



TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 4

JULY - AUGUST 2013

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama releasing the book titled "Glimpses of the History of Tibet" on 28 July 2013. Also seen in the picture are author Claude Arpi and the director of the Tibet Museum, Tashi Phuntsok Barling



Sakyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay with a group of Taiwanese students at Department of Information and International Relations in Dharamshala on 22 July 2013.

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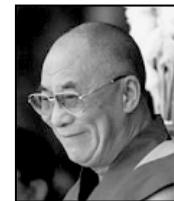
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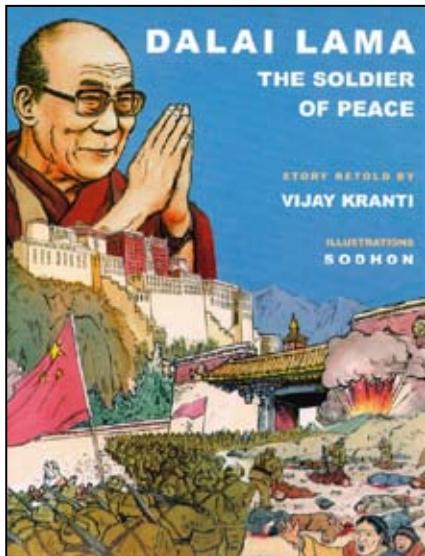
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Dalai Lama: The Soldier of Peace

‘Dalai Lama: The Soldier of Peace’ is a comic book chronicling the life story of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. The comic book, retold by noted Indian author and journalist, Mr Vijay Kranti, was released at a small function in Dharamsala on 7 August. The comic book is suitable for readers from all age groups and is dedicated to the 1.2 million Tibetans who died under Chinese occupation and for the hard work of Tibet support groups all over the world.

The comic book depicts how the Tibetan monks search out the reincarnation of the previous Dalai Lama, the intriguing relationship between Tibet and China; how Tibet was occupied; the thrilling escape of the Dalai Lama into exile and what makes the present Dalai Lama the most celebrated and charming personality in the present era of human history.

The author says that even though the life story of His Holiness has been told numerous times, retelling this story is crucial as it underlines the great contributions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama towards proving the power of peace and non-violence.

“The messages espoused by His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been embraced by hundreds of communities across the world who are struggling for justice” he said, adding that he hopes to instil in people the goodness of love and com-

passion through this comic book.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, is a Nobel laureate for world peace and a messenger of social harmony. He has inspired thousands of people around the world with his message of peace and non-violence. His story is a legacy that has been told and retold again and again all over the world. His message of peace, love and compassion is a global phenomena that is becoming all the more relevant in a world mired in serious humanitarian conflicts.

Mr Vijay Kranti is a senior journalist and a Tibetologist. He has presented over a dozen photo-exhibitions on Tibet in India and many other countries. His other books on His Holiness the Dalai Lama include a coffee table book titled ‘Dalai Lama Speaks’ and the Hindi edition of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s autobiography ‘Freedom in Exile’.

I have a dream, says His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the Dalai Lama today spoke from his residence in Dharamsala, India, on 28 August, about his hope and dream in honour of the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

In a video message, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said: “I always have one dream that within this century the world truly becomes a real happy human family. In order to achieve that we need to have a sense of oneness of human family. I think through education and more realistic and holistic thinking, I have confidence that we can develop a sense of oneness of humanity. Then the very basis of violence and war will no longer be there and this century will become a century of peace and non-violence.”

“I Have a Dream” is a public speech delivered by American civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr. on 28 August 1963, in which he called for an end to racism in the United States. Delivered to over 250,000 civil rights supporters from the steps of the Lincoln Memo-

rial during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the speech was a defining moment of the American civil rights movement.

18-year-old monk dies after setting self on fire; Toll rises to 120

File photo of monk Kunchok Sonam at his monastery in Ngaba

Kunchok Sonam, an 18-year-old monk of Thangkor Sogtsang monastery in Zoegé county in Ngaba region in eastern Tibet, has died after setting himself on fire, media reports and human rights group say.

Kunchok Sonam set himself on fire around 8:00 am (local time) Saturday (20 July) while returning from the monastery after a daily prayer service. Today is a special occasion for the local Tibetans to hold incense burning ceremony (Tib: Sangsol) in the morning. But on hearing reports of self-immolation, thousands of Tibetans rushed towards the monastery.

The local Tibetans prevented the police from taking away the body, which one report says was then consigned to the nearby Machu river. Another report says the body was taken inside the monastery and a prayer service is being held.

The situation in the region remains tense. The authorities have deployed a large number of security forces at the monastery and cut off the telephone and Internet lines.

Over 120 Tibetans have set themselves on fire in Tibet calling for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet

and freedom for Tibetans.

The Central Tibetan Administration had issued a white paper on the underlying causes of the increasing number of self-immolations that are currently engulfing Tibet.

"The reason lies in China's massive policy failure in Tibet over the course of more than 60 years of its rule. The revolution that is brewing in Tibet is driven by political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination, economic marginalisation and environmental destruction," noted the white paper titled "Why Tibet is burning" released this January.



Several Tibetans Wounded in Crackdown on Mining Protest

Several Tibetans were injured and one reportedly committed suicide, after Chinese security forces used tear gas and rampant beating to disperse Tibetans protesting against diamond mining in eastern Tibet's Yushul region (incorporated into China's Qinghai province) on 16 August.

The crackdown followed a tense confrontation between Tibetan protesters and Chinese miner workers at three sites having diamond reserves in Zatoe in Yushul region since 12 August.

Several military convoys arrived at the sites, Radio Free Asia quoted a source in the region as saying.

About 500 armed police stormed mining sites in Atod Yultso and Zachen Yultso and fired teargas to disperse the

Tibetan protestors. They also threatened Tibetans with dire consequences.

Several Tibetans were wounded in the crackdown, while at least eight Tibetans were detained and 15 others taken to hospital.

A Tibetan man named Sogpo Choedrup was grievously injured after he tried to kill himself with knife cuts and was taken away by police, RFA quoted a source as saying. Another source said the man had killed himself.

The security forces are planning to crack down on those sitting in protest at Chidza site.

crackdown on Tibetans protesting against illegal mining in Zatoe region of Yushul in eastern Tibet 16 August, which left hundreds of Tibetans severely injured.

"We are deeply concerned over China's systematic and rampant exploitation of mineral resources and environment. The Chinese government completely tramples upon the Tibetan people's religious sentiments and their deep respect for environment," the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile said in a statement on 22 August.

The mining operations in Tibet are being carried out in complete violation of the laws on environmental protection stipulated in the Chinese constitution, it said, adding that Tibet's environment affects billions of people in Asia, including China.

"We strongly urge the international community, including world governments, to press the Chinese government to end destruction of Tibet's ecology," the Tibetan Parliament said.

Several hundred Tibetans were injured and one reportedly committed suicide, after Chinese security forces used tear gas and rampant beating to disperse thousands of Tibetans protesting against diamond mining in Zatoe in eastern Tibet's Yushul region (incorporated into China's Qinghai province) on 16 August.

The local Tibetans complained that the mining activities trigger environmental problems and are carried out without sanctions from the central government.

China's large-scale exploitation of mineral resources in Tibet has led to sustained socio-economic and environmental problems. Massive influx of Chinese migrant workers into Tibetan areas deprives Tibetans of employment opportunities.

The Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala has repeatedly called on China to ensure active participation of Tibetan people in all decision making process and that social, environmental and cultural impacts assessment are carried out.

Tibetan Parliament Condemns China's Repression on Mining Protest

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has condemned the Chinese government's

China's large-scale exploitation of mineral resources in Tibet has led to sustained socio-economic and environmental problems. Massive influx of Chinese migrant workers into Tibetan areas deprives Tibetans of employment opportunities.

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and cultural impacts assessment are carried out.

US: Human rights situation deteriorating, urges China to resume unconditional talks on Tibet

The US government has expressed serious concern over the deteriorating human rights in Tibet and urged China to hold unconditional talks with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

Uzra Zeya, who led the US side in the annual human rights dialogue with China on 30-31 July, said that there has been increasing religious restrictions in Tibet and Xinjiang.

"I think we have continued to see a deterioration in the over all situation in China," said Ms Zeya.

"We also expressed deep concern about China's stepped-up attempts to silence dissent and tighten controls over Tibetans and Uighurs, emphasizing that policies ostensibly designed to maintain stability are counterproductive when they deny Chinese citizens their universal human rights and fundamental freedoms," she said.

"We also urged the Chinese government to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions," Ms Zeya said.

The US also raised some specific cases of political prisoners, including Dhondup Wangchen, a Tibetan political prisoner, who have been victims of the Chinese government's clampdown for expressing their concerns about the broader denial of rights affecting China's citizens.

Human Rights Watch has urged the US government to press the Chinese government to adopt concrete and clear benchmarks, and evaluate the progress in subsequent dialogues. "Without these benchmarks, the human rights dialogue risks serving as a perfunctory diplomatic exercise, rather than a genuinely useful advocacy tool," it said in a statement on 30 July.

The US government could further

strengthen such efforts by requiring all US agencies that have regular relationships with China to raise salient human rights issues in meetings and to raise them regularly in public statements and media interviews, including with Chinese-language media, it said.

"US officials should use this opportunity to do what people in China want: to try their best to hold the Chinese government accountable for its human rights violations," said Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch.

The US-China dialogue took place against the backdrop of alarming escalation in self-immolations by Tibetans to protest against the Chinese government's repressive rule. Since 2009 over 120 Tibetans have set themselves on fire in Tibet, calling for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet and freedom for Tibetans.

The US state department in its annual human rights report said that Tibetans in Tibet faced severe religious repression and societal discrimination.

In June this year, the US Ambassador to China, Mr Gary Locke, made a rare Chinese government-sponsored visit to Tibet's capital Lhasa. During his meeting with local officials, Mr Locke lobbied for opening access to Tibet to foreign diplomats, journalists and tourists and stressed the "importance of preserving the Tibetan people's cultural heritage, including its unique linguistic, religious and cultural traditions."

"We remain concerned by the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibetan areas, including the tragic self-immolations. The US urges Beijing to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives without preconditions," US Embassy deputy spokesman Justin Higgins had said on ambassador Locke's visit to Tibet.

Secretary of State John Kerry had raised concerns over the human rights situation in Tibet during the two-day US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue held this June.

Chinese police open fire on Tibetans praying on His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Birthday



Tashi Sonam, a monk of Nyitso monastery, sustains fatal head injury in the police firing, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday in Tawu in Karze, eastern Tibet, on 6 July 2013.

Reports coming out of Tibet say that police opened fire on Tibetans praying for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday in eastern Tibet on 6 July, leaving several Tibetans severely injured.

On the morning of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday on 6 July, hundreds of Tibetans, including monks and nuns of Nyitso monastery and Geden Choeling nunnery, gathered to hold prayer service and incense offering ceremony on a hill in Tawu in Karze (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province). They were stopped from moving towards the hill by a contingent of People's Armed Police, who later opened fire on them.

Two leading Tibetan Rights groups, Free Tibet, based in London and the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) now confirm that more than 14 Tibetans have been shot and injured during the firing on unarmed Tibetans in Tawu on 6 July. As reported earlier, the incident occurred after an altercation ensued when Chinese police tried to intervene at a local Tibetan gathering to pray and celebrate the 78th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Dozens were also arrested and tortured after the firing on unarmed Tibetans by Chinese police. At least twenty people were arrested, including some of those

injured in the shooting, Free Tibet has stated in a press release.

The Tibetans detained were severely beaten and tortured and were subjected to shocks from electric prods, Free Tibet said. 72-year-old Yama Tsing had sustained an arm injury during the incident and Lobsang Choedon, a nun, was severely beaten and was hospitalised for serious head injuries sustained as a result.

China Conducted Nuclear Blasts in Tibet to Divert Brahmaputra River: Report

China has conducted 3-4 nuclear blasts in Tibet to divert the Brahmaputra river, raising India's concern that its share of water would be reduced and that China could use it as a leverage against India by releasing water at anytime it wished, according to The Times of India, a leading Indian daily.

The report stated that low-yield atomic blasts were reported at Metok county in Nyingtri Prefecture in South-eastern Tibet (CH: Moutou), located close to Arunachal Pradesh in India and also near the Great Bend of the Brahmaputra. The blasts were aimed to clear Mountainous terrain to divert the river and conducted at significant depths to avoid detection, the report said, citing classified Indian Intelligence documents.

Apparently, the National Security Council (NSC) of India has also shared the information with the United States during the then American defence secretary Robert Gates, a former CIA director, during his visit to India in 2008. At the time, US authorities seem to have admitted to their Indian counterparts the complete failure of their satellites to detect the blasts.

