



# TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 24 - ISSUE 4

JULY- AUGUST 2020

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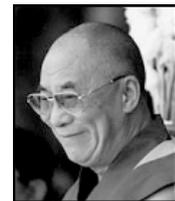
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**TIBETAN  
BULLETIN**

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



Signed articles or quotations do not  
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Tibetan Administration.

Contributions are welcome and may be  
addressed to the editor, Tibetan Bulletin.  
However the publisher regrets its inability  
to return unused articles unless they are  
accompanied by a self-addressed envelope  
with adequate postage.

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

Editor  
Tenzin Saldon  
Email: [tneditor@tibet.net](mailto:tneditor@tibet.net)

Asst. Editor  
Tenzin Phende

Layout & Design  
Tenzin Phende

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

Vol. 24, Issue 4  
**JULY - AUGUST 2020**



## Tibetan monk dies after two years of ill-health due to brutal torture in Chinese prison



*Khando Tsetan with his child. Photo courtesy of Tibet Times*

Two Tibetans named Khando Tsetan and Tsego were sentenced to seven years and three years in prison respectively by a Chinese court in north-eastern Tibet in early July this year.

The duo was sentenced under the false charges of “state subversion” and “leaking state secrets” after they composed, sang, and circulated a song in praise of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

According to Tibet Times, a Tibetan language media, the lyricist Khando Tsetan, and the singer Tsego, and an unnamed Tibetan woman were detained in 2019 after a song in praise of H.H. the Dalai Lama circulated on Chinese social media.

The song was written by Khando Tsetan and sung by Tsego. It was later posted by the unnamed Tibetan woman on social media. UN, EU & Human Rights Desk, DIIR has not yet been able to verify this news from Tibet.

According to the Tibet Times, Khando Tsetan’s sentence is a total of seven years. The Chinese court handed down

five years prison term sentence for the subversion of state and an additional two years for leaking state secrets.

In the year 2010, Khando Tsetan took part in a Tibetan students protest in Rebgong calling for language rights after which he spent one and half years in detention and later was released in the year 2014. However, he continues with his spirit and in 2019, he composed a song in praise of H.H. the Dalai Lama.

Khando Tsetan and Tsego are from Tsekhog (Ch: Zeku) County, Malho (Ch: Huangnam) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province.

This is not a new case but a common one. Over the years, there are several cases in which Chinese authorities have detained and sentenced Tibetans who have sung songs in praise of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This is a recurring pattern of Tibetan singers, artists, and writers receiving lengthy prison sentences in Tibet.

## Former Tibetan political prisoner, Samdup, passes away at the age of 50 in Tibet



*Samdup, a former Tibetan political prisoner dies at the age of 50 in Tibet. He is the fourth known former political prisoner in Tibet to have died this year.*

The UN, EU & Human Rights Desk, DIIR has learned about the sad news of the demise of a former Tibetan political prisoner, Samdup from Changra township, Phenpo county in Tibetan Autonomous Region.

A former monk, (monk name: Thinley

Choedhen) of Drepung Monastery, Deyang house, Samdup was sentenced to three years in prison for staging a peaceful protest with 15 other monks on May 12, 1992, in Lhasa. After he served his initial three years, he was again imprisoned for another four years for unknown reasons.

Samdup suffered from diabetes and was admitted into Lhasa Public Hospital early this year. On February 17, 2020, at 3:15 am, he passed away at the young age of fifty. He is the fourth known former political prisoner who passed away in Tibet this year.

Tibetan political prisoners are routinely tortured and denied proper medical care when held in Chinese prisons. For this reason, underlying health conditions are exacerbated and many prisoners suffer long-term consequences just like Samdup.

## Tibetans Urge UN on A-nya Sengdra and Against Triad of Collusion by Chinese Authorities, Police and Judiciary on Land Grabs

During the 44th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Tibetans urged the UN to raise voice against the triad of collusion by the Chinese state authorities, Chinese police and Chinese judiciary to permit and enable misappropriation of Tibetans’ lands for Belt and Road Initiative and such other so-called “developmental projects” and appealed the UNHRC and Member States to press China to release A-nya Sengdra and other Tibetan human rights defenders.

Delivering the oral statement, CTA’s Special Appointee for Human Rights Ms. Thinlay Chukki at Tibet Bureau Geneva welcomed the report titled “Connecting the business and human rights and the anticorruption agendas” by the UN Working Group on the

issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises. The report outlines various nexus of corruption amongst police, judiciary and state authorities including on the land misappropriation.



*CTA's Special Appointee for Human Rights at Tibet Bureau Geneva, Ms. Thinlay Chukki delivering the oral statement at the ongoing 44th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).*

Drawing the attention of the UNHRC to the similar issues faced by Tibetans under the Chinese rule, Thinlay Chukki noted that "Chinese authorities forcefully grab the lands and when opposed by the Tibetans, the Chinese police detains and tortures them and the Chinese courts sentence them under false charges of 'separatism'.

Just last year Nangchen County People's Court sentenced 21 Tibetans and before that nine Tibetans were sentenced for raising their voice against China." She further noted that many "Tibetans especially Tibetan nomads are being forcefully displaced from their pastoral lands and their lands are being forcefully acquired by the Chinese authorities for Belt and Road Initiative and such other so-called 'developmental projects.'"

Referring to the case of A-nya Sengdra, she noted that his case is "the classic example for this triad of collusion of Chinese police, Chinese authorities and Chinese judiciary."

A-nya Sengdra, a Tibetan nomad had raised voice against the illegal land grabs by the Chinese authorities. He was detained, tortured and sentenced to seven years in prison last year. Despite the joint calls by 12 Special Rapporteurs for his release, his appeal was rejected by the Chinese court.

Ms. Thinlay called upon the UN and said: "it is high-time that the UN raises

voice against this collusion" of Chinese authorities, Chinese police and Chinese judiciary against the Tibetans in Tibet. She once again reiterated the calls by the Tibetans for "a special session on the deeply entrenched systemic human rights violations being carried out in China and for a special rapporteur on China to monitor, analyze and report on human rights violations being carried out in China including against Tibetans, Hong Kongers and Uighurs."

## **The Canada-China committee unanimously passes a motion supporting Sino-Tibetan dialogue**

The Special Committee on Canada-China Relations unanimously passed a motion calling for Canada's support to the dialogue between the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan Administration, and the government of People's Republic of China.

The motion was originally introduced by MP Garnett Genuis on August 6th during the testimony of Tibetan political leader Dr. Lobsang Sangay. The special committee voted to adjourn the motion. During the adjournment period, Tibet groups and associations in Canada, led by Canada Tibet Committee and Office of Tibet, Washington DC lobbied for all-party support to the motion.

This unanimous approval of the motion marks a significant step for the international community to put more pressure on China to resume the Sino-Tibetan dialogue which has been stalled since 2010.

The motion will be brought to House of Commons in September.

The Committee was appointed to conduct hearings to examine and review all aspects of the Canada-China relationship, including, but not limited to consular, economic, legal, security and diplomatic relations.

## **10th session of 16th Tibetan Parliament postponed till March 2021**

Among the extensive list of unprecedented chaos and loss of lives suffered globally, the spread of the Wuhan-originated COVID-19 has also caused disruptions and delay in the functions and proceedings of governments and administrations worldwide.

A month ahead of the 10th session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker announced that the session is postponed until March 2021.

"This decision has been taken considering the rising urgency situation across the world caused by COVID-19 which originated in Wuhan, China," said Speaker Pema Jungjey addressing the press here at Dharamshala.



*Speaker Pema Jungjey (centre) and Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok (left) and Parliamentary Secretary Tsewang Ngodhup during the press conference concerning the postponement of 10th session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament. Photo/TPiE*

"We were bound to take this decision as we have to take responsibility especially when His Holiness the Dalai Lama resides here in Dharamshala. And even if the session is held supposedly, because of the current international travel ban Tibetan Parliamentarians from outside of India will not be able to attend the session and Tibetan Parliamentarians in India too might find it difficult to travel with the ongoing pandemic," he added.

Although the September session shall not be convened, matters and proceedings related to the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile are slated to be executed without

any negligence.

As such, the annual reports of the CTA's main offices and of its institutions for the fiscal year 2019-2020 is being reviewed by the members of the Standing Committee. Accordingly, questions raised on the annual reports by the Standing Committee will be submitted to the respective departments through the Kashag Secretariat.

All the departments are required to submit, via email, their précis annual reports and clarification to the questions raised by the Standing Committee in PDF format to the Parliamentary Secretariat before 20 September 2020.

Following which, the Parliamentarians' questions on the précis reports should be submitted to the Parliamentary Secretariat before 15 October.

The questions shall then be submitted to the Kashag Secretariat, from where the clarifications by the Administration are to be submitted back to the Parliamentary Secretariat before 31 October.

All the questions raised and the clarifications provided for the annual and its précis reports of the CTA's main departmental offices and institutions will be digitally available on the official website of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile ([tibetanparliament.org](http://tibetanparliament.org)) for the information of the general public.

The move to postpone the upcoming session was effected at the 327th Standing Committee meeting on 13 August 2020, in due accordance with Article 6 and clause 2 of Article 49 of the Charter of Tibetans in exile.



For detailed news visit:

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

## Historic milestone: 19 students to receive the prestigious Sikyong Scholarship this year

The wait is finally over. Central Board of Secondary Education, Delhi has declared the results for class XII examinations (AISSCE) 2020 on its official website-[cbseresults.nic.in](http://cbseresults.nic.in).

For the first time since the inception of the prestigious Sikyong Scholarship in 2013, the number of students to receive the award has soared to 19—setting an all-time record for the most number of Tibetan students to score 95 percent and above ever in history.



*Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay during a visit to TCV Selakui. Photo/Tenzin Jigme/CTA*

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay hailed the commendable feat as a “historic milestone” and congratulated all involved in this significant achievement.

“I would like to congratulate the students on this outstanding achievement an

I also congratulate and commend the dedicated teachers and staff of the Department of Education who have worked very hard to support the students,” Sikyong said.

He added that under the 14th and 15th Kashag, education has assumed the topmost priority among the other undertakings and this year's historic result has surpassed the initial scepticism expressed by a few when the Sikyong Scholarship Award was first introduced. It has further proven that the level of education is improving with students

performing exceedingly well every year since and most importantly, both the students and parents participating fully in improving the educational outcomes.

Of the 19 distinguished students, 14 are from Tibetan Homes School, Mussoorie, 2 from Sambhota Tibetan School, Mundgod, 1 each from TCV Selakui, TCV Suja and CST Herbertpur.

From the 16 Tibetan schools in India, a total number of 1016 students appeared in the examination held in March 2020, out of whom 998 cleared the exam with a pass percentage of 98.23 bettering last year's result by 1.23 %. As per CBSE, the overall pass percentage of all the schools in India is 88.78 %.

## Class 10 and 12 students record best-ever results in CBSE 2020: Stellar performance by THS Rajpur and Mussoorie

Students passing class 10 and 12 this year has set the benchmark at an all-time high in the CBSE board exams. With the record number of students to score above 90 and 95 percent to zero fail percentage, this year's results has blazed a new chapter of academic prowess and excellence in Tibetan school system.

Addressing a press conference, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay said the results are testament to the hard work of the students, teachers and parents as well as to the vision of the 14th and 15th Kashag of education first.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay who's previously held the portfolio of Education Kalon said education has assumed the topmost priority under his leadership in both 14th and 15th Kashag. In this pursuit, significant interventions were made in the successive years in school infrastructure including the complete transfer of schools under Sambhota (STSS) administration, new and ambitious scholarship programs such as the Sikyong Scholarship and

Excellence award for class 10 and 12 and implementation of policies enabling greater involvement of parents in student performances and parent-teacher trainings.

“With the Tibetan school transfer project, the leadership of the 15th Kashag and successive Kashag had envisioned a new beginning in the advancement of Tibetan education. Today is a historic day for we witness that vision turn into reality,” Sikyong said.



He congratulated the dynamic leadership of Kalon Dr Pema Yangchen and staff of Department of Education and thanked the principals, staff and teachers whose resourcefulness and collective efforts have brought the unprecedented laurels to the Tibetan education system.

Sikyong also congratulated the Tibetan Homes School, Mussoorie and THF Rajpur on its stellar performances in both class 10 and 12 results. Securing the highest average percentage of 71.39 percent with 100 percent pass percentage, THF Rajpur has topped all the other 26 Tibetan schools in class 10 results. The THF Mussoorie has scaled even greater height with 14 of its students scoring over 95 percent.

Kalon Dr Pema Yanchen who also spoke at the press event attributed the success to the teamwork of teachers, students and parents under the guidance and leadership of the Department of Education as well as the school administrators and principals over the years.

“Today’s result attests to the fact that each one of us can make a difference. All of us at the Education department who’s been leading various initiatives and programs as well as the school directors,

principals, teachers, staff who support the students on a daily basis, each has a significant role in influencing student performances,” Kalon said.

“I congratulate all the students, members of our schools and staff of DOE on this collective achievement. With this new benchmark, the future of our upcoming students surely looks promising.”

A total of 1154 students appeared in the AISSE held in March 2020 from 27 Tibetan schools in India, of which 1081 students cleared the exam with an overall pass percentage of 93.67.

The result this year according to the Education Department of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has bettered both qualitatively and quantitatively. 12 schools have secured pass percentage of 100 and 19 students have scored 90 percent and above.

The overall average percentage has increased by 1.04 percent whereas the pass percentage has increased by 1.36 percent against last year’s.

The top 10 Tibetan schools that outperformed the rest are Tibetan Home School, Rajpur, Sambhota Tibetan School Sonada, Sambhota Tibetan School Chandragiri, Sambhota Tibetan School Mudgod, Sambhota Tibetan School Chauntra, Central School for Tibetan Kalimpong, Tibetan Home School Mussorie, STS CVP Bylakuppe, and TNMF Clementown.

Sambhota Tibetan Schools’ performance stands out this year as 6 of the 10 top-performing schools are Sambhota Schools. Normally, Class 12 students from Tibetan schools receive the Department of Education’s sponsored coaching whereas the students of class X do not get specific coaching. Given appropriate coaching, no doubt the students could achieve more than 95 percent.

For detailed news visit:  
[www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net)

## Chorig dept begins 12th week of prayer service for those affected by COVID-19

Shining a light of hope and healing in the midst of extraordinary disruption and anxiety wreaked by the coronavirus pandemic, CTA’s Department of Religion and Culture has been dedicating prayers for all those affected by the Wuhan-originated disease, especially the COVID patients, frontliners, bereaved families and millions around the world who are struggling with all sorts of physical and mental challenges due to the coronavirus.

This prayer initiative which the department has been leading every day for more than two months now is aimed towards supporting the families of the deceased in observing prayer rituals according to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and to provide spiritual strength and resolution to those sick and vulnerable so that they may overcome or be able to cope with the impacts of the pandemic.

On Friday the Chorig department began its 12th week of prayer service at Jonang Kalachakra Meditation Institute in Dharamsala. The prayers on a weekly basis were also previously held at Nechung Monastery, Kirti Monastery, Namgyal Monastery, Gaden Choeling Nunnery, Institute of Buddhist Dialectic, Shugseb Ugenzong Nunnery, Gyutoe Monastery, Dolmaling Nunnery, Gadong Sercheling Monastery, Dip Tsechokling Monastery, Lhundup Chemey Gatseling and currently at Jonang Kalachakra Meditation Institute.

So far there have been 62 individual requests, mostly from Tibetans based abroad and healthcare workers from COVID hotspots including Delhi.

For those who wish to send prayer requests may contact the department at [religion@tibet.net](mailto:religion@tibet.net) or on WhatsApp at (+91) 9805472150.

Speaking at a press briefing last week, Additional Secretary Dhondul Dorjee of the Chorig department spoke on spiritual resources that the Religion and Culture department has made available for the Tibetan Buddhist community worldwide.

The first concerns on how to tackle the destructive effects of the pandemic through the Tibetan traditional practice of dedicating the Ngoesang prayer regarding which the department issued an urgent circular on 1 April. (Read here)

Subsequently, on 2 April, the department issued follow up circular after seeking the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the heads of various Buddhist traditions, urging the public to observe the Noesang and Riwasangchoe prayers and the initiative has successfully progressed with public participation. (Read the circular here)

On 28 April, the department issued a circular for all the 281 monasteries under its administration to observe prayer ceremonies dedicated for the Tibetans especially the deceased and for a speedy, global resolution to the COVID-19 crisis.

In its circular dated 1 May, the department as per the directives of the Kashag announced daily prayer initiative for those who died as well as those battling with the COVID disease. (Read the circular here) And since May 8, prayer sessions have been held daily by the Department of Religion and Culture beginning with Nechung Monastery. The full expenditure of the prayer services is being borne by the CTA.

The Department also issued a public appeal for prayers on 23 March. On 30 March, it also issued a new circular regarding Tensung prayers. (Read the circular here)

Several COVID-19 preventive guidelines were issued to Tibetan monasteries in collaboration with the Department of Health and through Settlement Officers on 6 March. From as early as 30 January, the Religion and Culture department had issued a public appeal for the Tibetan monasteries and public to observe select prayers prescribed by the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. (Read the circular here) Acting upon the Kashag's directives issued on 17 March on restricting gathering for up to 1 month and all returnees to undergo 14 days quarantine, the department, as a precautionary measure, sent forms enquiring in detail about the measures taken by the respective monasteries to curb the spread of the disease and other necessary practices.

On 6 May, the Department of Religion and Culture, CTA, through a special circular, called on all Tibetan monastic and religious centres around the world to join the Virtual Vesak Celebration and Global Prayer Week organised by the International Buddhist Confederation based in Delhi. (Read the circular here) The virtual celebration of Vesak – Buddha Poornima on 7 May was dedicated to a speedy resolution to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Kalon for Religion and Culture, Ven. Karma Gelek Yuthok also congratulated the Secretary-General of the International Buddhist Confederation

(IBC), New Delhi on his initiative and expressed his support and appreciation to IBC head office for dedicating the event as Global Prayer Week to pray for the victims of COVID-19 and to honour the medical professionals and security personnel in the frontline of global fight-back against the pandemic.

On the auspicious occasion of the Saka Dawa, the Chorig department issued an appeal to the public to pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and to accumulate positive karma in order to enhance the collective merit for the Tibetan cause. Especially, amidst the COVID-19 afflicted world, the department urged the people to pray for a speedy resolution to the pandemic. (Read the circular here)

Meanwhile, during the early lockdown period, the Chorig Department in collaboration with the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) organised weekly Wednesday programme through which many Buddhist scholars shared the Buddhist teachings and wisdom on coping with the pandemic.

In view of the pandemic growing unabatedly without a cure yet discovered, the Department issued its latest circular on 7 July, appealing Tibetan monasteries and public alike to continue observing the prayers until the pandemic subsides.

As of today, there are at least 16.1 million people worldwide infected with COVID-19, while the global death toll has surpassed 600,000 and continues to rise.



For more details visit: [www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net)

## Tibetan Geshe in rare post death meditative state sparks new research in Thukdam



*A picture of Geshe Jampa Gyatso in life. Photo/OOT, Taiwan*

Geshe Jampa Gyatso, a Tibetan Buddhist scholar and former political prisoner has entered rare spiritual meditative state of thukdam after being declared clinically dead on 14 July, according to Office of Tibet, Taiwan. Geshe Gyatso was a spiritual guide at OOT, Taiwan.

Thukdam (Tib: རྒྱལ་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་) is a Buddhist phenomenon in which realised master's consciousness remains in the body despite its physical death. Though they are declared clinically dead, their bodies show no signs of decay and are found to remain fresh for days or weeks without preservation. Scientific inquiry into this phenomena has begun a few years ago under the initiative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

After his clinical death on July 14, the mortal remains of Geshe Gyatso was returned to his funeral home. His close friend, Geshe Norbu of Sera Jey Monastery who had arrived for the prayer services held on the first and second day observed that his body emitted no signs of death in hue or odour, and assessed that the deceased had entered the state of thukdam.

On the third day, President Abbot Jigme Namgyal of the International Tibetan Buddhist Centre had seconded the observation.

At the time, Taiwan was in the midst of peak summer, yet nothing could be detected from an observation of the mortal remains.

The staff of the Office of Tibet revisited the body on the 5th day to determine signs of decay and decomposition. Similarly, it was examined by medical professionals who expressed their complete astonishment at the phenomenon, and the account of which was subsequently apprised to the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Secretary Tsegnyam who relayed His Holiness' instruction on the matter advised that a detailed report of the observation of the medical professional and a scientist's if possible be conducted for research purposes.



*Neural activity is examined by scientists. Photo/OOT, Taiwan*

Accordingly, Geshe's students approached Taiwan's research centre, Academia Sinica which in turn requested a scientific examination of the meditating monk. In this regard, the Gaden Phodrang Office via Secretary Tsegnyam advised that conducting the examinations would be of benefit to the ongoing research on thukdam and Buddha dharma in general. On 24 July, the physicist and his assistants from Taiwan's research centre, Academia Sinica arrived and conducted the first scientific examination on the monk.

Physicist Prof Ting-kuo Lee had previously participated in a 2018 dialogue conducted between His Holiness and Chinese scientists on effects of Quantum Physics held in Dharamsala. Professor Lee expressed his bewilderment and noted its similarity to



*The vital statistics are examined for noticeable differences. Photo/OOT, Taiwan*

the description provided by His Holiness during the dialogue.

On examination, it revealed the level of oxygen of the body to be at 86, quite close to a living human. Additionally, the suppleness of the skin, the apparently undecomposed state of the internal organs, the facial glow and warmth was noted under close examination. It was supplemented by an examination of the neural activity of the brain of the deceased on 28 July and 1 August by Taiwan University's Psychology Professor and his assistants who noted significant activity.

Similarly, Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama directed Dr Tseten Dorje of Delek hospital to guide the physicist, which was coordinated with the photographic documentation of the gradual changes in the body which were shared with Dr Tseten Dorje and his guidance was followed through by the assistant.

According to astrological reading, the body was cremated on 21 August.

The observations of the scientists, professors, medical professionals along with the photo and video documentation, accounts of caretaker and students on the Geshe's 28 days of thukdam will also be submitted to the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

## Statement of the Kashag on the 85th Birthday of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet



*CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay delivering the statement of the Kashag on the 85th Birthday of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet. Photo/Tenzin Phende/CTA*

Today we celebrate the 85th birthday of His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Jetsun Jampel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso. The Kashag and the Tibetan people, those inside Tibet and those in exile pay our heartfelt greetings to His Holiness, the most revered leader of Tibet, the world's leading spokesman for peace, the epitome of Buddha's wisdom and unconditional compassion.

His Holiness often describes himself as an 'ordinary monk.' For Tibetans, His Holiness is the glorious sun. He is a rare and unequalled leader who has been shouldering a nation and its people from the time he was sixteen years old. His Holiness is the peerless teacher who has been guiding Tibetans through every hardship, both personal and national.

In March 1959, His Holiness had to leave his homeland as a final resort to seek freedom for his people. From the first day he stepped into a life in exile, His Holiness has worked to protect his people, lead a political movement, and preserve the unique cultural identity of Tibet.

When Tibetans look at our recent past, we remember our great loss but this loss has been bearable, indeed it contains possibility for a future because of His

Holiness. His Holiness has softened the blunt break in our lives and has helped reshape our suffering into something that can contain hope. Tibetans exist as proud Tibetans even under conditions of continued dispossession because of His Holiness.

Today, many around the world view Tibetans as the most successful refugee community with schools, refugee settlements, monasteries and a democratic polity capable of representing and uniting all Tibetans. Like a parent with unconditional compassion, His Holiness had made supreme sacrifices to nurture us. His untiring effort and farsightedness has saved Tibet from becoming a mere footnote in the story of lost and forgotten nations.

His Holiness made the liberation for Tibet visible to the world. The 1989 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to him in recognition of his long advocacy of peaceful solutions based upon mutual respect and tolerance as a solution of international conflicts, global environmental problems and human rights issues. Tibetans rejoiced with joy and pride when His Holiness received the award. Our hearts were transported knowing that the world had acknowledged the uncommon ruler who,

even in the face of grave persecution, has always reached for a peaceful solution.

His Holiness' legacy of humanity, peace and compassion has already transformed the world. His Holiness was one of the earliest advocates for environmental protection and sustainability. In recognition of his contribution, His Holiness was awarded the United Nation Earth Prize in 1991. He continues to steer the world towards a more peaceful co-existence embracing all peoples and the environment with initiatives such as advocating the education of the heart in the modern curriculum, advancing the value of mindfulness in the territory of modern science, promoting religious harmony and facilitating interfaith dialogues.