India's then deputy national security adviser S D Pradhan have confirmed the blasts and the efforts made by India to confront the Chinese with the evidence. Other sources in the Research and Analysis Wing and the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) too corroborated the information. However, the security establishment, partic-

ularly the NSC, sought to play down the "grave" issue, the report said.

The Indian authorities believe two factors have confirmed the March 2005 atomic blasts. First the unprecedented flooding of the river in 2005, believed to have been caused due to Chinese engineers' efforts to divert the river water.

And secondly, Indian intelligence have noticed in October 2008, that Chinese engineers had begun work through Tibet's Galung La mountain in Nyingtri prefecture near the Great Bend of the Brahmaputra, confirming yet again that nuclear blasts had taken place there earlier.

Meanwhile, the Chinese authorities have flatly denied that atomic blasts had been executed to divert the waters of the Brahmaputra. It has steadfastly claimed that all the dams on the Yarlung Tsangpo are run of the river.

China has to Address the Grievances of Tibetans: UN High Commissioner

Expressing her deep concern over the grim situation in Tibet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said, "China has to examine and address the grievances of the Tibetans".

Responding to questions on BBC's World Have Your Say programme on 28 June about the UN's inability to engage China to address the sufferings of Tibetans, High Commissioner Navi Pillay underlined that the situation in Tibet requires a political solution, and that the suffering of the Tibetan people has to be examined by China and addressed.

Ms Pillay assured that the Human Rights Council will apply same yardstick to China while reviewing and scrutinising its human rights record this October.

The UN High Commissioner said China has invited her to visit China and that she would definitely go to Tibet to assess the situation there. Since 2009, over 119 Tibetans have set themselves on fire to protest against the Chinese government's continued occupation

and repression of Tibet.

Ms Pillay reiterated her real concern over the grim situation in Tibet. "I have issued public statements, asking China not to treat this as a security matter but to look into the root causes of the suffering of the Tibetans and why they are seem to be driven to such extreme measures of protests such as self-immolation," she said.

The UN High Commissioner said the world cares about the sufferings of Tibetans and urged them not to resort to drastic forms of protests.

German official vows to work for Tibetan cause after retirement

A member of German Parliament has pledged to work for the cause of Tibet even after his retirement and urged other parliamentarians to support the Tibetan people's aspiration for freedom.

"The situation in Tibet has not improved over the last many decades. It is of utmost importance that our parliamentarians and Tibet groups should provide political support to Tibetans in their quest for freedom," said Mr Harald Leibrecht, a member of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development. He is also the Coordinator for Transatlantic Cooperation on behalf of Federal Foreign Office and one of the co-chair of the Tibet Discussion Group in the German parliament.

In his message to the new parliamentarians who will be elected in the September elections, MrLeibrecht urged them to raise the issue of Tibet during their meetings with Chinese officials and underlined that the parliamentary group on Tibet can make valuable contribution to the Tibetan cause.

"I was involved in the Tibetan cause before I became a member of parliament and will continue to support the cause through other ways after my retirement," said MrLeibrecht, who plans to retire from politics after two months.

Australia's Major Political Parties Outline Stand on Tibet Issue Before Election

With Australia set to go for federal election on 7 September 2013, a prominent Tibet support group based in Australia, Australia Tibet Council, has sought views of three major political parties about their future foreign policy vis-a-vis China, particularly on the human rights issues and facilitating a lasting solution to the issue of Tibet through dialogue between Beijing and Dharamsala.

1. What do you see as Australia's role in assisting the Tibetan people to fulfil these aspirations?

2. If your party wins the elections or assumes a significant role in the new government, do you envisage a role for Australia in supporting the dialogue process between the Tibetans and the Chinese? What steps will you take to encourage the two sides to progress in their dialogue?

3. What priority will your party give to human rights in your over all engagement with China? Will you encourage the Australian government to join other countries in publicly expressing concerns over the human rights problems in Tibet?

4. Will your party leader meet with the Dalai Lama, a global icon of compassion and a Nobel Peace laureate, when he visits Australia. Dr Lobsang Sangay is the person elected by the Ti-

betan people to represent their interests and has the mandate to pursue a peaceful resolution of the Tibet issue. Will your party leader meet with Dr Sangay when he visits Australia?

5. What will your party do to secure unfettered access to Tibet for the Australian media, diplomats and tourists in reciprocity of the freedom that Chinese officials, media and tourists enjoy in Australia?

Labor Party's Response



Mr Kevin Rudd, leader of Labor Party

The Rudd Labor Government remains deeply concerned by the situation in the Tibetan regions and continues to urge Chinese authorities to:

Acknowledge and address the underlying causes of tension in Tibetan regions.

Protect the rights of all Chinese citizens to criticise the government, including by addressing their grievances in an open and transparent manner.

Lift restrictions on access to Tibetan regions, including for international media and diplomats.

Australian Government officials have consistently conveyed to Chinese authorities our concern about the situation in Tibetan regions.

Since the self-immolations began in March 2011, the Federal Labor Government has made representations on

thirteen occasions, in Canberra, Beijing and in provincial regions where most of protests have occurred.

The Federal Labor Government has urged the Chinese government to resume, as a matter of priority, substantive talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives to prevent the situation deteriorating further.

China is well aware of the Federal Labor Government's concerns about the situation in Tibetan regions. Then Prime minister Gillard raised Australia's concern about human rights, including Tibet, in meetings with President Xi Jinping on 7 April and Premiere Li Keqiang on 9 April.

The Federal Labor Government also joins others in the international community in encouraging the Tibetan people not to express their frustrations through extreme forms of protest. The Federal Labor Government urges Tibetan leaders to use their influence to discourage the appalling loss of life from self-immolations.

The Federal Labor Government will negotiate dates for the 15th round of

human rights talks with China.

The Dalai Lama is a frequent and welcome visitor to Australia.

As with any other visits by the Dalai Lama to Australia, this would be in a private capacity, reflecting his status as a spiritual leader and Nobel laureate.

Australian Labor party leaders have sometimes met the Dalai Lama unofficially and privately during his visits, although not on every occasion. The Federal Labor Government has made it clear to China that this is very much a

reflection of Australian community expectations.

The Federal Labor Government continues to place a high value on access to Tibet for Australian officials, media and tourists.

The Australian Embassy in Beijing has made a number of requests for the Australian Ambassador to visit Tibet.

So far, these requests have been denied on the grounds that the timing was not convenient. The Australian Embassy has expressed our disappointment about

this outcome and continues to seek an opportunity for the Ambassador to visit Tibet.

The Ambassador would use the visit to become better acquainted with the situation there, including through meetings with local leaders and officials. She would also visit Australian aid projects.

The Ambassador would also express Australia's concern about the underlying causes of tension in Tibetan regions of China.

Liberal and National Coalition Party



Mr Tony Abbott, leader of Liberal and National Coalition

Thank you for providing the opportunity to outline the views of the Coalition on the important issues facing your members.

On behalf of the Coalition members of Parliament and candidates, I am pleased to respond to your recent questionnaire.

The Coalition has called for peaceful dialogue between China and Tibetan representatives to ensure Chinese respect for Tibetan human rights. We have made our concerns known to China about allegations of human rights abuses in Tibet including arbitrary detentions, ill treatment and censorship. We believe that Australia can pursue

productive and friendly relations with China while calling for improved human rights in Tibet.

China is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which holds that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression without interference, as well as the freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

The Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Tony Abbott MP met the Dalai Lama, in his capacity as an important spiritual leader during his visit to Australia in December 2009. Both Mr Abbott and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Hon Julie Bishop

MP again met the Dalai Lama during his subsequent visit to Australia in June 2011.

In 1997, the previous Coalition government initiated a new bilateral dialogue with China on human rights.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the dialogue "is an important forum for frank exchanges on human rights and for identifying areas where Australia can help China implement international human rights standards, including through technical cooperation". This is the only Ministerial-level dialogue China has established with another country.

The Coalition values the input of the Australian Tibet Council and other human rights groups.

Between now and the election, the Coalition will be progressively providing further details of Our Plan to build a strong prosperous economy and a safe and secure Australia.

Once announced, the details of our policies will be available at www.liberal.org.au and www.nationals.org.au

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate the Coalition's view on important issues facing members of the Australian Tibet Council.

Brian Loughnane
Federal Campaign Director

The Australian Greens'



Christine Milne, leader of Greens Party

Australia has an important role in multi-lateral and bi-lateral dialogue with China in raising human rights in Tibet and by supporting the Tibetan people in Australia in their advocacy to end the cycle of repression.

The Greens has adopted a resolution on Tibet in 2011: That the Australian Greens recognise the rights of the Tibetan peoples over their traditional homelands and their rights to self-determination including cultural and spiritual expression. We recognise their elected representatives. Further we condemn the plundering of Tibet's natural re-

sources and destruction of Tibetan culture by the Chinese government. This conference calls on the government of China to end the repression in Tibet and heed the call of the Tibetans for restoration of their rights and freedom.

We will continue to press the government of Australia to support the dialogue process and encourage China to participate.

The Australian Greens have always prioritised human rights when it comes to China. We have been and will continue to be outspoken in support of the hu-

man rights of the Tibetan people. Senator Hanson-Young, our spokesperson on Tibet, has moved motions in the Senate of four occasions over the last three years calling on the Government to engage with China over Tibet. One motion was successfully passed in the Senate. Senator Hanson-Young and her Green colleagues will continue to advocate on behalf of Tibetan people.

Yes – the Australian Greens Leader, Senator Christine Milne, former leader, Senator Bob Brown and our spokesperson for Tibet, Senator Hanson-Young have met with the Dalai Lama and Tibetan representatives in the past and will be pleased to meet with Dr. Lobsang Sangay whenever he visits Australia.

Freedom of movement and information is essential in the struggle for human rights. The Greens will continue to advocate for unfettered access to Tibet. Senator Hanson-Young has met with Tibetan delegates on a regular basis to discuss how she can provide assistance and support to the community. The Senator also travelled to Dharamsala with a delegation from the Australia Tibet Council to speak with the people and meet with community leaders.

Tibet Motion Passed in Australian Senate

CANBERRA: Senator Sarah Hanson-Young from the Greens party moved a motion on Tibet in the upper house of the Australian Parliament.

The following motion was passed in the Senate on 20 March 2013.

That the Senate notes the Australian Government's efforts to urge Chinese authorities to:

- (a) address the underlying causes of tension in Tibetan regions;
- (b) end the use of harsh policies, such as increased surveillance and violent crack downs, which have only exacerbated the security situation in Tibetan areas;
- (c) lift restrictions on access to Tibetan regions, including for international media and diplomats; and
- (d) resume substantive talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives to prevent the situation deteriorating further.

Cultural Genocide on the Roof of the World

China's forced resettlement of millions of Tibetan nomads in "New Socialist Villages" has put their livelihoods and cultural identity at jeopardy

A new report provides insight into the annihilation of millennia old way of Ti-

"Tibetans have no say in the design of policies that are radically altering their

"New Socialist Village" made of identical houses in parallel rows is erected



Bagkarshol (Bagaxue), Taktse (Dazi) county (29°41'49.55" N 91°25'42.04") By 2009 about 90% of the original village housing units have been demolished and rebuilt as a New Socialist Village besides the main road.

betan nomadic life being unleashed on the roof of the world.

Human Rights Watch, a prominent human rights watchdog, has said in a report that China is subjecting millions of Tibetans to a policy of mass rehousing and relocation that radically changes their way of life, and about which they have no say.

In a 115-page report released on 26 June, Human Rights Watch said the Chinese government has forcibly evicted over two million Tibetan farmers and herders from their traditional habitation to concrete houses under its plans to "Build a New Socialist Countryside" in Tibetan areas since 2006.

The report titled "They Say We Should Be Grateful: Mass Rehousing and Relocation in Tibetan Areas of China", documents extensive rights violations ranging from the absence of consultation to the failure to provide adequate compensation, both of which are required under international law for evictions to be legitimate.

"The scale and speed at which the Tibetan rural population is being remodeled by mass rehousing and relocation policies are unprecedented in the post-Mao era," said Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch.

way of life, and – in an already highly repressive context – no ways to challenge them."

The report addresses defects in the quality of the houses provided, absence of remedies for arbitrary decisions, failures to restore livelihoods, as well as a disregard for autonomy rights nominally guaranteed by Chinese law in Tibetan areas.

Tibetans coming from both farming and nomadic herding communities, interviewed by Human Rights Watch between 2005 and 2012, say that large numbers of people relocated or rehoused did not do so voluntarily, and that they were never consulted or offered alternatives. They say that many face financial difficulties as a result of having to move, reduce their herds, or demolish and reconstruct their houses. They claim that new settlements are sometimes inferior to the ones they previously inhabited, and that many pledges made to them by local officials to induce them to move have never materialised, the report said.

The analysis of satellite reveals the magnitude of change faced by some Tibetan communities. In several cases, images show traditional villages entirely demolished, while a pre-planned

nearby.

The Chinese government has announced plans to further rehouse and relocate more than 900,000 people in Tibet Autonomous Region by the end of 2014 and an additional 113,000 nomads into sedentary dwellers in eastern Tibet by the end of 2013, the report said.

"Tibetans have no say in the design of policies that are radically altering their way of life, and – in an already highly repressive context – no ways to challenge them," said Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch.

"Forging ahead with mass relocation and rehousing programs in a broadly repressive environment will only fuel tensions and widen the rift between Tibetans and the Chinese state," Richardson said.

Selected Testimonies

Tibetans coming from both farming and nomadic herding communities, interviewed by Human Rights Watch between 2005 and 2012, say that large numbers of people relocated or rehoused did not do so voluntarily, and that they were never consulted or offered alternatives. They say that many face financial difficulties as a result of having to move, reduce their herds, or demolish and re-

construct their houses. They claim that new settlements are sometimes inferior to the ones they previously inhabited, and that many pledges made to them by local officials to induce them to move have never materialized.

cation, however, they have to purchase these necessities from markets, which is clearly increasing their expenditures. Now relying on government subsidies, they face innumerable difficulties.

Ming Yue, director of the Yushu Prefec-

Where consultation and compensation have been inadequate, the Chinese government should give affected individuals and families the opportunity to return to their original land, to be resettled in an area nearby or like the one from which they were removed, and to



Drupshe (Xiezha wo), Taktse (Dazi) county (29°41'49.55" N 91°25'42.04" E) By 2012 about 95% of the original village housing units have been demolished and the inhabitants relocated to the New Socialist Village besides the main road

"People in the village are desperate about abandoning their homes and having to resettle. They don't have any other skills than farming, and won't have any herds or land worth speaking of anymore. How is the next generation going to survive as Tibetans?" said Tenzin Gyaltsso, a villager from Gyamda (Jiangda), Tibet Autonomous Region, July 2012.

Drolma Tsomo, a resettled nomad from Yushu prefecture, Qinghai province, October 2009, said: "In the new settlement we have to buy everything, yet we don't have an income. You cannot live here without cash. The 500 yuan the government gives us [per month] is not even enough to cover the electricity and water bills. And then you have to buy your own food."

In some cases the location for the new constructions was chosen unscientifically. [For example] some settlements have been constructed on mud-rock beds, landslide zones, flood-prone areas, or loose ground, noted State Council Development Research Center Report, December 2009.

A Chinese academic study conducted in 2010 concluded that before their relocation, herders were quite self-sufficient in terms of basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. After relo-

ture Three River Sources Office, 2010, said at least 60 percent of nomads were unable to find work after leaving their land.

Recommendations

Human Rights Watch has urged the Chinese government to end forced relocation of Tibetan nomads to "New Socialist Villages", expressing concern that this policy, unprecedented in the post-Mao era, has left millions of resettled Tibetans' livelihood and their cultural identity at risk.

It said the Chinese government to halt all projects involving mass relocation and rehousing, and allow an independent assessment of the design and impact on these policies, including by agreeing to long-standing requests by various United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteurs to visit.

Impose a moratorium on relocation and rehousing until an independent, expert review of existing policies and practices is carried out to determine whether they comply with international law. The review should assess all government policies that require or lead to the displacement and resettlement of rural Tibetans, confiscation of their property, or imposed slaughter of their livestock, the Human Rights Watch said.

receive appropriate compensation as required by Chinese law, it said.

Where those adversely affected by relocation and rehousing policies are unable to provide for themselves, authorities should take measures to ensure that adequate alternative means of livelihood are available, including return to herding.

To comply with the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and other human rights treaty obligations, authorities should review the Property Rights Law 2007 to ensure it guarantees meaningful security of tenure to occupiers of houses and land.

Recognize and uphold the rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association to ensure that Tibetans and others are able to engage in peaceful activities and raise concerns and criticisms, including of government relocation and rehousing policies and practices.

Human Rights Watch also urges members and participants in the 2013 Universal Periodic Review of China at the UN Human Rights Council to call on the government to impose a moratorium on all relocation and rehousing programs until they meet international standards.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay Completes Two Years in Office, Reaffirms Commitment to Seek Genuine Autonomy for Tibet



The Central Tibetan Administration reiterates its firm commitment to pursue dialogue with the Chinese government to seek genuine autonomy for Tibet, said Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay at a special prayer ceremony in Dharamsala on 8 August marking the second anniversary of successful democratic transition following His Holiness the Dalai Lama's devolution of political authority to the democratically-elected Tibetan leadership.

Sikyong said the successful democratic transition His Holiness the Dalai Lama's historic decision to devolve political authority to a democratically-elected leader has send a clear message to the Chinese government that Tibetans in exile will keep alive the Tibetan movement.

It has strengthened the hopes of Tibetans inside Tibet that their brethren in exile shoulder the responsibility in line with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision and invigorated their courage and determination, he said.

The collective effort of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the people and civil servants of the Central Tibetan Administration has deepened the international community's conviction in our commitment to democracy, he added.

Sikyong said Tibetans in and outside has forged unity and made a concerted effort to ensure a smooth transition after His Holiness the Dalai Lama's historic decision to devolve political authority to a democratically-elected leader.

The Kashag has proceeded with a three-phase approach of consolidation, action and dialogue since assuming office in August 2011, Sikyong said, adding that the first two phases have been completed.

Sikyong said "we have been able to consolidate a smooth democratic transition with the support of Indian and international Tibet support groups by hosting their major conferences in Dharamsala."

"The action phase witnessed major solidarity events in several cities including New York, New Delhi, Brussels, Tokyo, Sydney and others. These solidarity events were complemented by media awareness and efforts to garner support for Tibet in Congress and parliaments across the world. Working with friends and supporters of Tibet, we were able to get resolutions and motions passed in parliaments in the European Union (EU), France, Italy, the United States and others," he said.

Sikyong said the CTA will now direct

its efforts on the dialogue phase and pledged to make continued efforts to resume contact with the Chinese government and take initiatives to educate the international community, including Tibetans, on the Middle Way Approach.

He said the international community strongly supports the Middle-Way approach as most viable and pragmatic solution to address the problem of Tibet. "President Barack Obama in 2011 applauded His Holiness the Dalai Lama's commitment to non-violence and dialogue with China and his pursuit of the Middle Way Approach, and encouraged direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences and that a dialogue that produces results would be positive for China and Tibetans," Sikyong said.

Sikyong said the task force on negotiations would be enlarged and will hold their 26th meeting this September.

Self-immolations in Tibet

Sikyong said the situation in Tibet remains critical as Tibetans continue to set themselves on fire to protest against China's repressive rule.

Sikyong reiterated that Tibetans are driven to set themselves on fire in protest by the Chinese government's policies of political repression, cultural

assimilation, social discrimination, economic marginalisation and environmental destruction over the last 60 years of its invasion. “The blame and solution lies squarely with the Chinese government,” he said.

“Through various media, the Kashag has consistently appealed and categorically discouraged Tibetans in Tibet from self-immolating as a form of protest. Life is precious and as human beings we do not want anyone to die in such a manner. As Buddhists, we pray for the soul of the deceased. As Tibetans, it is our sacred duty to support the aspirations of Tibetans in Tibet: the return of His Holiness the great Fourteenth Dalai Lama to Tibet, freedom for the Tibetan people, and unity among Tibetans,” he said.

Since 2009 over 120 Tibetans, including young monks, nuns, nomads, farmers and students, have self-immolated to protest against the Chinese government’s continued occupation and repression of Tibet. The self-immolators have called for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet and freedom for Tibetans.

Message to Tibetans

Sikyong praised the campaigns initiated by Tibetans inside Tibet to foster and strengthen unity among themselves. “Unity is of paramount importance and we appealed to our brethren to make continued effort towards this end,” he said.

Sikyong said the international support for the issue of Tibet is a result of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s vision and achievements and, truth and moral standing of the Tibetan people. “The international community recognises Tibetans as a people with moral character, honest and truthful. So we urge Tibetans both in and outside Tibet to maintain this recognition,” he said.

He also urged Tibetans to shun alcohol and drug addiction and gambling.

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Ten Questions for Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay

On the occasion of the second anniversary of the 14th Kashag, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay gave the following exclusive interview to Tibet.net.

1. How would you describe your administration’s overall strategic approach as you complete two years in office?

The 14th Kashag had the formidable challenge of ensuring a smooth transition in the wake of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s historic decision to devolve his political authority to a democratically elected leader while sustaining the Tibetan freedom struggle. The strategic approach we have taken at a macro level can be summarized as a three-phase integrated approach of consolidation, action and dialogue.

The consolidation phase that spanned much of the first year was focused on ensuring a smooth transition. Our priority during this time of transition was to avoid disruption; and rally all Tibetans and supporters. Towards this end, we hosted several major conferences in Dharamshala that brought together Tibetan representatives from all across the globe and leaders of the Indian and International Tibet Support Groups.

With His Holiness’ blessing, Tibetans inside and around the world have fully supported the transition and taken responsibility in fulfilling the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The 14th Kashag would like to express its appreciation for the support and urge Tibetans to continue to do so. This support has been instrumental during the consolidation phase.

The action phase witnessed major solidarity events in several cities including New York, New Delhi, Brussels, Tokyo, Sydney and others. These solidarity events were complemented by media awareness and efforts to garner support for Tibet in congresses and parliaments across the world. Working with friends and supporters of Tibet, we were able to get declarations, resolutions and motions passed in parliaments in the European Union, Australia, Brazil, Japan, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the United

States and other countries.

The dialogue phase involves sustained efforts and initiatives to resume contact with the Chinese government. Additional investment will be made to educate both Tibetans and external audiences on the Middle Way Approach. The Task Force on Negotiations will be enlarged and members will have their 26th meeting in September 2013 during which ongoing developments in Tibet and China will be reviewed and discussed.

2. What is the Middle Way Policy and how has this policy benefited Tibet and Tibetans?

As early as the 1970s, His Holiness the Dalai Lama began to formulate a far-sighted and pragmatic solution to the Tibet issue after consulting various Tibetan leaders in exile and later in the 1980s also soliciting feedback from Tibetans inside Tibet.

The new formulation traversed the middle path between repression and separation – rejecting the repressive and colonial policies of the Chinese government towards Tibetans while not seeking separation from the People’s Republic of China. This win-win proposition, which came to be known as the Middle Way Approach, calls for genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the framework of the People’s Republic of China. This approach was also in sync with then China’s paramount leader Deng Xiaoping’s position that, “except for independence, all other issues could be discussed and resolved.”

The Middle Way Approach has enabled Dharamshala and Beijing to establish contact through a series of talks held between Chinese representatives and envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. For the first time, Tibetans inside and outside Tibet were able to contact and visit one another. Tibetan students and

monks in Tibet visited India to receive secular and monastic education, which also contributed to the revival of Buddhism inside Tibet and awareness and solidarity with the exile Tibetans.

Many prominent educated Tibetans inside Tibet support the Middle Way Approach because they view it as a realistic and forward-looking approach to peacefully resolving the issue of Tibet. Furthermore, this approach enables many governments to support a solution-oriented Tibet policy and helps them raise the Tibet issue in their bilateral dialogue with China. After President Barack Obama's meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 16, 2011, the White House applauded "the Dalai Lama's commitment to non-violence and dialogue with China and his pursuit of the Middle Way Approach," and encouraged "direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences."

Another key area where the Middle Way Approach is steadily bearing results is in the minds of many Chinese, particularly among the intellectuals. Some of the Chinese intellectual luminaries, including Liu Xiaobo, the imprisoned Nobel Laureate, were signatories of a courageous open letter in 2008 that expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's peace initiatives. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's outreach to Chinese students and scholars and his teachings to Chinese Buddhist practitioners, part of an estimated 300 million plus Buddhists in today's Mainland China, are also helping reshape Chinese attitudes towards Tibet and Tibetans.

For all the reasons stated above, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) remains committed to the Middle Way Approach in resolving the Tibet issue.

3. What is the cause of the unprecedented wave of self-immolations in Tibet and how has your Administration handled this painful issue?

On the second anniversary of the present Kashag, a special prayer session was held in dedication to 120 self-immola-

tors, their family members and for all those who have given their lives for the cause of Tibet. Similar prayer sessions were held in the Tibetan settlements in India and abroad.

Sadly, since 2009, 120 Tibetans have self-immolated, including 22 in 2013. 103 of them have died. The self-immolators include monks, nuns, nomads, farmers, students and Tibetans from all three Tibetan regions of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo, including the capital city of Lhasa.