His Holiness' contribution has been marked by the highest of honors including the US Congressional Gold Medal and the Templeton Prize. In February this year, His Holiness was voted as the world's most spiritually influential person of the year 2020 in the Watkins list of '100 Most Spiritually Influential Living People.'

The world might see His Holiness as a human being who has achieved greatness but for Tibetans, His Holiness is the manifestation of the Buddha of Compassion. His Holiness has singlehandedly anchored Tibetans who had lost their homeland, their homes and their loved ones.

How shall we celebrate the life and legacy of such an eminent leader?

His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama's benevolence towards the Tibetan people will never be forgotten. This year is dedicated to him. During this "Year of Gratitude" we will express our deep gratitude to His Holiness. We urge Tibetans and our friends around the globe to initiate and take part in activities in their capacities to create awareness about the life and four commitments of His Holiness.

The world today is going through a traumatic experience, around the globe, more than half a million people have lost their lives due to the pandemic. Taking this opportunity, we offer our prayers and solidarity to all the nations and individuals affected by COVID-19. As the number of cases surge in India, we urge the public to take the necessary precautions to keep one another safe. In these uncertain times, His Holiness' virtual teachings offer solace, hope, and blessing for thousands around the globe. His teachings call for oneness

of humanity, and for kindness and compassion to be the guiding values of everyday life.

Taking this opportunity we thank each and every individual, organization, and government who has supported the initiatives of His Holiness and joined us in the just cause of Tibet.

Tibetans acknowledge with deep gratitude the debt we owe to His Holiness, the greatest of all the Dalai Lamas. We proudly celebrate His life

and legacies and pray that His Holiness will live for eons and that all His wishes be fulfilled. We pray for the day when Tibetans in Tibet will get to seek His Holiness' blessing and teaching from his seat in the Potala palace in the Land of Snow. May His Holiness' light continue to shine upon us.

The Kashag

6th July 2020

## Obituary: Ama Adhe, Tibet's heroic woman passes away



*Ama Adhe, former Tibetan political prisoner passes away (1932-2020)*

Adhe Tapontsang known affectionately as Ama Adhe, who was one of the longest-serving Tibetan political prisoners passed away here at Dharamshala this morning. She was 88.

Born in 1932, Ama Adhe spent 27 years in a Chinese prison for taking part in the Tibetan resistance against the Chinese occupation in the late 1950s. Inspired by her indomitable spirit and valour with which she fought for the freedom and dignity of her people, Ama Adhe became known worldwide as a symbol of Tibetan resistance, courage, and patriotism.

Ama Adhe was born in Nyarong in Kham Province to father Dorjee Rabten

and Mother Sonam Dolma in 1932. She was a devout Buddhist from a very young age. In an old interview, she described her feeling of terror upon seeing the Chinese for the first time and recounted how the Chinese tried to lure children with silver coins and their pretence to help Tibetans. Ama Adhe and her husband planned an escape to Lhasa, but her husband was poisoned by the Chinese before they could leave.

Ama Adhe then inspired other women to help the Tibetan men who fought against the Chinese by supplying food and provisions to them. The rebellion was crushed some of the women and many men and monks were arrested. Some of the stronger ones like Ama Adhe were taken away to a prison in Changshita, China. Only four out of the 300 women in that prison survived the ordeal of starvation there. In 1954, when Ama Adhe's first child was one year old, and she was pregnant with the second, her husband died of poisoning right in front of her.

She then joined the Tibetan resistance of the Khampas to fight the Chinese invasion that began in 1950. In 1958, she was arrested and separated from her two young children. Ama Adhe was one of the Tibetans who served the longest prison terms, which was 27 years and ended only when Deng Xiaoping

pardoned the political prisoners. During her incarceration, she suffered torture and forced labour. She was released in 1985.



*Ama Adhe passed away aged 88. Photo/ Department of Security*

Throughout her life in exile, she actively told the stories of life under Chinese occupation and of thousands of Tibetan prisoners who died under Chinese oppression. She fled to India in 1987 and made McLeod Ganj, exile seat of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan administration, her home. In 1997, she released a book titled "Ama Adhe: The Voice that Remembers: The Heroic Story of a Woman's Fight to Free Tibet", depicting the harrowing conditions of her incarceration.

## Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the occasion of official celebration marking the 85th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Today, the 16th day of the 5th month of the Tibetan Royal Year 2147, falling in the 17th sexantry of the Tibetan Royal Year calendar system, which corresponds to the 6th day of July, is an especially important day of great auspiciousness. It marks the day on which His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the protector and refuge, bar none, of all sentient beings that include the Gods in the heavens; the master of the corpus of all the Buddhist learning on this earth; the destined deity of all sentient beings of the Snowland of Tibet; the miracle emanation in human form of the most exalted lotus-holding Bodhisattva who exemplifies the greatness of a Buddhist monk persevering in steadfast observance of all his vows as such; the one who bears great affection for all sentient beings irrespective of the absence of any prior acquaintance with them; a great champion of world peace; and the unsurpassable leader and guiding light of all subjects of Tibet whose full name, for the sake of formality, is Jetsun Jampal Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso Sisum Wanggyur Tsungpa Mepey-de Pel-Sangpo; and the spiritual lord of the three realms attains the age of 86 by Tibetan tradition, and 85 by the universal calendar system. On this day of perfect bliss, we, on behalf of all Tibetans in Tibet and in exile, offer greetings with unshakable devotion of body, speech, and mind to His Holiness the Dalai Lama repeated a countless times and, along with it, offer fervent prayers that His Holiness may live for a hundred aeons so as to provide us with great kindness the nectar-like teachings of clairvoyant guidance which is akin to the continuity of a summer stream at all times.

Let me begin by offering our congratulations to everyone here for the fortunate opportunity we all have received once again to celebrate the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Inasmuch as they are monumental, the greatness of the noble deeds of His Holiness the Dalai Lama



*Honourable Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Pema Jungney delivering the statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the occasion of official celebration marking the 85th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Photo/Tenzin Phende/CTA*

defies description or enumeration. Nevertheless, seizing this moment as an opportunity for accumulating a share of merits, let me present a gist of these with greatest of brevity here. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was born on the 5th day of the 5th Tibetan month of the Wood-Hog Year in the 16th Tibetan Royal Sexantry, which corresponded to the 6th day of July in the universal year 1935, in Tagtser Village of Domey Kumbum, a territorial jurisdiction of the Tibetan nation at that time, to parents with excellence of ancestry. The birth was accompanied by the appearances of awesome harbingers of most auspicious of omens. Upon reaching the age of two, He, by the advice and prophesies of Gods and lamas under the power of the kindness of his predecessor reincarnation, was recognized as the reincarnation of His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama without any space for error. Thereafter in 1939, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was escorted to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. On the 14th day of the first month in the Tibetan Iron-Dragon Year, which corresponded to the 22nd day of February in 1940, His Holiness was ushered to the height of the Golden Throne that was held aloft by the fearless quintuplet of snow lions in the second of the fabled celestial palace of the

Potala that was located in the Lhasa city. Enthroned thus, His Holiness fluttered the banner of auspiciousness in all directions while immersing himself in the study of the career biographies of the great spiritual beings of the past. Along with it, His Holiness, brushing aside all difficulties that came his way, completed his study of the corpus of the Buddhist texts both general and specials. It all culminated in His Holiness the Dalai Lama appearing for his public dialectic debates at all the three great monastic seats of learning as well as at the Great Prayer Festival before mass gatherings of monks which paved the way for his honoring of the Geshe Lharampa degree, thus His Holiness became the crown ornament of all the learned masters of the Snowland of Tibet.

In 1949, communist ruled China began its armed invasion of Tibet from the east. Following it, the political situation in Tibet kept deteriorating fast, like the inevitability of the depletion of the fuel of butter in a continuously burning butter lamp. And it became starkly obvious that it was His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and no one else, who had the power and capability to steer the course of the Tibetan nation's religious and political affairs at that very critical

moment. All beings of the Snowland of Tibet, the divine as well as the humans, were spontaneous in their unanimous understanding to single-pointedly pray to Him with great fervidness to assume the leadership. And so it came about that even though he was only 16 years old at that time, His Holiness, true to the solidness of his kindness-driven oath to carry forward the work of his successive predecessors, assumed the leadership of Tibet in fields both temporal and spiritual, the twin sources of wellbeing and happiness to the Tibetan people, on the 17th day of November in 1950. And His Holiness began issuing clear and vivid royal edicts and directives of forcefulness and majesty towards his subjects in all the three provinces. Since then, he employed miracle as well as wisdom with great dexterity in keeping with the requirements of times and circumstances in getting on with all the communist Chinese occupiers in Tibet, be they people in the military or civilian sections, whether as leaders or subordinates, with the underlying motivation of great kindness for everyone. He adopted broadmindedness and fortitude when the Chinese government acted with brutality and violence, relying only on the non-violent method that ensured no harm to the other side. In that way, His Holiness strove to resolve the Sino-Tibetan dispute by continuing to deal with the Chinese in the manner of “coddling the fire, being burned by the fire.” In that way His Holiness made efforts to save his people from an otherwise imminent massacre and bloodshed for nine long years.

Nevertheless, there was no let up at all in the government of China’s plotting and war preparations, as well as its deceptions. In addition, there was no end to its continued subterfuge which threatened nothing less than the personal safety of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In fact, it was on account of the danger to the personal safety of His Holiness the Dalai Lama posed by the Chinese machination that on the 10th day of March in 1959, the Tibetan people rose to oppose the government of China by organizing an uprising as they found no other alternative means to avert the danger. After that the situation in

Tibet became even more critical and dangerous, with the result that it became inevitable for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to leave Norbu Lingkha Palace in the night of the 17th of March 1959 to escape towards the holy land of India.

When He safely reached India on the 31st day of March in 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was only 24 years old. Even so, He took to care for His people like a parent would his children. Not long after setting foot on India, many tens of thousands of Tibetan people, having opted to look up with hope to none but Him, followed His Holiness into exile. Which included monastics as well as laypeople, young and old from all the three provinces of Tibet. His Holiness ensured for them the breath of a life of safety, free from all fears. He ensured that they did not suffer from deprivations of basic existential needs of food, clothing and shelter. And then with the aim to rekindle the Tibetan people’s religious culture, His Holiness helped to re-establish in exile centres where each of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the Yungdrung Bon followers could study and practice Tibetans’ unique traditions and customs in their own ways and thereby ensured their revival and perpetuation. In particular, settlements, educational centres, handicraft centres, business enterprises, and fund-raising initiatives were established under the leadership of a democratic administration with unexceptionable guidance, bearing in mind the aim of ensuring the future and wellbeing of the religious heritage and national identity of the Snowland of Tibet. Our gratitude for the limitless expanse and endless continuity of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s noble deeds directed at the preservation and revival, as the case may be, of our precious religious and cultural heritage as well as our language, customs, and traditions can never be expressed enough in words.

Regarding the mutually beneficial Middle Way Policy being currently pursued as an effort to resolve the issue of Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama outlined the rudiments of a policy decision back in 1974 not to seek restoration of the independence of Tibet,

should an opportunity for dialogue with the government of China arise in the near future. And in 1979, China’s then paramount leader Deng Xiaoping proposed that except for independence, everything concerning Tibet could be discussed and resolved. Since then, His Holiness delegated successive envoys to hold dialogue with the government of China. On the 18th of September in 1997, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile unanimously adopted the Middle Way Approach, which since then became a policy of utmost merits of the Central Tibetan Administration. Including from many governments, the policy has received maximum possible support from many entities both public and private as well as individuals from across the world. Apart from that, the policy continues to receive loving embrace and support from many intellectuals in China itself. Developments such as these are the result of the decision taken by His Holiness giving the primary consideration to the resolution of the issue of Tibet on the basis of making a realistic appraisal of and adapting to the current situation.

Relying primarily on the power of compassion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has directed his efforts at promoting the potential of ethical values that are inherent to all human beings. On that basis, His Holiness has been unrelenting in his efforts at promoting the protection of the natural environment, inter-religious harmony, cessation of warfare and conflicts and so on by exhorting the concept of universal responsibility aimed at the realization of global peace. Efforts of His Holiness have received recognition from countries across the world and it culminated in him being conferred the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, the Congressional Gold Medal of the United States of America in 2007, and the John Templeton Prize in the United Kingdom in 2012. The total number of the most famous of awards, and degrees honoured to His Holiness the Dalai Lama counts into hundreds.