Political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination, economic marginalisation, environmental destruction and lack of religious freedom are the primary factors driving Tibetans to self-immolation. According to Human Rights Watch, two million nomads were resettled in ghetto-like accommodations without their full consent and proper consultation. The repressive policies has also resulted in recent incidents of violence in several mining areas in Tibet. The only way to end this brutal and grave situation is for China to change its current hardline Tibet policy by respecting the aspirations of the Tibetan people. We are always mindful of the fact that our compatriots inside Tibet hold the key to the Tibet issue.

The Kashag has consistently appealed to and discouraged Tibetans from drastic action, including self-immolation, as a form of protest. As human beings, we do not want anyone to die in such a manner. However, as Buddhists, we pray for the deceased. As Tibetans, it is our sacred duty to support the aspirations of Tibetans in Tibet: the return of His Holiness the great Fourteenth Dalai Lama to Tibet, freedom for the Tibetan people, and unity among Tibetans.

The blame as well as the solution for the self-immolations lies with the Chinese government.

4. Would you like to make any clarifications on the May 8, 2013 AFP article Exiled Tibetan PM not challenging Chinese Communist Party's rule in Tibet?

Those who have heard or read my remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in Washington DC, the basis of the AFP article, should have no grounds to be alarmed. There is no divergence between my comments and the long-held official CTA position on major issues such as the role of the Communist Party in Tibet, democracy in Tibet, and control of Tibet's defense. These official CTA positions were articulated in the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy For the Tibetan People and the accompanying Note on the Memorandum of Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People (hereinafter referred to as Note), submitted to the Chinese government in 2008 and 2010 respectively.

As far as Socialism and the role of China's Communist Party in a Tibet that is genuinely autonomous is concerned, I urge readers to review chapters 3, 4 & 5 of the Note, which clearly states, "The Memorandum, in no way challenges or brings into question the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in the PRC. The Memorandum also does not challenge the Socialist system of the PRC. Nothing in it suggests a demand for a change to this system or for its exclusion from Tibetan areas."

With reference to democracy, I was asked by the CFR event moderator "Do you think you can institute democracy in a genuinely autonomous Tibet? Will there be real, free political elections, freedom of expression? It would be unique to the People's Republic, wouldn't it?" The answer to these questions is "no." As I explained at the CFR event, "democracy is what we practice and this is what we aspire. But this is not part of what we are asking." As explained we do not challenge or demand a change to the socialist system of the PRC and leadership of the Communist Party if we are granted genuine autonomy.

5. What is CTA's stand on Tibetans applying for Indian or other foreign citizenship?

The decision to apply for Indian or any other country's citizenship is a personal

choice. The Indian Citizenship Act of 1955 grants citizenship rights to Tibetans born in India between 1950 and 1987; and to those born after 1987 if “either of whose parents is a citizen of India at the time of his/her birth”. CTA cannot prevent any Tibetan from applying for Indian citizenship. At the same time, CTA cannot compel Tibetans to apply for Indian citizenship, as the application process entails surrendering both Registration Certificate (RC) and Identity Certificate (IC) documents to the Indian authorities.

Also, the primary objective of CTA is political and to provide welfare services to Tibetans in exile.

CTA issues bona fide Tibetan letters of support through our Offices of Tibet to those applying for citizenships abroad. We also issue “No Objection Certificate” (NoC) through our Department of Security to applicants for Indian citizenship. During my administration, we have so far, received exactly 14 requests for NoC and we have not withheld supporting documents for anyone.

6. What is the state of CTA's finances?

CTA is financially sound. During the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's budget session in March 2013 the 14th Kashag submitted a budget for the fiscal year 2013-2014 that includes new revenue representing an increase of 23% over the previous budget. We are confident we will not only raise, but also exceed our revenue goal.

The current 2013-2014 budget includes 97 new projects, including programs for settlement revitalization and youth employment, which will positively impact a majority in the Tibetan refugee community. The budget also includes an increase in monthly stipend for former political prisoners from INR 3500 to 6000, for elderly people without family from INR 900 to 1500, and for people with special needs from INR 700 to 1500. Health and education for those living below the poverty line are also covered. It includes performance-

based scholarships for higher studies to encourage academic excellence. The budget also strengthens CTA's IT infrastructure and upgrades all computer hardware and software.

The voluntary cha-ngul payment by individual Tibetans, which constitutes about 8% of annual CTA's revenue. I commend those Tibetans who are regular contributors, and encourage others to begin to make such voluntary contributions. The amount is modest, but important symbolically as it reflects a personal commitment to the Tibetan cause and support for CTA as an institution.

Lastly, let me say that CTA funds are prudently managed with clear controls in place. Approval is needed from either the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile or its Standing Committee before the Kashag can receive or spend funds.

7. How is the CTA helping new arrivals from Tibet and tackling youth unemployment in the Tibetan exile community?

I am happy to report that we have allocated an additional sum of INR155 lakhs (USD293,000) from the current CTA budget for the rehabilitation of new arrivals from Tibet in Dharamshala and other places.

The curriculum at the Sherab Gatsel Lobling School (SGLS), formerly known as Tibetan Transit School, has been thoughtfully upgraded and redesigned. This new program expands the school's focus from basic education to basic education plus skills and vocational training. Furthermore, SGLS students who qualify, will now have the option to pursue college and university education.

Beginning this budget year, we have launched a new program to offer a second chance for those new arrivals who are 35 years and older, and for those who have dropped out of SGLS and are unemployed, to reapply for a two-year program.

The Department of Security provides new arrivals with much-needed assis-

tance in obtaining all their necessary documents. The Department of Health offers medical care and attention to torture survivors among the new arrivals and also provides them life-skill training. The Department of Religion & Culture gives monthly stipends to the new arrival monks and nuns and facilitates admission into their choice of monasteries and nunneries in India.

Although there is a decrease in the number of new arrivals from Tibet into India, the Tibetan Reception Centres in Kathmandu, New Delhi and Dharamshala continue to facilitate their safe journey and looks after their essential needs until the time they are enrolled in secular or monastic educational institutions.

On a related note, we are also committed to tackling the problem of youth unemployment. We all know that the success of any community rests on the productivity of its youth, and that today's Tibetan youth are tomorrow's future. With this in mind, we have launched several initiatives in this arena:

- A pilot Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) venture was launched in Dharamshala, as a joint effort of CTA's Tibetan Administration and Welfare Society (TAWS) and OKS Group, an Indian corporation. As part of this venture, the newly-opened BPO center will employ 50 Tibetans. Depending on the success of the pilot venture more such centers could open in the future.

- In addition, employability skills trainings are being provided to 570 young Tibetans, including new arrivals, through the Tibetan Career Centre (TCC), a project of the USAID-funded EDOTS program. The TCC operates in several satellite centers for the Tibetan youth throughout various Tibetan settlements, including in McLeod Ganj, Dharamshala, HP.

- The third initiative for our youth is with The Institute for Small Trade Training at Neelamangala, Bangalore, managed by the Department of Home. This program has announced a new round of skills training for unemployed

Tibetan youth in seven different fields: cookery, graphic & web design, computer hardware & networking, medical transcription, beautician, hairdressing and tailoring. Similar vocational training programs are also made available at Tibetan Homes Foundation, Mussoorie and at Selakui.

8. What are some of your new initiatives in education and what is the current status of the transfer of CTSA-run schools to the CTA?

Education continues to be a top priority of our administration. Our literacy rate of 84% is better than that of many south Asian countries. We want to provide a supportive environment where our schools, students and teachers can excel. Some of the key programs we have launched include:

- Incentivized Scholarship: The incentivized scholarship to offer higher funding for higher scores was initiated to inspire students to work harder and perform at higher levels.

Students from families living below the poverty line (nyamthak) now receive special scholarships as long as they score a minimum of 40% in their board exams.

Gaden Phodrang student merit awards have been increased from three to nine and the top three performers in science, arts and commerce receive INR 20,000/15,000/10,000 respectively.

A new annual Sikyong scholarship of INR 100,000 will be awarded to any student scoring 95% or higher in XIIth grade board exams.

This year's XIIth grade board results are also encouraging. The number of students scoring 90% rose from 4 in the previous year to 13. Students scoring at least 70% rose from 242 to 345. Tenzin Chokyil, the first recipient of the Sikyong scholarship, scored a total of 95.4% in the All India Senior School Certificate Examination –

the highest to date in the history of Tibetan education in exile.

- New College Opportunities in the United States: CTA and a partner organization convened a meeting in Boston on October 14, 2012 which brought together His Holiness the Dalai Lama and more than 60 deans and admission officers from some of the top American schools including Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Caltech, Princeton and Yale. We are hopeful that the number of Tibetan students seeking and gaining admissions to high-ranking universities will increase in the coming years. CTA will continue to reach out to university officials in the U.S. and elsewhere across the globe.
- Bhuntar, Centre for teacher education: We opened a centre for teacher education at Bhuntar, an off-campus branch of Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath. The aim is to give teachers a strong foundation in content and pedagogy firmly grounded in moral ethics and human values.
- Education Advisory Committee meeting: The first-ever Education Advisory Council meeting was held on 5-6 June 2013. Experts in the field of education, including Indian Padma Shri recipients, attended the meeting as committee members.
- National Geographic Explorers (Nat Geo) Program: A year-round science, environmental science and English learning programs were introduced for students of class VI to X in three Sambhota schools (Petton, Paonta and Chauntra) and two TCV schools (Suja and Chauntra) in July 2013. This collaborative effort between the Department of Education and the Nat Geo Explorers (NGX) Program, based in the U.S., aims to improve English language proficiency of Tibetan students; and to improve the teaching and learning of environmental science.

As regards the CTSA schools transfer,

we are close to finalizing the document detailing the modalities of the transfer. We are aware of the challenges related to the transition and will make every effort possible to ensure a transparent and successful transfer.

9. What are your thoughts on the state of gender equality in the exile Tibetan community and what measures has your Administration taken in this area?

The 14th Kashag is fully committed to gender equality and supports the welfare and overall advancement of Tibetan women. Though there is still much to do, I'm pleased to report that we have made some progress. This includes the fact that female Kalons run two of CTA's largest departments – Department of Home, and Department of Information and International Relations. Also, women representation in the 15th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has increased from 8 to 12 compared to the previous parliament. Women comprise 36.5% of the CTA workforce.

Yes, the number of women in senior CTA leadership positions is still much too small. This is due to the fact that promotion within the CTA service is exclusively based on seniority. However, now that more women are applying and being hired by CTA, we are confident this will lead to an increased number of women in key positions.

To gain a better understanding of the gender situation in the exile community, the Social and Resource Development desk (SARD) of Department of Finance has recently published a report titled The Status of Women.

In the exile Tibetan community-at-large, I'm pleased to see Tibetan girls excelling academically. In the recent All India Secondary School Certificate Examination conducted by CBSE, the girls outperformed the boys in clearing the high school board exams (88.63% to 85.96%), attended colleges in larger numbers and also received a larger share of CTA scholarships. In 2011, 125 female students received undergraduate

scholarships as compared to 53 male. Post graduate scholarships went to 52 women and 21 men. In 2012, the numbers were 125 female to 108 male for undergraduate scholarships and 52 female to 20 males for post graduates. This accomplishment is comparable to economically advanced countries because, even in the U.S., the female representation outpaced male representation at the college level only recently.

Let me also comment on the Tenzing-gang incident, a most unfortunate case of gender violence. This incident happened in June 2011, two months before the 14th Kashag took over. By then, an agreement had already been mediated amongst concerned parties by the local community. The aggrieved woman, till date, refused to file a legal complaint despite our and others repeated efforts. As per the court of law, if a victim refuses to file a case, one cannot do much. Through the CTA's Department of Health the previous Kashag extended all necessary medical and other assistance to the aggrieved woman.

As per the resolution passed in the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, the Kashag in April 2012 sent out a circular notifying local representatives of all Tibetan settlements to exercise gender sensitivity in any decision-making process. The dedicated staff of Department of Home and Kalon Gyari Dolma continue to create awareness among the Tibetan settlement officers on gender sensitization.

10. Lastly, what is the current status of the Canada Tibetan re-settlement program and could you please provide an update on the U.S. Immigra-

tion Bill that has a provision for 5000 visas for Tibetans?

We are grateful to the Canadian government for accepting 1000 Tibetan refugees from Arunachal Pradesh as permanent residents under a special program. This opportunity became possible after His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Canada in 2008. In the first lottery, 890 people were selected, including 409 applicants under "Single" category and 481 under the "Family" category. The first batch of 204 applicants is expected to leave for Canada in the fall of 2013. CTA provided the settlement resident data, allocated the number of seats based on the population of various camps, and monitored the entire process. The actual process of preparing a list of people, organizing the lottery, etc. was conducted by the camp representatives in conjunction with Project Tibet Society, the Canadian organization coordinating the resettlement program.