In 2011, His Holiness relinquished all his historical political and governance powers in favour of the leadership directly elected by the Tibetan people.

To this day since then, He has continued to remain busy in pursuing an array of activities of fundamental value among which have been his four principal commitments borne of compassion: promoting the realization of the commonality of happiness among all peoples on the basis of the understanding of their oneness as human beings; promoting a harmonious coexistence of all religions; making efforts to uphold, preserve, and maintain the relevance of Tibet's religious and cultural heritage; and making efforts to revive awareness of the value of ancient Indian knowledge. With these ends in view, which have been subjects of special attention, His Holiness has continued to deliver talks and offer guidance. People across the world have been paying great attention to these unwavering efforts being made by His Holiness. It is only to be expected, therefore, that all the people of Tibet having their root in the Tsampa-eating ancestral habit must undertake a study of these four great commitments of His Holiness and lend cooperative helping hand to the realization of their goals under His leadership. This will be the basis for the accumulation of good conduct merits, amounting as they do to an offering that gladdens His Holiness, and we all must make utmost endeavours in these efforts.

The magnitude of the debt of gratitude that all of us Tibetans owe to His Holiness for his boundless deeds in fields both religious and political is such that it could never ever be repaid. The essence of the purpose of marking the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is to remember Him as the destined deity of Tibet and his deeds, and to heed and respectfully study and follow advices and guidelines of His Holiness. On this day of great importance, which is being marked by people of all ethnicities across the world but especially by the Tibetan people both in and out of Tibet with joy, devotion, and sense of gratification, we wish to point especially to two among the numerous advices and suggestions His Holiness has given us by way of quoting Him: "It is absolutely wrong and one should never ever engage in strife based on sectarian and provincial considerations;" and

"The best birthday gift for me would be that you should be kind-hearted." The nectar of these advices and suggestions has come upon us repeatedly from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and we wish to take this opportunity to remind everyone to make a commitment to be forthright in following and bring them to fruition through actual practical implementation. This will undoubtedly be the most meaningful way to present a gift to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on His birthday. Therefore it is our appeal to everyone to implement these advices and suggestions to the point of realizing their objectives.

Another point we wish to bring up by taking the opportunity provided by this occasion is that the general election for our Sikyong and Parliament-in-Exile is not far away. Therefore, the electorates who are citizens of Tibet as defined in the Charter of Tibetans in Exile faithfully adhere to their fundamental rights and duties, it is absolutely unacceptable that anyone should bring to the public domain their personal misgivings to disturb the inter-religious and inter-provincial harmony, to cause offence to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and to cause despair among Tibetans in Tibet who continue their struggle with courage and determination. So, there should be no mistake on the part of anyone in their appreciation of the dos and don'ts with regard to these matters so that there will be no violations. Apart from that, the power of the solidarity that binds the four major Buddhist religious traditions and the Yungdrung Bon religion as well as the three provinces of Tibet into an integrated whole with the ethos of unity in shared fortune or misfortune through both good and bad times under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a great source of pride to all of us. However, there is a tiny minority of mischief mongers who have made it their preoccupation to disturb our unity and solidarity and it is incumbent on us to counter their malicious agenda. There is great danger that some fellow-Tibetans may on occasions get misled by the devious agenda of such people out of lack of application of their mind. So we all have a duty to exercise care and caution at all times and to be on the

watch out for them.

At the end of December last year, there was an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the City of Wuhan in central China that soon spread the Covid-19 pandemic across the world. Into the long period of its spread – which is now in its seventh month – the pandemic has inflicted a multitude of both human suffering and economic hardship of great magnitudes in a large number of countries, including in the developed countries, across the world. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has been greatly concerned by this development and extends its empathy with peoples and nations across the world in this moment of great tragedy. During the lockdown period that followed the pandemic, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has, apart from other major Tibetan religious leaders, delivered online teachings and given advisories that were designed to enable not only Tibetans but also people across the world to cope with the emotional distress and anxiety resulting from it. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to take this opportunity to express immense gratitude for this enormous gesture which continues to provide to this day.

On the 5th of June this year, an Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) was newly established as an initiative of senior lawmakers from a number of democratic countries that included Australia, the United States of America, and from the European Union. Its aim was to "construct appropriate and coordinated responses, and to help craft a proactive and strategic approach on issues related to the People's Republic of China." The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to take the opportunity provided by this momentous occasion to offer our congratulations for this move. We remain hopeful that through the IPAC the international community will be able to exert pressure to bring positive changes to the ongoing serious violations of human rights in China and the violent repressive rule over the minority groups, including on the Tibetan people.

Besides, the Tibetan Parliament in

Exile wishes to extend its appreciations and gratitude to the Central Tibetan Administration and, along with it, to the large number of monasteries, Tibetan organizations and associations both public and private, as well as the Tibetan public for the great amounts of generosity with which they are still continuing to extend help to the best possible extent they can to address the difficulties and hardship created by the spread of the novel coronavirus pandemic on the governments and peoples of the host countries in which they reside with monetary donations as well provisions of dry ration supplies, Personal Protection Equipment items, and so on. At the same time it is important to remind everyone that they should do their utmost in the efforts, both at the public level and in their private capacity, to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 infection in the localities in which they reside.

On the 4th of June this year, retired Chinese football star Hao Haidong and fugitive Chinese billionaire Guo Wengui living in the United States of America together issued a scathing criticism of the government of China for its range of immeasurable atrocities and attacks that included the Tiananmen Square massacre of the 4th of June in 1989 and the unleashing of the current Covid-19 pandemic. And they proclaimed the launch of a new China on the June 4th Tiananmen Square massacre anniversary with the reading of a manifesto that supported the proposed founding of a “New Federal State of China.” They also announced the formation of a non-governmental organization called “Himalaya Supervisory Organization”

along with a stretch banner for it. However, they unilaterally included the great nation of Tibet in their proposed new federal state of China, used disrespectful terms in referring to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and hurled a multitude of epithets against the Tibetan people living in exile. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile therefore wishes to make clear its total disapproval and absolute rejection of their actions. On all issues big or small pertaining to Tibet, the final decision, if and when an occasion for making it arises, can only be made by the Central Tibetan Administration which is truly representative of all the Tibetan people living in Tibet and in exile. No governmental or non-governmental body or individual whatsoever can make decisions concerning Tibet without any sort of consultation with the true representatives of the Tibetan people.

On the 19th of May this year, Representative Scott Perry introduced a Bill in the United States House of Representatives, calling for the recognition of Tibet Autonomous Region as an independent country. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to express its gratitude to him for his gesture. However, we wish to make it clear that “Tibet” should be understood to mean the territoriality and nationhood that includes all its three provinces. Tibet Autonomous Region alone does not suffice to constitute the wholeness of the nation of Tibet. We therefore appeal for an amendment to that Bill to replace “Tibet Autonomous Region” with “Tibet, with all its three provinces.”

After it carried out its annexation of

Tibet in 1959, the People’s Liberation Army of communist party ruled China continued to make attempts to encroach into India from all across its border areas. And recently, a dispute in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh led to a clash between the troops from the two sides with the result that 20 Indian soldiers died and several others were injured. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to express our condolences to India for the tragedy which resulted from that unfortunate incident.

More than 60 years have passed since we the Tibetan people came into exile in India. During that period, apart from the holy land of India, many other countries, being appreciative of our hardship and problems under such a circumstance, have extended all possible assistance, help, and partnership under programmes which continue to this day. Hence we take the opportunity provided by this occasion to express our gratitude on behalf of all the people of Tibet to the governments and peoples of these countries and, likewise, to all the members of parliaments, organizations, and individuals.

Finally, we pray with great hope that His Holiness the Dalai Lama may live for a hundred aeons, that all his wishes may be seen fulfilled with spontaneity, and that the just cause of Tibet may be seen to prevail with indubitable certainty.

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

6 July 2020



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## 15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Chorig Kalon Karma Gelek Yuthok

On the occasion of the completion of the 4th and the penultimate year of the 15th Kashag, Kalon Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok, Department of Religion and Culture speaks with Tenzin Chemey, Tibet TV on the achievements of the Chorig department under the 15th Kashag and discusses key priorities in his final year in office.

Following is the English translation of the interview with the Kalon, originally conducted in Tibetan. Watch here.

**Tibet TV:** Could you walk us through the department's initiatives and its significant accomplishments in the past 4 years?

**Kalon:** On the religious aspect, overseeing the welfare of the Tibetan monasteries in exile is our top priority. Since 1959, reconstruction and revival of 281 monasteries have been undertaken by the Chorig Department of which 15 was completed in the last 4 years. Among the 246 monasteries and 35 nunneries, Tibetans make up 32 percent, Himalayan region 65 percent and 3 percent of Mongol and others. The department's key undertaking is to convene lifelong prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, wherein the monasteries under the leadership of CTA and lay public participate. The year 2018 which according to the Tibetan astrology coincided with His Holiness' obstacle year, extending into 2020, the Chorig department organised long-life prayer offering to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, dedicated prayer ceremonies to deities as well as many religious heads led prayers, joined by monasteries and the public. Simultaneously, CTA organised the Tenshug Monlam thrice, beginning in 2017, in 2018, and in Dharamshala in 2019. As part of long-life prayer offering for His Holiness, the Chorig department funded the renovation and revival of 64 monasteries and operational expenses of 100 Monasteries.



*15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Chorig Kalon Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok/Screengrab image*

The third important development is the 14th Tibetan religious conference which the Chorig department organised in November last year at CTA headquarters here in Dharamshala. The meeting was blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and attended by the heads and important figures of various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon tradition, other eminent Tibetan rinpoches and tulkus, representatives and lamas from the Himalayan region, Khen Rinpoches of major Tibetan Buddhist institutes in exile, heads and members of Tibetan monastic institutes and representatives of Tibetan nunneries. Important agendas were discussed, primarily that of the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We were also able to consecrate the new headquarters of CTA with blessings of the spiritual heads.

In accordance with the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a programme has been established to introduce young educated Tibetans to Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. Buddhist centres across 39 settlements host young graduates with the expenses of the tuition and living costs borne by the Chorig department. With many Tibetans in higher education institutes across India, religious scholars are arranged to tour those institutes once

or twice a year to teach about Tibetan Buddhist philosophy. In collaboration with Gyudmed Monastery in Hunsur, the Department has introduced a six-month intensive course on Buddhist philosophy and language for Tibetan college students. Every year, we are receiving active participation from students in the program.

Guided by His Holiness' vision for better understanding and integration of modern science and ancient Buddhist tradition, science workshop is organised twice a year to ensure monks and nuns appreciate modern science, by the Chorig Department and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. According to His Holiness' advice, the Chorig department is also overseeing the construction of Buddhist stupas at the sacred Buddhist sites which is currently in progress.

One of the most important achievement is the historic conferment of Geshema degree to Tibetan Buddhist nuns. The Conferment of Geshema degree to Tibetan Buddhist nuns was a longstanding aspiration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and having successfully realised this vision reflects a historic milestone. In 2017, the awarding of Geshema degree in accordance with His Holiness' sustained efforts for

gender equality, facilitated by Chorig department, saw the first batch graduate. So far, 43 Geshemas have been awarded, including 33 in tantric studies. Similarly, equivalent degrees are awarded in the other religious traditions.

The 34th Kalachakra in 2017 was a historic success, CTA's official request was granted and arrangements were then taken care of by the CTA. Although Tibetans in Tibet were restricted by the Chinese government at the time from taking the pilgrimage. It was still a rousing success with the teachings broadcasted for Tibetans around the world. CTA sponsored the elderly and destitute for the pilgrimage for those who lacked the financial means. Newly arrived Tibetans studying at Sherab Gatseling, monks and nuns in the retreat were facilitated by offices under CTA to undertake the pilgrimage. The Indian govt, state and district governments, Kashag, Gaden Phodrang office, CTA offices, Namgyal monastery, Geluk Monlam monastic organisation worked collectively to make it a success. CTA had formed subcommittees for preparations, led by Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the Departments who dedicated almost a month to plan it, and the efforts of the volunteers.

In terms of international collaboration with international Buddhist organisations and bodies, we have achieved a great deal. The Chorig department is a member of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP) which is headquartered in Mongolia. In 2017, the member organisations met in New Delhi to discuss how to revive Buddhism, subsequently, the most elaborate was held in 2019 in Mongolia, attended by the heads of the religious traditions. As a Chorig Kalon, I have also been appointed as the President of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC). They have held 2 conferences till now and ever since the coronavirus outbreak, the organisation has successfully convened virtual programmes for Choekhor and Buddha Poornima celebrations which was virtually joined by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Chorig Department and various religious heads of Tibetan sects. World Fellowship of Buddhists (

WFB) of which Tibetan representatives have been previous members, invited the Kalon during the 15th Kashag, as a special guest at the conference in the US.

As overseeing the welfare of the Tibetan monasteries in exile remains our top priority. In keeping with this, we have visited and inspected Tibetan monasteries in India from early on except when conditions are not possible such as in Nepal and Bhutan due to political circumstances. Otherwise, apart from 7-8 in Dharamshala the inspection of which have been disrupted by the pandemic, we have inspected all monasteries and nunneries and heard their concerns and similarly apprised to the relevant authorities.

Under the scholarship programme for monasteries and nunneries, we have covered 3600 scholars, which is facilitated by Gaden Phodrang to an extent. The department also provides tutor expenses for a total of 522 students for various subjects including Tibetan literature, Science and Chinese. The stipend programme covers 564 elderly monks and nuns aged over 60; renovation of 35 monasteries has been achieved; biannual religious organisations conference were held since 2017 with 100-200 attendees and the venues selected from participating monastic institutes. A specialisation programme was established in 2013, the first beginning in 2014, the second in 2015, completing in 2019, while this year it was disrupted by a pandemic. Initially, there were 10,15, 25 students respectively enrolled which has now increased to 22 graduates.

In light of the recent global outbreak and its toll on mental and emotional wellbeing, the Chorig department has taken special initiative to help alleviate the suffering through spiritual guidance on dealing with the pandemic and the mental stress. Initiated by the Gaden Phodrang, and under Kashag's directives, Chorig department has issued timely announcements and organised prayer sessions for the benefit of the world at large and Tibetans in particular. The monasteries under the purview

of the department have held prayer sessions dedicated to the deceased and sick regularly. Many people appreciated it, leading to a prominent interest in the Tibetan culture as well. The commitment of the monasteries and Tibetan public is commendable.

On the cultural front, since the 1990s onwards, autonomous organisations such as, Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts(TIPA), Library of Tibetan Works and Arts(LTWA) were established which marked its 50th-anniversary recently. Tibet House in Delhi marked its 50th anniversary in 2016 which was graced by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I as a Chorig Kalon was also part of the momentous event. Norbulingka Institute of Tibetan Culture reestablished by Chorig Department recently completed its 25th year which oversees many cultural developments. The Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (Deemed University) (CIHTS) at Sarnath, Varanasi, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2017 which was graced by His Holiness. I had also attended the event as a Kalon.

The Kashag has also paid adequate attention to reviving Tibetan opera or Lhamo or Tibetan opera which is a distinct Tibetan theatre form. The Kashag has facilitated the development of such cultural organisations and established 2 new centres and supports such organisations annually.

To this end, In 2017, the department announced the Tibetan Culture and Arts Fund(TACF) with the objective to revive Tibetan culture in exile. This programme provides grants to Tibetan artists and organisations involved in the preservation and promotion of traditional Tibetan culture and arts. Thus far, there have been 4 conducted, benefitting 55 individuals and organisations in total. The program is funded by USAID,

**Tibet TV:** What are the initiatives undertaken by Chorig department for the Tibetan community in Nepal?

**Kalon:** Across Nepal, India and Bhutan, 107 beneficiaries are covered under the scholarship fund for newly arrived

Tibetans, stipend allowance for 22 beneficiaries in Nepal and tuition fees which covers 54 monasteries for 109 teachers and renovation of monasteries as requests submitted, with 3 in Nepal. The objective of the revival of Buddhism in border regions has supported 63 monasteries in Nepal, funded conference and modern science workshops, under the 'introduction of Buddhist philosophy to youth' programme, 3 centres have been established across settlements in Nepal, similarly, religious scholars tour to increase awareness of Buddhist philosophy is conducted.

There are also 2 graduates of Geshema from an important centre in Nepal. Notably, in the 1st Geshema awarding ceremony, the top-ranking scholar was from Nepal. Therefore in regards to Buddhist scholarship, the Department has made provisions for the Tibetan community in Nepal as in India.

**Tibet TV:** In the past 4 years, as you referenced the department has faced various obstacles during the Kalachakra arrangement and on top of that, the restrictions imposed by the Chinese

government on Tibetan pilgrims inside Tibet among several others. Were there any other issues that the department had to face and how did you overcome it?

**Kalon:** In my view, there are more urgent internal challenges that we need to address. In terms of familiarising our youth with Buddhist philosophy, its objective in accordance with the aspirations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is an area that still needs work and requires collaborative efforts. We need to reduce the gap between what we call religion and culture, and the general public. We try to bring the knowledge available in religion and culture to the general public through introductory courses and teachings on Buddhism and such. We believe these will help the public tremendously.

With the rise in educated youth, it is necessary to recognise our unique circumstances and dedicate wholeheartedly to the larger cause. Because of modernisation and the accompanying distraction, there is a decline in self-reliance to take forward the cause is which is concerning.

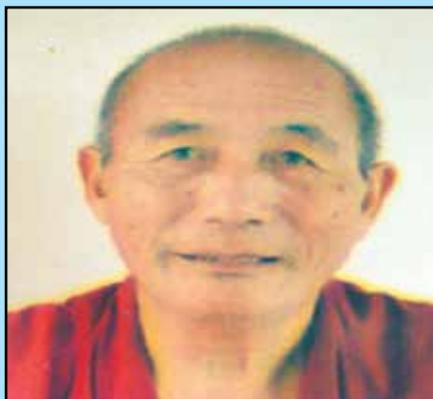
Materialistic evaluation of everything needs to be introspected, instead, commitment towards the larger cause should be revived.

In the 60 years of exile, the revival of Tibetan religion and culture in exile has been one of the most successful amongst all refugee communities. The success is due to the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and through the collective efforts of the Heads of all the religious traditions. As I have mentioned before, the external achievement in exile is formidable, even in comparison to those with respect to Tibet. So the most pertinent issue facing us is the dwindling numbers of monastics. This is concerning because we are looking at the preservation of our rich culture and religion. However, we are making every effort to inform the reality to the public and is exploring appropriate means and solutions to this problem. As many religious forums have forefronted the issue, we should face the fact and it is important for Tibetans to appreciate our cultural heritage which is precious and strive to develop it.

## Obituary: Former Tibetan political prisoner Ven Choedak passes away

Ven. Tenzin Choedak, a former Tibetan political prisoner who participated in the 1968 mass uprising in Driru county, Tibet, passed away here at Delek hospital on Sunday morning.

Ven Choedak was born in 1941 in Nagshoe, Driru county, Nagchu prefecture in eastern Tibet. At the age of 10, he joined the Rabten Monastery and became an ordained monk. In the following years as the entire Tibet came under the brutal occupation of Tibet, more than 98 percent monasteries and nunneries were decimated and 99.9 percent monks and nuns were disrobed. Like thousands of Tibetan monks and nuns across Tibet, Ven. Choedak was forced out of the monastery and into



*Former Tibetan political prisoner Ven Choedak passes away (1947–2020). File photo/Department of Security/CTA*

hard labour. The genocidal occupation of Tibet coupled with Mao's cultural revolution eventually led to mass

uprisings and revolts across Tibet. Ven. Choedak was part of one such mass uprising in Driru country in 1968 which was brutally suppressed by the Chinese forces. In September 1969, he was arrested and imprisoned for 12 years.

After his release in September 1981, Ven. Choedak committed towards revival and preservation of Tibetan Buddhism. He worked tirelessly to revive the monastery in Driru and others in Lhasa. In 1996, he came to exile in India to seek blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and since coming to exile, Ven. Choedak dedicated many Buddhist retreat and practices to the long life of His Holiness.

## 15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Home Kalon Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang

On the occasion of the completion of the 4th and the penultimate year of the 15th Kashag, Kalon Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang, Department of Home speaks with Tenzin Chemey, Tibet TV on the achievements of Home Department under the 15th Kashag and discusses key priorities in his final year in office.

Following is the English translation of the interview with the Kalon, originally conducted in Tibetan. Watch here.

**Tibet TV:** Could you walk us through the department's initiatives and its significant accomplishments in the past 4 years?

**Kalon:** In these past 4 years, one of the most significant initiatives or rather accomplishments would be the implementation of Five Fifty Vision under the leadership of the 15th Kashag. Even though there is still a year left for the present Kashag. Our goal, however, is to sustain the administration for another 50 or 60 years if needed. In order for that to happen, a strong foundation is crucial. We have to make changes that need to be made to ensure the strength and stability of the administration. During the 14th and 15th term of Kashag, many initiatives and reforms related to 5/50 vision were launched. On the aspect of the Home Department, a key focus has been to create self-sufficient Tibetan communities in the obedience of Indian law.

The legal status of the Tibetan settlement lands across India has been classified into three groups- a) settlements which are land leased by the Indian government such as the settlements in South India and North-Eastern parts. b) lands which are bought by registered organisation or institutions such as those of Bir, Paonta, and Puruwala settlements, and c) settlements such as Bomdila, the land is procured in His Holiness the Dalai Lama's name. As for the land leased by the Indian government, for nearly 40-50 years the



*15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Nangsi Kalon Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang. Image/Screengrab*

land has been under the administration of the Ministry of Environment and Forest of the Indian government. Since these lands are not registered in the name of our administration, we had to face many obstacles. We had tried multiple times and approached the Indian authority regarding that. Our administration had even visited those places and had a range of discussions with the respective settlement officers and drafted an appeal letter containing 15 points recommendation to the Indian government. That time the officials of the Indian govt's Home Department were well versed with the predicament of the Tibetan refugees and had huge respect for His Holiness the Dalai Lama because of which our problems were swiftly attended and apart from the two points, rest of the 13 points were approved. The officials then contacted the concerned offices in Delhi and held a series of meetings and finally constituted a policy known as Tibetan Rehabilitation Policy 2014.

The recommendation was sent to the Chief Secretary of the States where Tibetans were residing. They were informed of the decision to implement a policy and all of them agreed in unison. On 20th October 2014, then Home Kalon Kasur Gyari Dolma and I visited the Indian govt's Home Department to discuss the framework of the policy and

our meeting went successful. Since then as per the policy, our first and foremost focus was to legally register the lands. For instance, settlements like Kollegal, Mundgod, Hunsur were legally verified. However, Lugsam and Dekyi Larsoe settlement in Bylakuppe is yet to be registered. When it comes to the policy, many tend to misunderstand that the policy is only linked with the Department of Home. That is entirely wrong. There are many recommendations in the policy pertaining to the Department of Education, Health, and the Culture and Religion Department, etc. For instance, not long ago India's Ministry of Culture had written a letter to the Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh enquiring the number of Buddhist monasteries in the state and meanwhile proposing to distribute midday meal. In accordance, the Chorig Department submitted the numbers to the Ministry of Culture and the latter provided the free meal for our monks and nuns amid the pandemic. As for the Tibetan medical professionals and nurses, we were able to help them out with better job opportunities by having them enlist in the Nursing Council. In the policy, it is clearly mentioned that the Tibetan medical professionals can apply for jobs in the public sector.

Being a Tibetan refugee, we receive exclusive benefits from the Indian government as we can avail of the benefits

and amenities of both State and Central government which is a rare occurrence for the people of this nation. Because we have such a policy, we are able to legally acquire the lands in our names but can we maintain the developments of the land? This is quite difficult to answer as many Tibetan youngsters nowadays are migrating abroad and settling there leaving only the elderly and kids in the settlements. Even though we have major agricultural settlements, we don't have efficient manpower. However, despite minor setbacks here and there, today we are one of the leading successful refugee communities in the world all that is because of the blessing and kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the leadership of the Central Tibetan Administration. In order to make the best use of the agricultural lands we have, we have taken the initiative to provide loans at low interest to youth who are interested in agribusiness and related activities. In addition, they will be awarded for their exemplary reports. In the past 4-5 years, we have witnessed a considerable increase in the interest of people toward farming and agribusiness and that is a very commendable and positive step. We have always encouraged organic farming but for certain lands that are less productive and are wastelands, we are trying to employ *Jatropha* cultivation. This particular practice of farming has been backed by the former President of India, late Dr Abdul Kalam. During his address at the Agricultural University in Tamil Nadu, Dr. Kalam has encouraged *Jatropha* crop plantation. *Jatropha* plants generally produce oilseeds which is a great source of biodiesel. This practice of plantation is usually done on wastelands and it uses less water and prevents soil erosion and does not impact other crops.