Provision for 5000 visas to the U.S. for displaced Tibetans over a three-year period was initiated as an amendment to a larger immigration reform bill currently under consideration in the U.S. Congress. Senator Diane Feinstein sponsored the amendment which passed the U.S. Senate with broad bipartisan support. However, the fate of the Tibetan provision is tied to the outcome of the larger immigration bill. The House of Representatives, controlled by the Republican Party, has criticized the comprehensive immigration bill and announced that they will come up with their own series of immigration-related bills. Hence, it remains uncertain whether or not the Congress will pass

the immigration reform bill.

Would you like to share any final thoughts?

I, on behalf of the Kashag, want to express my deep gratitude for the continuing support of Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet. Active participation by individuals and civic groups is crucial for a vibrant democracy. We welcome diverse opinions and feedback on our various initiatives and policies while at the same time, encouraging civil and respectful discourse as we maintain our unity.

The enduring spirit of Tibetans in Tibet, the unity of all Tibetans, and the guiding presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama will help us achieve our long cherished goal that all Tibetans enjoy the freedom and dignity which we deserve and is our right.

I would like to thank all my colleagues in the Kashag and the CTA staff for their support and dedication. We continue to meet adversity with exceptional unity, resilience, and dignity. I pay tribute to all those who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet. I fervently pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

For those interested in keeping abreast of the latest developments of the Central Tibetan Administration and the Sikyong's work, please visit www.tibet.net, LIKE the Sikyong Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/sikyong.lobsang.sangay>), and follow the Sikyong on Twitter @drlobsangsangay.)

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The Statement of the Sikyong on the Auspicious Occasion of the Seventy-Eighth Birthday of His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet



On this joyous occasion of the seventy-eighth birthday of His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, I bow in deepest reverence and pay obeisance on behalf of the Kashag and Tibetans inside and outside Tibet. My colleagues in the Kashag and Tibetans everywhere join millions of admirers across the globe in wishing His Holiness good health and a long life. We offer our prayers and re-affirm our unflinching devotion and loyalty to His Holiness the Dalai Lama – Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso Si-Sum Wang-Gyur Tsungpa Me-Pey Dhe Pal-Sangpo Chog. We express our deepest gratitude to His Holiness' loving parents for blessing us with their precious son, Lhamo Dhondup, born on July 6, 1935 to a peasant family in Taktser village in the Amdo region of Tibet.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. For Tibetans, he is the human manifestation of Chenrezig – the Bodhisattva of Compassion. His Holiness' greatness extends beyond Tibet as he advances his vision for a better humanity through the promotion of his three commitments: 1. basic human values or secular ethics in

furthering human happiness; 2. inter-religious harmony; and 3. the preservation of Tibet's peaceful and non-violent Buddhist culture.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama teaches that human beings are the same, all want happiness and no one wants suffering. Just as physical hygiene is essential for a healthy body, a sense of moral hygiene based on warm-heartedness and compassion is equally important. He believes education should instill in children both cognitive and emotional intelligence in order to create synergy and balance between a healthy body and healthy mind. Towards this end, the Central Tibetan Administration will introduce a curriculum on secular moral ethics in Tibetan schools.

As a tireless advocate of inter-religious harmony, His Holiness the Dalai Lama interacts with religious leaders of all faiths and has visited and prayed at numerous mandirs, mosques, churches, synagogues and monasteries.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been instrumental in preserving and disseminating the teachings of the Buddha from

their repository in Tibet to their origin in India and to 67 other countries across 6 continents. Buddhist monasteries and cultural institutions destroyed in occupied Tibet have been revived and rebuilt in exile. His Holiness encourages Tibetan scholars and practitioners to categorize the Nalanda tradition of Buddhism into separate fields of religion, philosophy and science.

As a pioneer in promoting intensive dialogue between leading world scientists and Buddhist monks, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has greatly advanced and enriched both modern science and Buddhism. The study of mind, as pursued by Buddhist practitioners, when applied to contemporary scientific fields has resulted in collaborations with major reputed universities such as Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Emory, Wisconsin, Zurich, Delhi University and others.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is one of the world's most respected and admired figures. Like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Mother Teresa, his contribution to the betterment of greater humanity extends far beyond his own religion and time. His enduring contributions are evident from over 150 major awards, prizes and honorary doctorates that have been conferred on him, most notably the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, United Nations Earth Prize in 1991, US Congressional Gold Medal in 2007 and the Templeton Award in 2012. The Templeton Award citation acknowledged His Holiness for encouraging "serious scientific investigation and reviews of the power of compassion and its broad potential to address the world's fundamental problems."

As His Holiness' stature on the world stage has grown, so has global awareness and support for Tibet. As one of the world's most inspirational figures, His Holiness has directly and positively impacted on the image of the Tibetan people and fundamentally benefitted the Tibetan cause.

In His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetans have a leader that no other people has. Recognized as His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the tender age of five, His Holiness was compelled to take on political responsibilities at age fifteen, to face the occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China, and was exiled to India at twenty-four. He had to forego all semblance of a normal childhood as the survival of Tibetan identity, hope and the future of an entire civilization rested on his young shoulders. Like a good shepherd leading his flock through an arid area to greener pastures, the young leader single-handedly prevented his people and the Tibet issue from falling into historical oblivion. His Holiness has been the force unifying the spirit of Tibet's three provinces (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) and four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the Bon religion. He is the beacon of hope for all Tibetans in Tibet, the majority of whom have never seen him. Our compatriots inside Tibet, including the new generation, express deep loyalty and clearly yearn to be reunited with His Holiness.

As of today, 119 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet. Their grief is reflected in the lyrics composed by two young singers, Pema Trinlay and Chakdor, both of whom were imprisoned for their song.

*"Precious master exiled from Tibet
Without you, Tibetans are like orphans
Suffering under Chinese rule is unbearable"*

Our compatriots in Tibet, including the self-immolators, clearly expressed their primary aspiration to be the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet and freedom for Tibetans. Tibetans in exile and the diaspora, particularly the new generation, must make the realization of this aspiration a sacred duty. This is the least we owe to the Tibetans inside Tibet. This calls for a thorough understanding of the leadership of His Holiness, his thoughts and vision for Tibet and the Tibetan people.

Tibetan democracy in exile from its infancy to today's consolidated state is the result of decades of efforts by His

Holiness the Dalai Lama. At this critical period of our struggle, Tibetans in exile and diaspora must utilize this democracy and freedom responsibly to show solidarity with and highlight their suffering of Tibetans in Tibet, challenge the hard-line policies of the Chinese government, and unite all Tibetans.

As early as the 1970s, His Holiness the Dalai Lama began consulting various Tibetan leaders and soliciting feedback from Tibetans inside Tibet to formulate a far-sighted and pragmatic solution to the Tibet issue. The new formulation traversed the middle path between the two extremes of repression and separation – one categorically rejecting the repressive and colonial policies of the Chinese government towards Tibetans while not seeking separation from the People's Republic of China. This win-win proposition, which came to be known as the Middle Way Approach, calls for genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the framework of the People's Republic of China. This approach was also in sync with then China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's position that, "except for independence of Tibet all other issues could be discussed and resolved."

The Middle Way Approach has enabled Dharamsala and Beijing to establish contact through a series of talks held between Chinese representatives and envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Tibetans inside and outside Tibet were for the first time able to contact and visit one another. Thousands of Tibetan students and monks in Tibet were able to visit India and receive secular and monastic education, which also contributed to the revival of Buddhism inside Tibet and awareness about the Central Tibetan Administration.

The Middle Way Approach is supported by many prominent Tibetans inside Tibet as they view it as a realistic approach to peacefully resolving the issue of Tibet. Furthermore, this approach is also enabling many governments to support a solution-oriented Tibet policy and helps them to raise the Tibet issue in their bilateral dialogue with China. After President Barack Obama's meet-

ing with His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 16, 2011, the White House applauded "the Dalai Lama's commitment to non-violence and dialogue with China and his pursuit of the Middle Way Approach," and encouraged "direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences and that a dialogue that produces results would be positive for China and Tibetans."

Another key area where the Middle Way Approach is steadily bearing results is in the minds of many Chinese people, in particular among the intellectuals. Some of the brightest Chinese intellectual luminaries, including Liu Xiaobo, the imprisoned Nobel Laureate, were signatories of a courageous open letter in 2008 that expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's peace initiatives. Since then more than 1,000 articles and opinion pieces have been written by Chinese scholars and writers. These include a report by the Beijing based legal NGO, the Gongmeng Constitutional Initiative, describing the suffering and grievances of the Tibetan people and calling for policy change. Tibetan Buddhism is also drawing a growing number of Chinese practitioners from Mainland China, where it is estimated today there are over 300 million Buddhists. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's outreach to Chinese students and scholars and his teachings to Chinese Buddhist practitioners are shaping Chinese attitudes towards Tibet and Tibetans.

On the auspicious occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday, the Central Tibetan Administration reiterates its firm commitment to the Middle Way Approach in resolving the Tibet issue. Since assuming office in August 2011, we have proceeded with a three-phase approach of consolidation, action and dialogue.

The consolidation phase that spanned much of the first year was important to ensure a smooth transition after His Holiness the Dalai Lama's historic decision to devolve political authority to a democratically-elected leader. Towards this end, we hosted several major conferences in Dharamsala that brought

together Tibetan representatives from all across the globe and leaders of the Indian and International Tibet Support Groups.

The action phase witnessed major solidarity events in several cities including New York, New Delhi, Brussels, Tokyo, Sydney and others. These solidarity events were complemented by media awareness and efforts to garner support for Tibet in Congress and parliaments across the world. Working with friends and supporters of Tibet, we were able to get resolutions and motions passed in parliaments in the European Union (EU), France, Italy, the United States and others.

The three phases are inter-related, and the dialogue phase will involve continued efforts and initiatives to resume contact with the Chinese government. Additional investment is being made to educate both Tibetan and external audiences on the Middle Way Approach. The Task Force on Negotiations will be enlarged and members will have their 26th meeting in September 2013 during which the recent developments in Tibet and China will be discussed.

I take this opportunity to thank the great people of India and the Indian Government for their unwavering assistance and support to Tibetans. I also thank other governments and our supporters around the world.

Lastly, I offer my fervent prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long and healthy life. With unity, innovation and self-reliance as the guiding principles, may all his wishes and the aspirations of Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, and his efforts towards promotion of a more compassionate and peaceful world be fulfilled.

The Middle Way Approach has enabled Dharamsala and Beijing to establish contact through a series of talks held between Chinese representatives and envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Tibetans inside and outside Tibet were for the first time able to contact and visit one another.

Statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 78th Birthday



Today is a uniquely important day for it marks the birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the Bodhisattva Chenrezig who has descended to this earth in human emanation, the spiritual lord of the Three Realms of dwelling, a champion of world peace, the master on this earth of all the teachings of the Buddha, the saviour of all the Tibetans, and a leader treasured by all and excelled by none.

For the sake of all the sentient beings in general terms and especially for the benefit of the sentient beings of the Snowland of Tibet, His Holiness took birth on the 5th day of the 5th month in the Wood-Pig Year of the 16th Tibetan Royal Sexantry, which corresponded to the 6th day of July 1935, in the village of Tagtser in the Kumbum area of the Tibetan province of Domey. He was born to parents of excellently endowed lineage and blood amid numerous wondrously auspicious signs and omens. On such a completely auspicious day as today, we offer our greetings and obeisance to His Holiness with unflinching devotion of body, speech and mind. At the same time we pray ardently, and with great strength of commitment, that His Holiness, the sacred saviour of all sentient beings so numerous as to fill the sky above us, in general terms and,

especially, with the people of the Snowland of Tibet, and a great champion of world peace, live for as long as a hundred aeons. We also pray that His Holiness, on that basis, indebt us with the ambrosia of His sound guidance on the basis of the clarity of His vision over the three time realms and in such continuous manner as the flow of the steady summer stream.

Having committed to make the sentient beings of the Snowland of Tibet the object of His spiritual deliverance, His Holiness took birth in such numerous human forms as kings, ministers and Bodhisattvas, and accomplished various vast deeds for the benefit of the Buddhist faith. Since the time of the Great Fifth, successive reincarnations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama have assumed both spiritual and temporal leadership of Tibet and exercised responsibility over its sentient beings with great sense of authority. In particular, His Holiness the great 14th Dalai Lama assumed his temporal and spiritual leadership of Tibet when He was only 16 years old. After having done so, He set out to reform the old system of Tibet. And He also underwent multitudes of hardships through various creative and compassionate efforts in dealing with communist China. After arriving in India

in exile, He set up the basic structure of a government in exile afresh and in the course of it presented to the Tibetan people a democratic system whereby a Tibetan parliament in exile was set up in 1960. Later in 1963, He proclaimed a democratic constitution for a future free Tibet. In 1991, He took other measures, such as raising the strength of the Tibetan parliament in exile, and transformed it into a genuine legislative body. He later gave his assent to the Charter of the Tibetans in Exile which had been passed by the Tibetan parliament in exile. Further, in order to complete the process of full democratization of the Tibetan system in exile and on the basis of discerning the numerous immediate and long term potential problems and purposes, His Holiness has now transferred all his political and administrative powers to the leadership in exile elected by the Tibetan people. By such and numerous other means over the last more than 60 years, His Holiness has taken up with spontaneous diligence an array of tasks that entailed a multitude of hardships on him for the immediate and long term well being and benefit of Tibet and the Tibetan people.