In 2019, I visited the Agricultural University in Tamil Nadu along with Chief Planning Commissioner Dr. Kunchok Tsundue. We met with the Director and professors of the university who showed us the types of machinery of biofuel extractions and demonstrated to us the equipment used for research work at the university. We were swamped by the knowledge and the technique they presented to us. Since we have the

fund available, our goal is to gradually employ this technique of farming in the settlements. We have already started the *Jatropha* farming on a 200-acre land in Hunsur settlement and it takes about 2- 4 years for this kind of plantation to yield the result although the economic lifespan of the tree is 30-40 years.

Apart from developing the agricultural and animal husbandry sectors in the settlements, the Department of Home also undertakes rehabilitation assistance to the displaced Tibetan refugees and undertake sponsorship programs for the old, infirm and destitute. As of now, there are 43 settlements under the jurisdiction of Nangsi including 8 settlements in Nepal.

Our department is able to oversee the running of rehabilitation for the Tibetans in exile is because of the effort and hard work of sections in our department. There are 7 different sections in our department namely Administrative, Agriculture, Welfare, Account, Planning, Youth Empowerment Support, Housing and Estate, and Internal Audit. Each of the divisions is responsible for supporting specific aims and objectives. For instance, the administration division is responsible for overseeing the overall administration of the department and of the Tibetan Settlements in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. The account division looks after the main department and settlement accounts, preparing yearly budgets, providing residential facilities to new arrivals, etc. The Youth Empowerment Support or YES provides short to long term skill training and micro-credit to the unemployed youth especially to those who could not continue their school or college, and school dropouts so that the number of unemployed youth is reduced by making them able to stand on their own feet. We have spent around 51 million on the Yes project.

As for the agriculture division, it looks after all the Tibetan Settlements engaging in Agricultural allied activities in India, Nepal, and Bhutan and encourages them to adopt organic farming by giving financial and logistical support. It also aims to ensure agricultural practices that are sustainable and environmentally

friendly. So far we have spent around 180 million for agriculture-related programs.

The welfare division looks after and takes care of destitute in all the Tibetan Settlements and scattered communities and 14 old people home (OPHs) located in different Tibetan Settlements. In 4 years, besides the main expenditure, we have spent around 34 million on miscellaneous aids. Under the Welfare division, we have poverty alleviation section which is categorised into three categories a) Old age (65+ years of age) destitution with ill health who are cared under the Department of Home initiatives. b) Families with a large number of children are cared for under the Department of Education initiatives. c) Youth disabled by diseases who are cared for under the Department of Health initiatives. One staff from each section has been employed for the role. Each settlement has its own poverty alleviation committee. Two staff is employed to field survey all the Tibetan settlements in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. The compiled report of destitute families found during the survey is submitted to the Central Poverty Steering and Alleviation Committee (CPSAC). After thoroughly examining the report, the committee further puts up this report to Kashag for approval. All those approved destitute families receive whatever support and services are needed by them. Four years back, we have had around 1500 destitute elderlies in the Tibetan settlements across India, Nepal, and Bhutan and the number keeps decreasing partially due to improvement in their financial status and mostly because of migration abroad. As of now, there are 1275 destitute elderlies in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. In 4 years, we have spent around 262 million only on the stipend. The OPHs under the administration accommodates around 545 elderlies. On each OPH, we spend around 50-60 million each year. In 4 years we have spent in total around 159 million on the accommodation and needs of the elderlies at OPHs.

In 4 years, the department has initiated 59 different projects in 17 settlements. For those projects, we spent around 52-53 million. We were even able to cover

the compensation grant and provide relief funds to Tibetan shopkeepers whose livelihood has been affected by cases of fire mishap and other natural disasters. In 4 years, we have had over 9 such cases for which around 58 million was spent.

Despite our immense support to alleviate the poverty in our community, it is disheartening to see certain individuals discredit CTA and falsely accused it of not aiding the poor. We have not let shortcomings come in our way to provide for the poor and if any individual see it otherwise then they are urged to visit the respective department for any clarification.

The rehabilitation scheme of the Indian government does not mandate any benefits to the newly arrived Tibetans or undocumented Tibetans in exile, however, the 14th and 15th Kashag took it upon themselves to provide the needful assistance in the matter concerning their rehabilitation. For that purpose, we initially built 75 housing in Bir for the newly arrived which costed around rs 700-800 lakhs. Gradually we keep getting more appeal for such assistance. Their names have been received and verified for eligibility such as those currently enlisted in schools, religious institutions, and the army cannot avail of the support until they passed out from the said institution. Our priority is to help those living in a rented house in the settlement. Out of the 100 applicants from Bylakupee, we have approved 80 of them and spent around 70-80 lakhs in housing.

In Mundgod settlement, we had over 40-50 families, and the housing them is currently under construction. In Dekyiling settlement too, 87 Tibetan families from in and around Dehradun who, until now, could not be facilitated in the Tibetan refugee settlements and had temporarily settled outside the jurisdictions of the Department of Home have been allotted the housing. 25 families of newly arrived Tibetans are also included in the auspices of the project. In total, the new housing will cater to 112 Tibetan families.

I have once said in the parliamentary session to devise my full effort in solving the rehabilitation problems faced by the newly arrived Tibetans in India which I believe is almost achieved. A similar housing project is under progress in Kullu but due to the pandemic, the work is currently put on hold. In Delhi, there are around 130-140 families in need of housing and we are currently working on that project. Till now we have spent around 296 million on the housing project. Looking after the welfare of Tibetans in the settlement is not the standalone responsibility of the home department as the department also looks after the welfare of CTA staff through its housing and estate division. During the 15th Kashag, our data shows that there is around 343 staff in and around Dharamshala. Out of the numbers, we have been able to allot the staff quarters to 243 staff. We have constructed 58 new staff quarters in Ghangkyi. Now we need around 30 more staff quarter and the housing issue of the CTA staff will be resolved.

On the environmental aspect, we have dealt with poor road conditions for a long time which has now been fixed and the smooth pavement is laid out. For the maintenance of road and cleanliness, we have spent around 187 million during the 4 years. In terms of the CTA staff salary, there has been a considerable rise in the pay, for instance, the pay of CTA's official driver has been raised by 121% times and that of a Secretary by 109%. This also includes welfare benefits.

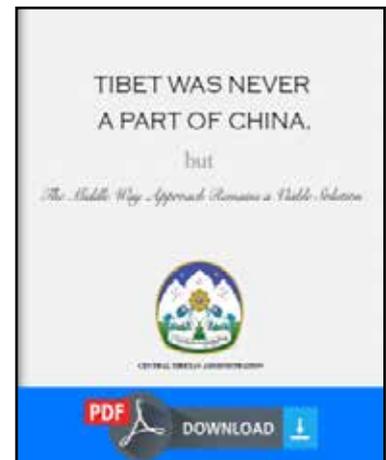
**Tibet TV:** What are the initiatives undertaken by the Home Department for the Tibetan community in Nepal?

**Kalon:** There are 8 Tibetan communities in Nepal under 8 settlement officers. The yearly expenditure on the administration of each settlement is completely borne by the Home Department. For instance, according to our data, in a year we spend around 50-70 lakhs INR depending on the population of the respective settlement. During these 4 years, we have spent 345 lakhs. Besides that, we had initiated many development projects and the expense of which is done through

SARD to the Lutheran World Foundation in Nepal. When a severe earthquake had hit Nepal in 2015 causing widespread destruction, our department offered 300 million in relief fund.

**Tibet TV:** In the past 4 years, were there any issues and challenges that the department had to face and how did you overcome it?

**Kalon:** Generally speaking, there are many obstacles in any kind of administration. But with determination and will, the obstacles can be overcome. At present, we haven't faced any external pressure or challenges. In fact, the government of India has been utterly generous and supportive of our struggle. In case of any issues we face, the Indian authority is always kind enough to guide us. However, the obstacles we are facing at times are caused mainly by internal matters. Like I said before, defaming and discrediting the administration from the comfort of their home is easy without recognising the effort and hard work that goes into good governance, policy implementations, and monitoring and evaluation.



## 15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Finance Kalon Karma Yeshi



*15th Kashag Completes Four Years in Office: Exclusive interview with Finance Kalon Karma Yeshi*

On the occasion of the completion of the 4th and the penultimate year of the 15th Kashag, Kalon Karma Yeshi, Department of Finance, CTA speaks with Tenzin Chemey, Tibet TV on the phenomenal milestones set by the 15th Kashag in the areas of finance and resource mobilization in Tibetan diaspora.

Following is the English translation of the interview with the Kalon, originally conducted in Tibetan.

**Tibet TV:** Could you walk us through the department's initiatives and its significant accomplishments in the past 4 years?

**Kalon:** The Department of Finance as one of the major departments of the Central Tibetan Administration runs under three nonprofit registered bodies which are: His Holiness the Dalai Lama Charitable Trust; Tibetan Administration's Welfare Society; the Social and Resource Development Fund (SARD) and Gang-Jong Development Finance Pvt. Ltd which was incorporated on 27 November 2017. All the developmental undertakings of the Department of Finance is lawfully executed through these four registered bodies.

One of the most crucial functionaries of

the Finance department is the Budget section. This section monitors the CTA's budgetary cycle which includes planning, coordination and supervision. It monitors the budget proposals of each Department and offices under CTA and maintains its overall account. It is also responsible for reviewing budget proposals of all Tibetan settlements and offices and presenting it to Kashag and then is forwarded to Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile for approval. Due to the grace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the vision and leadership of Kashag, the Budget section has seen tremendous growth.

The annual budget for the activities and functions of the CTA's seven departments, autonomous bodies and other CTA offices has increased by three-fold since 2011. The consolidated budget approved this year was around 3 billion, which is three times more than our budget in 2011.

There is a tremendous increase in this year's annual budget and respectively the allocation for each department has increased as has their functions, capacities and programs. Through the budget section, the Department plays a key role in supporting the overall organisational development, optimising the roles of each department, ensuring

that our financial plans are sustainable and well-grounded and thus driving forward CTA's short and long-term vision.

Likewise, the Tibetan voluntary Green book Contribution is equally important. The green book is a bridge that connects the Tibetan public and the Central Tibetan Administration and the green book contribution is the fundamental duty of each and every Tibetan. Tibetans in India, Nepal and Bhutan are able to pay their green book dues without any issues so far. However, among Tibetans living in the west, due to various constraints, it has been difficult to get 100% payment. To resolve this, we have made extraordinary efforts during my term to achieve 95 per cent payment. We have reached this target in smaller diaspora communities but efforts are still going on in the larger ones.

Thirdly, we have achieved recognisable growth in the members for the bluebook solidarity movement; around 7900 members in total. The bluebook solidarity movement is a project to raise awareness about the Tibetan political situation and culture to non-Tibetan friends around the world. It also encourages our friends to contribute 10\$ or 20\$ or 50\$ per annum towards the main trust fund of the Central Tibetan Administration. We are still committed in our endeavours to increase the membership by liaising with the Offices of Tibet and Settlement Offices. If we can do that, in the future, the whole expenditure of the CTA will be met through this fund. So, this blue book solidarity movement is essential to raise funds for the CTA's trust fund and garner international support for the Tibet movement.

Fourth, Gang-Jong Development Finance has made significant progress towards supporting small and medium Tibetan business who are unable to approach banks and other financial institutions due to lack of collaterals. In December 2018, Gangjong Finance,

a non-banking financial corporation of the Department of Finance, became a legitimate Non-banking Financial Institution registered with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Through Gangjong Development Finance in the first year (2017), a loan of 9,13,00,000 INR was disbursed to 913 sweater sellers for a fixed period of six-months with a relatively low-interest rate. The loan amount was repaid 100% by February/March of 2018. In 2018, a loan of 13,14,00,000 INR was disbursed to 1314 households followed by a loan of 18 crores to 900 households. All of which was repaid 100%. By supporting Tibetan business to thrive through its low-interest loan services, the Gangjong Finance has achieved a significant milestone in the past over 3 years in strengthening the self-reliance and sustainability of the Tibetan community in India.

In addition to sweater sellers, three additional beneficiary groups have been included in the program which includes those selling trinkets on pavements in tourist destinations, those raising horses and mules for traditional caravan services, and those running taxi services.

**Tibet TV:** There is a sizeable population of Tibetans in Nepal. Can you discuss the key welfare and development initiatives of the Finance department focusing on these population?

**Kalon:** In continuation of the vision of the 14th Kashag, the incumbent Kashag have implemented a series of new ventures in Nepal focusing on the Tibetan population there. The goal is to strengthen the development and long-term resiliency of the Tibetan community. Accordingly, the Finance department appointed two new coordinators of SARD and TED respectively with the objective to support the development efforts and sustenance of the Tibetans living in Nepal. As part of this initiative, I attended the 50th founding anniversary of Lodrig Tibetan settlement on 15 October 2016. Thanks to the visionary leadership of the 15th Kashag, we have established a new partnership with the Lodrig settlement

office for implementation of settlement sustenance-related programs for the Tibetans in Nepal.

Of the total Tibetan diaspora population, Tibetans in Nepal constitute only 10 per cent but the budget allocated for the Tibetans in Nepal forms 15 per cent of the total annual budget of CTA. Every year, USD 3 lakh through the PRM and USAID 5 lakh through the USAID is disbursed to support developmental efforts in the Tibetan population. The shared commitment and partnership between the CTA, the Lodrig Office, Snowlion Trust and our funders have facilitated to making these progress as per the Kashag's vision.

**Tibet TV:** In this final year of the 15th Kashag, what are the initiatives that the Kashag is hoping to complete this year and are there any new undertaking planned for this year?

**Kalon:** With regard to implementing new initiatives, it is not viable as the electoral process for the 2021 Kashag and Tibetan Parliament has already begun and we need to adhere to the applied guidelines.

An important endeavour that is already underway is the registration for Gangjong Finance as a full-fledged bank. Earlier the minimum capital in the licence for Small finance banks was Rs 100 crore and accordingly we had envisioned and strategised a plan of action to gain the license. However, last year the RBI revised the minimum paid-up capital requirement for Small Finance Banks to Rs 200 crores instead of Rs 100 crores earlier. In light of these unforeseen challenges, the course of our plan is certainly affected and slowed down but efforts will continue and if not in this Kashag, the vision will be realised by future leadership.

Secondly, self-reliance whether in business or any means of livelihood is absolutely imperative for the Tibetan community. Looking back at the status of Tibetans in the 1950s, we have come so far in terms of education, welfare, financial and social status. However, the attitude of dependency is still present

in the community. The dependency syndrome hampers the long term sustenance of society. I think we need to root out this attitude and become a confident, fully self-sustained society.

Thirdly, public participation in the Tibetan voluntary Green book Contribution and the blue book solidarity movement is extremely crucial and increasing their membership will remain a high-priority while I hold the office.

Lastly, the most important initiative is the renewal of the second USAID five year grant. In 2016, we have received the first five-year grant of 23 million for strengthening self-reliance and resilience of Tibetan communities in South Asia. The grant expires in September 2021. In order to continue receiving the grant for the next Kashag, the incumbent Kashag and the Department of Finance has already begun preliminary preparations.

Once approved, this will ensure the vitality of Tibetan communities, institutions and businesses for the next five years while propelling forward the CTA's vision for the peaceful resolution of the Tibet issue and the preservation of the Tibet's unique identity and culture.

I take this opportunity to thank the dedicated staff of CTA and the Department of Finance, as well as the exceptional leadership of the Kashag, under whose vision, we have set phenomenal milestones in this 15th term of Kashag.

Lastly and most importantly, I pay my profound reverence and gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama who has guided us throughout with his blessings and enlightened counsel.



## Free Nations vs Communist China: Prospects and Challenges for Tibet

After US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's speech at the Richard Nixon Library & Museum calling on free nations to change the Chinese Communist Party, emblematic of a major shift in US-China ties, has ignited a new discourse around the world on overcoming the totalitarian regime.

Against this significant development, the Office of Tibet based in London led by Representative Sonam Frasi organised a virtual panel discussion inviting three eminent speakers: CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay, Michael Van Walt, Professor of international law at Golden Gate University in San Francisco and legal advisor to CTA and Norman John Baker, Former MP and Minister of State at the Home Office, UK government.

Representative Frasi welcomed the distinguished panellists invited to the discussion entitled, "USA calls Free Nations to change Chinese Communist Party: Analysis and Prospects for Tibet", a topic he emphasized was "not only current and topical, but relevant to the future prospect and status of Tibet".

Noting the rising anti-China sentiment around the world and the attitudinal shift, he opined that the future developments could possibly bode the end of the authoritarian government not unlike the historic fragmentation of the Soviet Union, despite China's economic and military might.

Representative went on to observe that US policy has come full circle from Sino-America Rapprochement in 1970-71 under President Nixon and Kissinger, dealing a severe blow to the Tibetan movement, to the recent policy shift under President Trump and Secretary Pompeo with formal calls for democratic allies to change the Chinese Communist Party.

Touching on the global anti-China sentiment due to the handling of coronavirus, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay stated that China continues to face major backlash, citing a recent



*CTA President Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay speaks at the virtual panel discussion on "USA calls Free Nations to change Chinese Communist Party: Analysis and Prospects for Tibet" organised by Office of Tibet, London. Screenshot image*

study conducted by the 'Institute of contemporary relations,' a govt affiliated think tank, which revealed that global anti-China sentiment is at its highest since Tiananmen Square crackdown.

He shared that 130 countries at the WHO had pressed on investigating the origin of the coronavirus as it became common knowledge that Chinese government tried to hide information for almost 3-6 weeks. A critical period during which had the information been updated, 95 percent of the global crisis could have been prevented, as a major organisation alleges. The result of which is that now more than 9 trillion dollars loss of global economy and job loss has occurred, thereby making it difficult for politicians to assuage citizens' disenchantment. Hence, the global leaders are under tremendous pressure because of which leaders are trying to make China accountable.

Referring to the international concerns about the security threat of Chinese technology, Sikyong noted the significant shift in diplomatic stance, such as the statement from Washington DC recognising China as competition no. 1 or rival no. 1 which is further bolstered by the EU designating China as economic competitor and rival last

year. Subsequently, in January this year, the EU unveiled a recommended strategy for its member states to defend from Beijing dominating the 5g market. On security terms, Poland, Romania, Latvia have signed onto an agreement on 5g.

Also noteworthy, the UK government recently reversed the decision on 5g and banned Huawei in great Britain. UK government's proposition for D10, an alliance of 10 democratic countries to create an alternate source for 5g technology, curbs dependence on Chinese technology.

Sikyong described these developments as a whole, an indication that China is under pressure to be responsible and an accountable member of the international community and conform to the rule of law.

China's response has been on the contrary; cracking down in Hong Kong and diluting the basic law of Hong Kong, arresting so many under the new law, essentially compromising the one country-two systems.

As illustrated in China's rise to becoming the 2nd largest donor of the UN after the US, and similarly, the

World Bank's lending to China at low-interest rates upto 2 billions of which Chinese government gives 200 million dollars to the UN in order to influence it, Dr Sangay said China is moving full throttle in undercutting the independent functions of international institutions, thus posing a looming threat upon the world which has depended on these institutes since the world war II.

For instances, UN Food and Agriculture Organization which was led by former Chinese vice-minister of Agriculture. And in 2018, Houlin Zhao, who had started his career at China's Ministry for Post and Telecommunications, acquired 2nd four year term as the Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union, a crucial body that sets the technical standard for communication network.

Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres appointed Liu Zhenmin, formerly Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of China to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, a key position. The international civil aviation organization which regulates global air travel headed is headed by Liu Fang, a Chinese national.

The appointment of Jiang Duan, an official at the Chinese Mission in Geneva, who was nominated and confirmed by the Asia regional grouping to a seat on the consultative group of UNHRC raised international concerns over the credibility of the UN body, making it apparent that the voices of Tibetans and Uyghur even at the UNHRC were going to be silenced. Duan holds the position until March 2021.

He noted that as things are optimistic from one side, similarly, it was bleak from another.

“On one hand, the democratic countries are coming together to make China accountable to liberal values, on the other hand, China is installing key people at UN bodies, WHO, WEF and hence the challenges remain.”

He, therefore, appealed the Tibetans to be more vocal and promote advocacy, hold protests out in the streets to revive Tibet advocacy in the international forum recalling the 90s when Tibet was a prominent issue.

Similarly, he urged friends of Tibet around the world to be more vocal, vigilant and actively optimize at this opportune time.

He concluded by noting that both good opportunities as well as major challenges exist where the cause of Tibet is concerned in this current climate.

Representative Frasi then followed up by posing a question to the Sikyong, “Is the call from the US a credible scenario that the world could see or have the possibility to change the CCP?”

Sikyong agreed that it appears so, referring to the belief formerly held by politicians like Kissinger that engagement and cooperation with China would ensure it would also conform to international norms, and which has proved wrong for the past 40 years. With Washington now, arriving at the consensus that China is a rival, from the security aspect, which is now shared across the departments of the administration. The US government is highlighting the plight of Uighurs and Hong Kongers to hold China accountable and the sentiment is common across the aisle. The EU, like-minded countries and democracies are generally, coming to realise that what Tibetans have been saying is true and are extending support, he concluded.

## Union Minister Kiren Rijju's message on His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birth anniversary



India's State for Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijju greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 85th birthday. Photo: Screengrab

India's minister of the State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Honourable Shri Kiren Rijju greets Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 85th birthday in a video message broadcasted earlier this morning.

Extending his greetings, the Union Minister said, “His Holiness the Dalai Lama is one of the most revered, admired, and worshipped global spiritual leaders and the most honoured guest of India”.

“We feel blessed for his presence here in our country which he regards as his Arya bhumi

His Holiness the Dalai Lama proudly calls himself the son of India and he is one of the greatest ambassadors of the ancient Indian knowledge.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama often quotes this prayer as his guiding motivation, “For as long as space remains, for as

long as sentient beings remain, until then may I too remain to dispel the miseries of the world”.

His Holiness transcends the barriers of religion, national, culture, and race.

The Tibetan people, the people of the Himalayan region, the Dharma followers, and the people of this world need the continued presence of the institution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

I wish him all the very best for his good health pray for his long life on the auspicious occasion of his 85th birthday.”

## Bringing change to China: an opportunity for governments to course correct on Tibet

Global anti-China sentiments have tipped an all-time high in successive months following China's early mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic and its aggressive leveraging of the crisis to advance undue and illegal territorial and maritime claims.

Much like the COVID-19, strategic realization across the global political spectrum of the CCP regime's hegemonic agenda has gone pretty much viral.

Tibet expert and renowned advisor for global peace processes, Dr Michael Van Walt speaking at a discussion organised by the Office of Tibet London this week said that the global attitude and policy shift towards China could have renewed a conducive environment for bringing the question of Tibet back to the center of the discourse.

The executive president of Kreddha, who is an unmatched authority in terms of the study of Sino-Tibet conflict said now is the "critical juncture" to be vocal about the status of Tibet as he believes that "this discussion is indeed critical to bring change in China".

"The window of opportunity for this kind of thing is always extremely short," he explains, "70 years of Chinese Communist propaganda have greatly impacted people's perception of Tibet's status at the time of the invasion. Many people including foreign ministry officials and journalists that influence policy, many assume that Tibet was part of imperial China in some way."

The upside for China is that it has been successful at shaping the discourse in its favour on basis of historical claims which are difficult to assess requiring extensive research based on centuries-old historical sources that are dispersed in varied languages.

As a result, "many people have started to doubt" and he adds that leaving such misrepresentation unchallenged emboldens Beijing to maintain the status



*Bringing change to China: an opportunity for governments to course correct on Tibet: Dr Michael Van Walt, legal advisor, scholar and a long time supporter of Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.*

quo on Tibet.

Contrary to Chinese claims, Dr Michael argues Tibet was in fact historically never a part of China.

"Tibet was not part of China during Mongol empire, it did not become part of the Yuan dynasty, It was not ruled by Chinese Ming dynasty and the Manchu Ching emperor's relation with Dalai Lamas and Tibet never resulted in Tibet's incorporation into China," he said.