Even after having transferred his political and administrative powers to the elected Tibetan leadership in exile, His Holiness has, as prayed to, graciously assented to assume the role of the Protector and Symbol of Tibet and the Tibetan people. In that capacity He has undertaken to offer counsel on any religious or political issue concerning the Tibetan people, as well as to provide suggestions to the Tibetan Parliament in exile and the Kashag on important matters of politics and religion as and when He sees it necessary to do so. This undertaking extends also to meeting with and holding discussions with important international leaders and personalities on behalf of Tibet and the Tibetan people. In keeping with the undertakings He has given very kindly on matters such as these, His Holiness continues to assume great responsibilities on behalf of the Tibetan people. There is no way we the Tibetan people can claim to be in a position to repay over a hundred lifetimes even a tiny fraction of the enormous gratitude we owe to His Holiness.

Nevertheless, we, acting on behalf of Tibetans both in and outside Tibet, and with a solemn body, speech and mind obeisance, make it a point to express our gratitude to His Holiness, if only to make it clear that our indebtedness to him will remain in our hearts without ever being forgotten. At the same time, we pray with utmost intensity of devotion that for as long as the sky above us remains, His Holiness continue to hold the misery afflicted people of the Tibetan Land of Snows in compassion and extend to them as before His beneficial deeds.

It especially bears mention that through lectures and guidance on compassion, tolerance and universal responsibility for the benefit of all the sentient beings of this world, His Holiness continues to assume great responsibility to bring peace upon the entire humanity. He also continues to take it upon himself to seek to inculcate ethical values in everyone, irrespective of the question whether one believes in any religion or not, for the benefit of humanity in general and for the purposes of protecting the global environment. In an effort to bring about harmony among the different religions in this world, His Holiness has held discussions with numerous leaders of different religious faiths with an approach of broadmindedness and liberalism and has thereby also sought to dispel doubts and to deal with the differences among them. In particular, His Holiness has taken great responsibility to ensure a coexistent march between Buddhism and modern science with each side benefiting from the other through an appreciative understanding of each other's respective strengths and weaknesses. By such means as above, His Holiness has undertaken, and continues to undertake, political and spiritual deeds of enormous dimensions, becoming a source of merits of enormous value to the sentient beings of this world and a worthy source of sublime contentment to them.

The Middle Way policy is mutually beneficial to both the Chinese and Tibetan sides, is in keeping with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's wishes, has been adopted by the Central Tibetan Admin-

istration at Dharamsala, and is being actively pursued by the latter. It has received as much support as possible from all conceivable quarters, both private and public, from across the world, including from governments of many countries. In particular, it is appreciated and supported by enormous number of people within China, including especially by Chinese intellectuals. As this is directly concerned with the immediate and long term interests of both the Chinese and Tibetan peoples, it is high time for the government of China to greatly enhance its sense of responsibility and make efforts towards resolving the Sino-Tibetan dispute as soon as possible and at the earliest possible opportunity.

On 9 March 2013, during his meeting with the delegates from Tibet Autonomous Region to the Chinese National People's Congress, General Secretary Mr. Xi Jinping of the Communist Party of China, after having made the usual Chinese remarks about Tibet being an inalienable part of China and so on, clearly acknowledged the region's special characteristics. He said that the stability and prosperity of Tibet could be ensured if, among other things, there was a fruitful implementation there of the country's laws governing the administration of ethnic autonomous areas, including with the assurance of respect for the Tibetan people's religious freedom and the protection of the Tibetan language and culture. In June recently, Jin Wei, a professor at the Central Party School in Beijing, in answering questions during an interview with a Hong Kong publication, said that the central government of China should revive peace talks with envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. She also said that there had been anti-religious bias in the policies followed by successive Party Secretaries of the Tibet Autonomous Region. These remarks reveal that the Chinese government now accepts that the policies it had implemented in Tibet previously had been wrong. News reports related to this development have been continuing to appear over the internet in recent times and if they are true we do not know whether they show a new positive change on the part

of the government of China or whether they are designed only to be used as a tool to make false allegations against innocent Tibetans. However, as these developments can only contribute towards immense immediate and long-term benefits for both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples, we hope that these could be implemented in all the Tibetan inhabited regions.

Also recently, on 9 June, the government of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region held in Lhasa the first general meeting of delegates of returned overseas Tibetans and their families with the participation of all the top leaders of the region. Remarks on this subject were also made by some leaders of Tibet Autonomous Region during their recent overseas delegation visit. Such actions show a strengthening of efforts by the government of China to implement a policy of trying to entice Tibetans living in exile and thereby to weaken the Tibetan struggle by every possible means and with a renewed vigour. In view of these developments, we would like to remind the Tibetan people to act with care and caution to ensure that they do not get deceived and carried away by the glib and sweet talks and by the temptations of short term, minor economic gains.

We remain hopeful that the hardline policies being implemented in Tibet and on the Tibetan people after China's current leadership came to power will be changed, that there will thereby be a positive development which is based on the real situation in Tibet and in keeping with the true aspirations of the Tibetan people, and which will also be beneficial to both Tibet and China. We also strongly reiterate our call on China to immediately release all the prisoners in Tibet, including the young Panchen Lama, who are innocent of any crime. This call for immediate release extends especially in the case of the hundreds of innocent Tibetans who had been arrested, jailed or persecuted in numerous other ways since the peaceful Tibetan uprising of 2008 and those who staged self-immolation protests thereafter and their alleged accomplices, who continue to suffer to this day. It should be

ensured that they are thereby enabled to enjoy the same happiness and well-being to which all humans are entitled alike.

In the recent past, there have been reports that on numerous kinds of minor pretexts, Chinese police subjected Tibetans to such unlimited brutal beatings that some of them resulted in deaths. In addition, there have been countless other instances of displays of contempt and bullying against Tibetans. Such instances of abusive behaviours clearly betray the prevalence of discrimination and the absence of the implementation of China's claimed policy of equality of nationalities and the rule of law. We believe that the government of China must genuinely implement in Tibet its policy of equality of nationalities.

It has been more than 54 years since we took refuge in India and other foreign countries. In particular, India has been like a second homeland to us. Both the government and people of India have extended extensive help, protection, and benefits to the Tibetan people. We take the opportunity provided by this very auspicious occasion to express our gratitude on the basis of remembering at all times our immense indebtedness to the government and people of India. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama especially makes it a point to remind us at all times, all Tibetans living in exile should maintain a strong bond of friendship with the people of the local host community wherever they may be living and thereby maintain such conduct as to benefit the reputation of the Tibetan people in general, their sense of loyalty, and to the orderliness of the local social situation. This is a requirement of immense importance and we make it a point to appeal to all Tibetans accordingly.

In conclusion, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama live for as long as a hundred aeon, that all His sacred wishes be fulfilled with spontaneity, and that the just cause of the Tibetan people may definitely see the light of the day as soon as possible.

6 July 2013

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Exhorts Youth to Make a Happier Century

Tibetans across the world on 6 July celebrated the 78th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who made a clarion call to the people, especially youth, to promote world peace through love and compassion.

Addressing tens of thousands of people at Bylakuppe in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said: "People should embrace love and promote world peace through compassion to live in harmony. The present-day generation can create better conditions and build a world where everyone can live in harmony and in a spirit of co-existence."

"You should not think of your and your family welfare alone but of your fellow beings and the country you are living and the whole world eventually," he said.

He expressed gratitude to the people and government of Karnataka for providing shelter to Tibetans during the most difficult period of Tibet's history. He remembered former Mysore chief minister, S. Nijalingappa, who on the advice of India's first minister Jawaharlal Nehru allotted 3,000 acres of land to resettle about 3,000 exiled Tibetans at Bylakuppe in 1960.

Top Indian government officials, including chief ministers of Karnataka and Arunachal Pradesh, attended the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah offered his heartfelt greetings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and wished him a long healthy life.

"The bond of friendship between Kannadigas and Tibetans dates backs to 1960. We have always treated them as our own people and sheltered them in their hour of crises," the chief minister recalled.

Tibetan autonomy poses questions for Hong Kong

By Michael C. Davis
[South China Morning Post]

Beijing's guarantees of self-rule have not proved reliable for the unhappy Himalayan region



Following the 120th Tibetan self-immolation in protest at Beijing's alleged autonomy policies, Hong Kong people – themselves the subject of autonomy guarantees – may wonder why ordinary Tibetans are so dissatisfied.

On the face of it, Beijing and the exiled Tibetan leaders should be able to find a solution. In the 1951 Seventeen-Point Agreement, sometimes considered a precursor to the Hong Kong agreement, Beijing promised Tibetans could carry on under their traditional self-rule – with Chinese sovereignty.

But the excesses of China's early communist period eventually led to the collapse of the agreement and the 1959 flight of the Dalai Lama.

China then proclaimed the system of "minority nationality autonomy". Tibet was divided into 13 autonomous areas: the Tibetan autonomous region and 12 adjoining areas in neighbouring provinces.

The problems lie in the failure to fully implement the national minority autonomy laws and the use of repressive policies to contain resistance.

To address these problems, the Dalai Lama long ago conceded claims for independence in favour of autonomy under his "middle way" approach. Af-

ter the bloodshed of the 2008 protest, he was invited to elaborate on his proposal under the People's Republic of China constitution, which he did in his 2008 Memorandum of Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People. It urges genuine autonomy in areas including self-government, language, culture, religion, environmental protection, education, and natural resources. This largely tracks China's existing national minority commitments, but also seeks control over immigration and public security, similar to the Hong Kong model, and the uniting of all Tibetan areas.

Responding dismissively, Beijing argued that this was the equivalent of asking for a "high degree of autonomy" and that would be the equivalent of "independence". No explanation was given why the same guarantee of a "high degree of autonomy" for Hong Kong is not deemed independence. The seemingly shared commitment to autonomy in Tibet has been undermined by a lack of trust. Beijing worries that "genuine autonomy" is just the first step on the road to real independence. The Tibetan side, after their tragic experience to date, is surely doubtful about conceding any ground without iron-clad guarantees.

Beijing has also pressed the Dalai Lama to concede to its widely disputed claim to have always historically ruled Tibet.

The Dalai Lama will only acknowledge an historical imperial religious relationship with China. For him, autonomy is merely the only option realistically available under difficult circumstances. Even under Chinese historical accounts, Tibet would have enjoyed genuine autonomy throughout the imperial period, when indirect rule of peripheral areas was the norm.

A careful look at the Tibetan memorandum reveals that it not only largely tracks China's own proclaimed policies, but also international standards reflected in the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which aims to give indigenous peoples self-governance and cultural rights.

China voted for the declaration, but quickly proclaimed there were no indigenous peoples in China.

China's long-term interests might be better served by embracing international standards. This would require less interference in Tibet, something Beijing has also been reluctant to do in Hong Kong. Agreement with the Dalai Lama may also secure Tibetan and international support.

Professor Michael Davis, of the University of Hong Kong, is a constitutional law specialist

The Dalai Lama will only acknowledge an historical imperial religious relationship with China. For him, autonomy is merely the only option realistically available under difficult circumstances. Even under Chinese historical accounts, Tibet would have enjoyed genuine autonomy throughout the imperial period, when indirect rule of peripheral areas was the norm.

A new way forward

[The Economist]

Proposals for a different approach in Tibet suggest some in China know their policies are not working

Jun 22nd 2013

CONVENTIONAL wisdom on Tibet among Chinese officials is that when the current Dalai Lama dies, the Tibetan problem will be solved. China has tight control over the mountainous region and believes it holds all the cards. It can choose the Dalai Lama's next incarnation and that will be that.

So Tibet-watchers have greeted with surprised interest the interview of a leading Chinese scholar on Tibet, published this month in a Hong Kong magazine. In the interview, for almost the first time in a generation, a senior government adviser suggests that China's Tibet policy of economic development with continued political repression is not working and needs changing.

The official, Jin Wei, is no Tibetan-hugging softy. She is the director of ethnic and religious studies at the Central Party School, a think-tank in Beijing. She takes the standard line that Tibet is an inalienable part of China (something most of her countrymen believe, too). But she suggests that the way the Communist Party treats every cultural and religious problem in the region as sub-

versive is making things worse. Some clashes over culture and religion are unavoidable but manageable, she says, and they should not be seen as a threat to the state. Ms Jin says that stalled talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives should be restarted, and suggests inviting him to Chinese soil in Hong Kong or Macau. Most controversially, she suggests China negotiate with him about his next incarnation, and in the long term, allow him to return to Tibet itself.

The way China works means Ms Jin's intervention must have been sanctioned by somebody near the top. This may have happened because of the recent change of leadership. Tibet's party secretary in the late 1980s was Hu Jintao, who took over in 1988 after riots in Lhasa. He went on to become party chief and president, and hardline policies he imposed have dominated policy towards Tibet ever since. He stepped down as party leader last November and as president in March. That may have been Ms Jin's cue. She also implies that Tibet policy should be taken away from Mr Hu's supporters.

Don't dilly Dalai on the way

The proposals will face a backlash from hardliners, who see any softening as the thin end of a wedge that leads to Tibetan independence. The West should therefore tread carefully. Overzealous sup-

port for these ideas would strengthen the belief, widespread among Chinese leaders, that the Dalai Lama is conspiring with the West to split China. In fact, he has long said he does not support independence and wants only more Tibetan autonomy; but most of Chinese officialdom views him with undiminished suspicion.

Yet accommodation with the Dalai Lama is the Chinese government's only hope of ever reaching a deal acceptable to most Tibetans. Another Tibetan burned herself to death this week (the 119th self-immolation since 2011), and new forms of control at the lowest level show no signs of making Tibet any easier to govern. The death of the present Dalai Lama might well be the beginning, not the end, of real problems in Tibet: freed from the constraint of the exiled leader's personal authority and his insistence on a non-violent stance, a younger generation of angry Tibetans may turn aggressive.

For both China's and Tibet's sake, it is to be hoped that Ms Jin's proposals gain a wider currency. The idea of a Communist government sitting down with a holy monk to discuss his own reincarnation seems bizarre. But Ms Jin's proposals are in fact far more pragmatic than the hardline ideological approach to Tibet that has succeeded only in alienating a people China claims as its own.

Captives still

By Edward Lucas
[Europeanvoice.com]

Some of the lost causes of the 1980s have been won; the others that remain may yet be won

In the 1980s my social life revolved around events marking lost causes: freedom, democracy and independence in the captive nations of the Soviet Empire. We would gather in dusty social clubs and semi-derelict diplomatic

missions, surrounded by the detritus of decades, the air laden with grim, determined refusal to accept the verdict of history. Victory was not in sight: the only plan was just to keep going. If some echo of our efforts crossed the Iron Curtain, it might at least be some solace to those enduring foreign occupation and totalitarianism.

People would shake their heads sadly at the waste of time. I remember a campaign, run by my university friend Anthony Finkelstein, to raise money to re-

place the 'word processor' confiscated by the Czechoslovak secret police from an obscure playwright called Václav Havel; I remember a bumper-sticker dating from the Moscow Olympics saying "Estonians out of Siberia, Soviets out of Estonia", around the time that the Tartu University chemistry professor Jüri Kukk was dying on hunger strike in the Gulag. I remember interviewing for a BBC programme the priest Dick Rodgers who locked himself in a cage to highlight the persecution of the Rus-

sian poet Irina Ratushinskaya; a campaign by Keston College in Oxford in support of the jailed Lithuanian ‘underground nun’ Nijole? Sadu*aite?; and many more seemingly hopeless causes besides.

So I felt quite at home at a party in London last week to mark the Dalai Lama’s birthday. The food, folk music and prayers were different – but the essence, of loss, oppression, resistance and exile was the same. Many of those present had relatives in Tibet, or in jail in China.

Some had first-hand experience of Chinese oppression – such as Robert Ford, a sprightly 90-year-old, once the Tibetan government’s radio operator and perhaps the only remaining Westerner with first-hand memories of independent Tibet. After his capture during the China invasion in 1950, he spent five years in the gulag, adding prison Chinese to his fluent Tibetan. A handful of foreign

diplomats turned up to the party too – though one ambassador begged me not to mention his name for fear of the vengeance that China would wreak on his small country. The Legatum Institute, a think-tank whose director of studies is my friend the author Anne Applebaum, deserves kudos for hosting the event.

It set the scene nicely for Captive Nations Week. A joint resolution of Congress in 1959 cites the enslavement by communist imperialism of “Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Estonia, White Ruthenia, Rumania, East Germany, Bulgaria, mainland China, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, North Korea, Albania, Idel-Ural, Tibet, Cossackia, Turkestan, North Viet-Nam, and others”. It requires the White House to mark this in the third full week in July.

Soviet communism is dead. My lost causes of the 1980s are won. But there is plenty still to do. For the Tibetans, for

the Uighurs of ‘Turkestan’, for ‘Mainland China’, as well as for the Tatars and Bashkirs of ‘Idel-Ural’, the Belarusians of ‘White Ruthenia’, and the North Koreans, freedom is still denied, by crony-capitalist, ethno-nationalist, or communist authoritarian regimes.

By the standards of the early 1980s, it is not hopeless. A new reason for hope is that China may well have more practising Buddhists than Communist Party members; many are attracted by the Tibetan tradition in that faith. That may prove to be a lethal chink in the regime’s grip.

Sadly, I do not expect the White House to use Captive Nations Week to echo the stirring rhetoric of the original resolution. But please consider what you can do for Tibet, and for other captive nations.

Edward Lucas edits the international section of The Economist.

‘Anything But Humane’: Tibetan Exposes China from the Inside



Holding an image of the Dalai Lama, Tibetan monks take part in a vigil to protest violence against demonstrators by Chinese police in January 2012/AP

[Spiegel Online]
By Andreas Lorenz

The files, stored on three CDs, are potentially devastating to the Chinese government. They contain the reckoning of a Tibetan who once believed in the goals of the Chinese Communist Party and carved out a career within the Beijing bureaucracy. To protect his anonymity, the official, who is known nationwide, met secretly with SPIEGEL at a restaurant in a Chinese provincial

city. He hopes that what he has written about the oppression of his people will be published as a book in the West, thereby exerting pressure on the leaders in Beijing.

Dorjee Rinchen got up very early on Oct. 23, 2012, the last day of his life. The 58-year-old turned the Buddhist prayer wheels at the Labrang Monastery, then returned to his hut, cleaned up and went back to the monastery.

Near the police station on the main street

of Xiahe, a town in China’s Gansu Province, the Tibetan farmer poured gasoline over his body and lit himself on fire. Images taken with mobile phones show the man, engulfed in flames, running down the street until he falls to the ground.

Police and soldiers immediately appeared on the scene, jostling with bystanders trying to take Dorjee’s charred body to his house, according to Tibetan custom. The officers eventually relented.

Dorjee is one of more than 100 Tibetans who have turned to self-immolation since March 2011 in protest of Chinese rule in Tibet. Another man, who also took his life a few days later, left behind a letter that sums up the sentiments of these unfortunate people: “There is no freedom in Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is not allowed to return home. The Panchen Lama is in prison.”

The mood is desperate in the region known as the “Roof of the World.” Never before have so many Tibetans sacrificed their lives in this manner to draw

the world's attention to their fate. But not everyone believes this is the right approach. A few hundred kilometers from the Labrang Monastery, a high-ranking Communist Party official is shaking his head in disapproval. The self-immolations, he says, are an "overreaction, an excessively radical act. Buddhism forbids suicide."

And yet he can understand the motives, he says. Conditions are dramatic in his native Tibet. "The economic situation, the standard of living, culture and education have greatly improved in Tibet, he says. But the government exacts too high a price from Tibetans in return for this development, he adds, noting that Beijing is trying to discipline them with violence. "There is substantial surveillance and limited freedom."

The man is a senior official in the Communist Party. He is well known, not only in Tibet but also throughout China, and no one suspects him of being a member of the opposition. He is one of the privileged, someone who long believed in the promised goal of a socialist China, one in which not only the Han Chinese, but also Tibetans and all other ethnic groups would lead a better life.

But now he intends to make a stand. "I am a Tibetan, and I work in the government. I have the authority to describe what is really going on," he says.

'Far Worse Than the West Suspects'

He has served the Chinese government since youth. Like many Tibetans, he had who come to terms with the fact that Beijing has ruled their country since the Chinese army invaded in 1950. These individuals include party officials, police officers, propagandists, journalists and engineers, all of whom behave like people who want to live in peace under foreign rule. They assimilate, parrot the party slogans and enjoy their growing affluence, though they often feel miserable in the end.

This helps to explain why this contemporary witness sat down and penned an account of the more recent history of Tibet, as seen through his eyes. He focuses on what the propagandists and chroniclers working for the system suppress or sugarcoat, writing: "Everything was and still is far worse than people in the West suspect."

He is determined to remain anonymous for as long as possible. "I don't want to mention my name, I don't want you to mention my profession, and you can only describe the place where I live in general terms," he says.

He aims to have the book published abroad, which is his only option, of course. If it emerged that he, a respected official, were in fact a Tibetan dissident who compares the "fate of the Tibetans" with that of the Jews under the Nazis, his comfortable existence would quickly come to an end. He could face a prison term and possibly even the death penalty.

The book is written in Mandarin, the language of the rulers in Beijing. The author wants as many people as possible to understand his people, who, as he says, have been "plunged into pools of blood and purgatorial fire" in exchange for a foreign utopia.

Ironically, some Tibetans were initially pleased to see the Chinese invade Tibet, because the new masters brought the promise of modernity and prosperity. They believed that the Communists, led by Mao Zedong, would help them liberate themselves from a brutal dictatorship of monks. The Tibetan people lived a harsh life under the thumb of monasteries and the aristocracy, who oppressed their subjects, treated them like serfs and whipped them into submission.

But the mood changed when the Chinese government, under Mao, did not keep its promise to allow the Tibetans to maintain their traditions and religion. The collectivization of agriculture proved to be especially devastating. Tibetan nomads were forced to settle in so-called people's communes, destroying their traditional way of life. By the 1950s, there was growing unrest.

Atrocities and Brutal Policies

In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976), the Red Guards,

including many Tibetans, attacked their supposedly "revisionist" and "imperialist" countrymen. Thousands of monks were beaten to death or put in camps, and ancient relics were destroyed. The Red Guards used their artillery to flatten hundreds of monasteries.

The Communist Party officials wanted to destroy the culture of their subjects. Tibetan women, for example, were made to wear the kinds of trousers worn by Han Chinese women, and helpers cut off their braids. Clan elders and abbots were sent to reeducation camps, where they were forced to study Mao's directives every day.

The Chinese military brutally crushed any rebellions. When monks killed a corporal in the People's Liberation Army in 1956, a Chinese cavalry regiment exacted its revenge in the town of QiujiNawa in Gansu Province with an attack on about "200 innocent women and children. They surrounded a tent, threw hand grenades inside and then fired at it."

The author quotes a former soldier who witnessed a similar massacre: "Some women were stabbed in the vagina with swords and their chests were split open. Some two- and three-year-old children were grabbed and thrown into the Yellow River."

In the early 1980s, the Communist Party had to admit that it had "seriously harmed the interests of the people" with its brutal policy. By then, Tibet had become a permanently restive region. As the Communist Party official writes, Beijing's claim that "millions of Tibetan farmers" had become "masters of their own house under the party's leadership" proved to be nothing but propaganda.

In his opinion, there are many reasons for the unrest and the rage of Tibetans. One is that the long-cherished hope that the Dalai Lama could one day return home from India, where the Tibetan government in exile has its headquarters, is beginning to fade. Beijing condemns him as a "traitor" and refuses to even consider talks.

It was an affront to Beijing when, in

1987, the Dalai Lama spoke to members of the United States Congress in Washington, where he presented his Five Point Peace Plan. He demanded, among other things, that Beijing put an end to the immigration of Han Chinese to Tibet and its use of the Tibetan Plateau as a nuclear waste dump. According to the Communist Party official, after the visit “a new spirit of opposition began to grow among young intellectuals and a few officials, as well as laborers, farmers and shepherds.”

Then, in 1988, the Chinese made another mistake. At the end of the annual Great Prayer Festival, senior officials had gathered on a roof terrace of the Jokhang Temple in the Tibetan capital Lhasa to watch the grand procession. As it happened, they were standing directly above a room that the monks considered sacred. It was where the Dalai Lama had always slept during the festival.

Soon the group was pelted with stones. Soldiers beat their way through the crowd, and a few party officials, including the deputy party chief for Tibet, had to be lowered from a window on ropes.

Monks and nuns repeatedly took to the streets in the ensuing weeks, until Beijing finally cracked down. The central government removed senior Tibetan Communist Party officials and replaced them with Han Chinese, including Hu Jintao, who would later become General Secretary of the Communist Party and president of China. A year later, Hu ordered soldiers to open fire on protesters. According to the author, the incident resulted in the deaths of 138 people and 3,870 arrests, while many others were abducted.

The author quotes many eyewitnesses, one of whom reported: “They screened the entire urban population of Lhasa and arrested those they didn’t like. First there were beatings, and then those who had been arrested were thrown into police cells.”

But the cells were apparently so full that some of the detainees suffocated. “When someone died,” said the witness, “it didn’t mean anything more to them

(the Chinese) than as if they had stepped on the grass while walking and killed an ant.”

Part of the Tibetans’ dissatisfaction stemmed from the fact that Chinese immigrants from other parts of the People’s Republic were cultivating more and more land. In the author’s opinion, this causes serious environmental damage, because the gradual disappearance of grasslands leads to desertification. “The Tibetans have less and less space in which to live, and the environment is getting colder and more severe,” he says.

A conspicuous example of China’s reckless environmental policy is Qinghai Lake, the official adds. Because too much pasture was cultivated and an extensive irrigation system was built, only eight of the 108 rivers that once emptied into the lake still exist today, he says.

Tension on the Streets

Things were quiet for a few years after the unrest, which lasted until 1989. Communist Party leader Hu later attempted to placate the Tibetans with billions of dollars in investments. The mineral resources that had been discovered in the region, as well as its strategic importance as a buffer zone between China and its economically powerful rival India, were extremely important to Beijing.

But the tension is palpable in the streets of Lhasa today, partly because of the presence of Chinese security forces, who act like occupiers. “The way the members of the Armed Police behave is anything but humane. They kill people as cold-bloodedly as poisonous snakes. They indiscriminately beat local residents, loot their property and kill them if they defend themselves,” the Communist Party insider writes in his manuscript.

In March 2008, as Beijing was preparing for the Summer Olympics, Lhasa’s residents revolted once again. But this time schoolchildren, students and office workers joined the protesting monks, as did Tibetans from other regions. The

police and military arrested about 6,000 people.

The authorities now see only one way to pacify the Tibetans: more investment, together with even harsher repressive measures. During the so-called patriotic education campaign, which takes place in all monasteries, the monks are required to distance themselves from the Dalai Lama. Many were temporarily or permanently banned from monasteries, and some lamas were imprisoned or sent to reeducation camps. Alleged supporters of people who committed suicide by self-immolation were sent to prison, including six people tied to Dorjee Rinchen, the farmer from Xiahe.

Beijing’s rulers do not permit a public debate over their Tibet strategy. Very few Chinese dare to even raise the issue, and then only in Hong Kong or through foreign media organizations. Author Wang Lixiong, married to Tibetan lyricist Tsering Woeser, is one of the brave few. He believes that nothing will change as long as hostility toward the Dalai Lama translates into the livelihoods of tens of thousands of officials within the party’s propaganda machine.

The Tibetan book author puts it this way: “We all have a knot in our heart.” The authorities, he says, “view the monks as outsiders. They are not allowed to express their opinions, and they are certainly not permitted to participate in political decisions.”

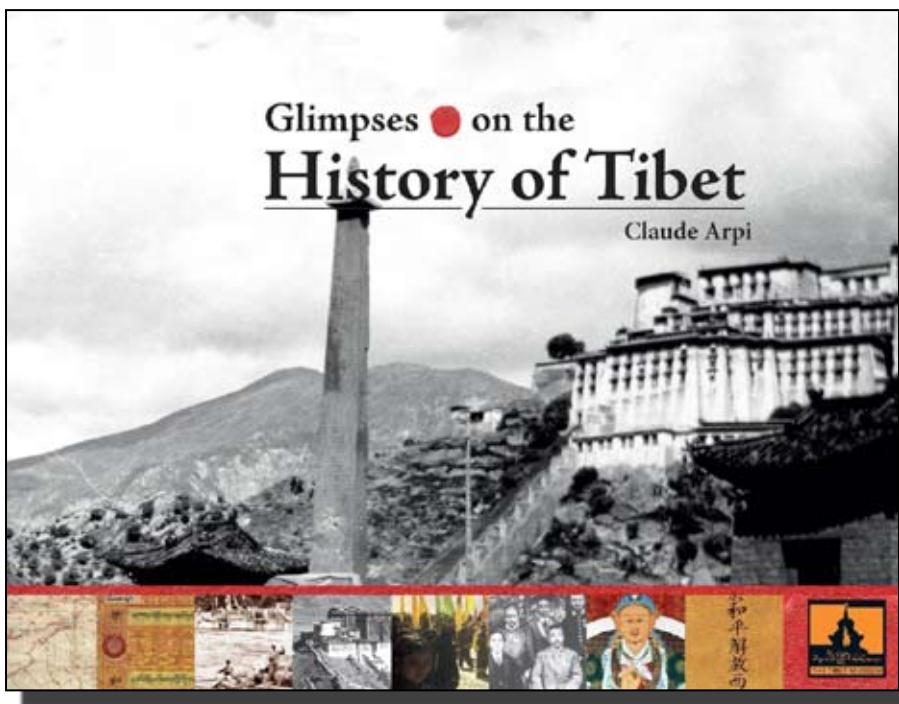
Is there a solution to Tibet’s plight? The author remains faithful to his upbringing in saying that it would be wrong to permit the return of a theocratic government, a Tibet in which the abbots are in charge and “politics and religion are one”—the kind of system many monks would prefer.

And the alternative? “We have to practice democracy,” he says. “Not necessarily a Western-style democracy, but a unique, Tibetan form. Otherwise we will remain at an impasse.”

Translated from the German by Christopher Sultan

A Walk Through the History of the Roof of the World

By Thubten Samphel



Glimpses of Tibetan History
By Claude Arpi
Price: 200 Rupees
Tibet Museum, DIIR,
Dharamsala, 2013, pp. 56

I was there at the very beginning, the beginning of creation, so to speak. For the winter of 2009, I took my family to Auroville, a community which is guided by the way of life inspired by Sri Aurobindo, an Indian nationalist leader and mystic who based himself in the French enclave of Pondicherry in south India to escape harassment of the British Raj. Our time spent in this truly international city coincided with His Holiness the Dalai Lama inaugurating the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture. As its name implies, the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture is a centre devoted to the study of Tibetan culture, the pet project of Claude Arpi, a lover of Tibetan culture and an expert on everything Tibet and the politics that engulf the country.

According to Claude Arpi, after speaking to young Tibetans about Tibet's past, His Holiness the Dalai Lama requested

him to capture the entire history of Tibet in a comprehensive slide presentation. He wanted the French Tibet scholar to do 25 panels with succinct explanations about their background. His Holiness the Dalai Lama hoped that this would inspire young Tibetans and others to delve more deeply into Tibetan history for them to better understand and take pride in the past of the Tibetan people. Claude Arpi said that perhaps to give him strength and to bless him on this arduous journey into Tibetan history, His Holiness the Dalai Lama presented him with two thangkas of Shantarakshita and Guru Padmasambhava, two Indian Buddhist masters most responsible for planting firm roots of Buddhism in Tibet and the three religious kings who made sure that this happened in their realm.

After a year or so, Claude Arpi said

he had completed the project and forwarded the slide presentation, called Glimpses of Tibetan History, to the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR). The DIIR's Tibet Museum converted the 25 slides into 3 by 6 foot panels which constitute an important part of the Museum's exhibition on Tibet.

Now this exhibition has been transformed by the Tibet Museum of the DIIR into a stunning coffee table book. Apart from the introduction, like the exhibition, the book is divided into 25 sections. The book edition of Glimpses of Tibetan History takes the reader right to the beginning of the formation of the Tibetan Plateau, more than 20 million years ago. Or, according to Claude Arpi, 100 million years ago when India decided to migrate from Africa to Asia. India's eventual departure from Africa and its coupling with Asia took about 71 million years. The resulting collision between India and Asia, in the words of Sven Hedin, the legendary Swedish explorer and scholar, threw up the most stupendous upheaval on the face of the earth. Today that upheaval is known as Tibet, or the Roof of the World, the source of life-giving waters to the rest of Asia.

Like the exhibition, Claude Arpi's book, Glimpses of Tibetan History is an ode to the sanctity of Tibet. While reading the book, one can almost hear Claude Arpi singing hymns in praise of Tibet from ancient India's Puranas:

*As the dew is dried up by the morning sun,
So are the sins of men dried up by the sight
of the Himalaya,*

*Where Shiva lives and where the Ganga
falls*

*From the foot of Vishnu like
The slender thread of a lotus flower.
There are no mountains like the Himalaya,
For in them are Kailas and Manasarovar.
Or, one can hear Claude Arpi declaiming
from Kalidas:*

*In the northern quarter is divine Himalaya,
The lord of mountains,*



His Holiness the Dalai Lama at a photo exhibition on Tibet during the inauguration of Tibetan Pavilion at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Museum on Indian History in Vadgaon Shinde, in Pune, India, on 28 July 2013

*Reaching from Eastern to Western Oceans,
Firm as rod to measure the earth.*

Like ancient India, ancient Tibet had the same reverence for its sacred geography. The ancient Tibetans celebrated the arrival of their first king, Nyatri Tsenpo, the Neck-enthroned one, around 127 BC, with these words. These verses reproduced below are a Tibetan celebration of the enthronement of their first king and the sanctity of the realm he came to rule.

*He came as lord of the six parts of Tibet,
And when he first came to this world,
He came as lord of all under heaven.
This centre of heaven,
This core of the earth,
This heart of the world,
Fenced round by the snow,
The headland of all the rivers,
Where the mountains are high and the land
is pure.*

The author taking his readers on a bird's-eye-view journey over the ups and downs of Tibetan history, starting from an examination of the scattered, archaeological remains of Tibet's Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages, is a remarkable achievement. With the author we look at the tentative beginnings of Yarlung dynasty that flourished in the

Yarlung valley which scholars consider to be the cradle of Tibetan civilization. The kings of the Yarlung dynasty came to dominate stronger and well-established earlier kingdoms like Shangshung in western Tibet, the centre of Tibet's Bon religion. The Yarlung kings soon over-ran the whole of the Tibetan plateau, laying the foundations of the empire and the civilization that bound the Tibetan people.

The ancient Tibetans' empire-building enterprise was accompanied by absorbing the cultural influences they encountered when they broke out of the confines of the plateau. The biggest influence was that of Buddhism which Tibetans transmitted to Tibet over the course of five centuries. Along with incorporation of Buddhism, the ancient Tibetans invented a script, developed a medical system and devised a calendar, which made Tibetan civilization wholesome and complete.

The best minds of ancient and medieval Tibet engaged in this mighty cultural enterprise took talent and energy away from Tibet's empire and nation-building effort. The empire the Tibetan kings constructed fragmented into pieces.

With no central authority, Tibet became easy prey for outside predators. The biggest was the Mongols who in exchange for Tibetan allegiance left Tibet a self-governing administration within the rapidly expanding Mongol empire. With the Mongols, the Tibetans developed the priest-patron relationship, a unique form of diplomacy among the Tibetans, Mongols and the Manchus.

Claude Arpi then takes the readers through the rise of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism and the assumption of political authority by the great Fifth Dalai Lama. Later, there was increasing Qosot Mongol and Manchu interference in the politics of Tibet, which China today says are the grounds for its claims on Tibet. However, on this issue Claude Arpi cites Huc and Gabet, two French missionaries who visited Tibet at the time, as saying, "The Government of Tibet resembles that of the Pope and the position occupied by the Chinese ambassador was the same as that of the Austrian ambassador at Rome."

The following sections deal with the Gorkha, Zorawar Singh's and British India's invasion of Tibet, taking the readers to the turn of the 20th century to 1904. The 13th Dalai Lama, in touch with the modern world through his two exile experiences in Mongolia, China and then in British India, made strenuous efforts to modernize Tibet. He established a police force in Lhasa, sent young Tibetans to be educated in England, started a modern standing army, laid a telegraphs line between Lhasa and India, built a modern mint, established a new English school in Gyantse and improved monastic discipline. The great 13th Dalai Lama also made serious efforts for Tibet to be admitted to the League of Nations, the predecessor to today's United Nations. But all these efforts proved too little, too late. In 1950, a re-unified and resurgent communist simply overwhelmed Tibet through force and diplomacy.

This is the story Claude Arpi tells with great insight and erudition. Glimpses of the History of Tibet should be read by all Tibetan school children.

TIBETAN MEDIA

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Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay with members of the 14th Kashag during a prayer service held for Tibetan self-immolators at the main temple on 9 August 2013.



Monks from Namgyal monastery and local Tibetans of Dharamshala at the prayer service on 9 August 2013.