Based his 10 years of extensive research which he and his colleague undertook through engagement with over 100 scholars starting with the rise of models of Genghis Khan eight centuries ago which is exactly the period Beijing claims Tibet first became part of China, Michale said none of the claims PRC made regarding its alleged historical sovereignty over Tibet holds water.

These conclusions were all corroborated by contemporaneans, Tibetan Mongolian and Chinese sources. The complete analysis is contained in the 'Tibet Brief 2020' which will be available on Amazon bookstore by October this year.

Shedding more light on how the historical status of independent status

and its 70 years of experience with China holds the key to the current global discourse, Dr Michael cited Tibetan's 70 years of experience in the kinds of policies that we are seeing now being carried out in Hong Kong, against Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The oppressive policies of integration and assimilation were blueprinted in Tibet.

By neglecting its moral as well as legal obligations to recognizing China's forceful and illegal occupation of Tibet, and looking the other way is what has emboldened Beijing govt to assert expanding territorial claims and influence.

One of the few ways to send a very strong signal to China "by questioning the legitimacy of China's rule in Tibet," he asserted.

"Also questing the legitimacy of Chinese behaviour in Hong Kong and the legitimacy of China's claims to Taiwan and the South China Sea."

Drive to bring about change in China, he concludes, is an opportunity for governments to course correct on Tibet now.

## UK should mirror US' Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, sanction Chinese officials meddling in the Dalai Lama's succession: Former UK Minister

With a bipartisan consensus in Washington on toughening stance on China, the US government has already embarked on the path of economic decoupling with Beijing. Taking it a step further, the US Secretary of State last month issued a vociferous call for allied countries and Chinese people to join efforts to change China: to insist at all times on reciprocity, transparency and accountability from them.

Culminating upon the American call for the free nations to change China, the Office of Tibet, London organized a live panel discussion titled 'USA calls free nations to change Chinese Communist Party: Prospects and Analysis on Tibet' on 17 August via Tibet TV Facebook.

Despite constant technical interferences during the live streaming, the hour and a half panel event transpired into a coruscating discussion on prospects and analysis on Tibet in light of growing climate of anti-China furore and the international push back at the PRC government's hegemonic ambitions.

Among the illustrious panel of speakers were Rt Hon Norman Baker, former UK Home Affairs minister, former liberal democrat MP, and long time Tibet supporter. He is former president of Tibet Society, the world's oldest Tibet Support Group and a member of the All-party parliamentary group for Tibet in the House of Commons, Westminster parliament. He has written many articles on human rights abuse of Chinese occupied Tibet.

Addressing the critical question on how the capitals in Western Europe and London will heed the call of the US and allies, Rt Hon Baker proposed three policy recommendations for the EU and UK to enact in order to counter Chinese advances.

"First, we need to mirror the US with the Magnitsky Act to impose sanctions on individual members of the Chinese



*UK should mirror US' Reciprocal Access to Tibet, impose sanctions on Chinese officials meddling in the Dalai Lama's succession: Former UK Minister and MP, Rt Hon Norman Baker.*

government who behave in the way we regard as reprehensible, unacceptable."

"Secondly, we need to push Reciprocal Access to Tibet, which again the US has been leading on, in the British parliament. My former colleague of All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet, Tim Loughton who chairs that group has introduced the bill to require the UK govt to impose that. It should be adopted by the UK government."

"Third issue which we need to be very, very firm on is the issue of the succession to His Holiness. I am very pleased that in EU and UK takes steps that make it very clear that we will not accept Chinese imposition of fake Dalai Lama as they have imposed a fake Panchen Lama."

In the case of the issue of the Dalai Lams's succession, he stressed that it was incredibly important that the world says it very clearly, and that "any Chinese officials who attempt to be part of this fiasco of appointing their own Dalai Lama should be subject to Magnitsky Act conditions. They should have to pay for that personally."

Speaking in terms of the prospects for Tibet and resolution of its vexed, prostrated issue, Rt Hon Baker said

given Britain historical association with Tibet and the neighbouring China and India, the UK is in "a very strong position to be able to challenge the lies that Beijing tells about the history of Chinese involvement with Tibet" and "to give evidence to that fact from our archives and historical record."

"We were a presence in independent Tibet, we were there to sign the Lhasa convention not with the Chinese but with the Tibetan government. We were there to sign the Simla Convention in 1917 with Tibetans, not Chinese. We saw the independent Tibetan government, we saw the independent foreign policy, Tibetan currency, Tibetan stamps."

"We saw that Tibet was an independent nation and that will not be forgotten."

At a time when more and more countries are beginning to push back at the authoritarian and dictatorship one-party rule, recognizing its multitudinous presence in respective countries as security, political threats, Rt Hon Baker said, UK too will fight back.

The CCP now poses threats to the world equivalent of Nazi Germany, he said as he urged countries to stand up to China together. "Nazi Germany ended up

in war because the world did nothing about it...Thats why we look at the US response and we support their view that if we don't change communist china, they will change us."

However, the former minister noted the governments needed to engage in a far more coordinated way, especially the countries that are more vulnerable to the China threat.

"In terms of Chinese dams which are drying out rivers in India, the border villages being conducted along the Chinese borders in Tibet, and the fact that we had incursions of Chinese led to the confrontation of Chinese and Indians quite recently. We need to get the India

govt more involved. They don't want to necessarily antagonise Chinese but like everyone else, they have to realize that doing nothing is not an option anymore."

But in respect to bringing concretes, real change in China, he argued that such a change can be induced from inside.

"Soviet Union govt changed because of Gorbachev. The Chinese government will have to find its own Gorbachev to change."

In the meantime, the rest of the world can try to educate the Chinese people who have been fed lies and encourage them to replace the Xi Jinping and his colleagues with a government more

open to reason and to respecting human rights. At the same time, protecting one's national interests, human rights, and continuing to push back Chinese tactics.

"It is a long battle, one that won't be won overnight. but we have to engage in a coordinated way, then we can eventually win," said Rt Hon Baker.

"As you said, Sonam [Fras] in the beginning, no government last forever, no empower last forever, so let us now limit the damage which the governs in Beijing can do and let sit back and let wait for the day that ghastly govt of Beijing is no more."

## Challenge posed by China is serious; Either we transform China or China transforms us: Sikyong Dr Sangay at CACN China hearing

The Wuhan originated COVID-19 in China has radically disrupted global events including diplomatic calendars impacting significant international meetings to be held online. The first formal hearing on China of the Canadian House of Commons Special Committee on Canada-China Relations (CACN) held on Thursday, August 6, 2020, was one such anticipated events affected by the pandemic.

The special Canadian parliamentary committee was established last year against the backdrop of deteriorating Canada-China bilateral relations marred by diplomatic and trade disputes. The committee examines and reviews all aspects of the Canada-China relationship, including, but not limited to, consular, economic, legal, security and diplomatic relations.

CTA President Dr. Lobsang Sangay was officially invited as the first speaker to the committee's hearing on China.

Dr Sangay was joined by the former Ambassador of Canada to the People's Republic of China, David Mulroney, chair of the committee MP Geoff Regan, the Liberal party and MP Dan Albas,



CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay speaking at the first formal hearing on China of the Canadian House of Commons Special Committee on Canada-China Relations. Photo: Screengrab

Conservative MP Stéphane Bergeron, Bloc Québécois, and MP Jack Harris of New Democratic Party as its vice-chairs and the members of the committee.

In his keynote address, President Dr. Sangay addressed the masked diplomacy of China targeted toward undermining the liberal and democratic values and human rights values.

"The challenge posed by the Communist Party of China is very serious. Either we transform China or China transforms us"

said President Dr Sangay and remarked that being the second-largest donor to the UN, China attempts to restructure the UN by appointing key personnel whose integrity is to dismantle the democratic and human rights values.

"What they are attempting at now is to redefine human rights. They have passed two resolutions redefining human rights and if such an attitude is continued then the human right values we are so well aware will be diluted".

## What Canada could learn from Tibet?

What happened in Tibet in the 1950s the 'elite cooptation' of China influencing politicians, businessmen, intellectuals, and media are now taking place as already seen in Canada. President Sangay mentioned the issue of Canada's two Michaels who are unjustly held captive by the Chinese government for over 600 days.

"My solidarity is with the families. The choice is clear. If the Canadian government submits to the demands of China to release Meng Wanzhou in exchange for the release of the two Canadians, it is very much likely that more such cases will happen in the future where China would blatantly use more Canadians as hostages just to pressure the Canadian government for concession. I think Canada has taken the right stand here not to succumb to the pressure of China".

"We are already seeing the worst of our prediction in Taiwan, Hong Kong, East

Turkistan, a 'repetition of the tragedy of Tibet'. There are lots to be learned from the tragedy of Tibet".

As for the security law passed in Hong Kong which many critics claimed it as 'end of Hong Kong', President Sangay noted that similar law known as unity law was also passed in Tibet and these laws, he said, are simply to undermine democratic values, freedom of speech, and to encourage political repression of the people.

"We have been warning the nations and global leaders that the tragedy of Tibet should not be neglected as the incident could strike again".

Finally, President Dr Lobsang Sangay put forward to the committee a recommendation to pass a motion recognising and supporting the Middle Way Approach as a policy- seeking genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the framework of the Chinese constitution.

"A legitimate dialogue must be encouraged between the envoys of the Dalai Lama and the representatives of China. It is a win-win proposition for both the Chinese government and the Tibetan people".

He also urged the Canadian government to join the allies of democracy or like-minded countries who support and uphold liberal values. Together, they can pressurise the Chinese government to become a responsible member of the international community one that abides and respect the human rights of the Tibetan people, Uyghurs, Taiwanese, and the Hong Kongers.

President Sangay's plea for a motion supporting the middle way approach as a policy has been taken up for consideration by the members and there will be a proper discussion held on the subject in the upcoming committee meeting.

## Tibet and Hong Kong: a spotlight on broken promises of China

In a webinar organised by the Office of Tibet, London on Monday 20th July, eminent panellists, with authority and expertise in their respective professions, discussed Tibet and Hong Kong in the wake of China's passing of the national security law for Hong Kong.

Dr. Lobsang Sangay, President of the Central Tibetan Administration, in his opening remarks said, in 1951, China signed the 17-point agreement with Tibet which is essentially one country two systems. The Tibetan delegates went to Beijing with the intention that the agreement would be signed as equal partners which did not happen and the representatives of Tibet had to signed the agreement under duress. Despite everything, the provisions of 1951 agreements were violated and all the promises made to Tibetans were denied including regional autonomy, uninterrupted position, and authority of

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, promotion of Tibetan language, etc. In 1954, His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Beijing to persuade the Chinese leaders like Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai to grant Tibet the autonomy as promised in the agreement. But his efforts were futile.

In 1956, His Holiness visited India to participate in the 2500 anniversary of Buddha Purnima and that time His Holiness's initial wish was to stay in India but the then Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai came to India thrice and persuaded His Holiness to return to Tibet. Once again he made hollow promises regarding the implementation of the 17 point agreement. With that assurance, His Holiness returned to Tibet. What happened following His Holiness return to Tibet is history known to everyone.

Dr Sangay added that China also promised Tibetan peace and prosperity

through its expansionist policy which afterwards turned into treachery and tension, the beginning of the downfall of Tibet. During the extreme period of tension, there were discussions and debates within the elite circle as to whether the presence of Chinese in Tibet is beneficial or not. In a way, they were seeking to curb the tension through elite cooptation a strategy that is now familiarised in Hong Kong.

"Our experience has been tragic and now Hong Kong is going to be Tibet number 2. It's unfortunate and our solidarity is with Hong Kong people," he assured.

Tom Tugendhat MP, Chairman of Foreign Affairs Select Committee, in his remarks referred to the changing relationship between the United Kingdom and China in recent years, citing the example of the UK government's Huawei decision.



Panelists on Tibet and Hong Kong: a spotlight on broken promises of China. Photo: Screenshot.

The relationship between the UK and China has become significantly worse than it was since Xi took over as the President. Xi has made it harder and harder for countries like the UK to deal with. As far as the UK is concerned there are very obvious touchstones most obvious is Hong Kong to whom the UK has a remaining obligation under the Sino-British Joint Declaration recognising and granting residency to almost 3 million eligible Hong Kong citizens. He also highlighted the grave about China's attempt to influence academic freedom in the UK. He expressed alarm over the London Chinese embassy's role in organising different protests and pressurizing Chinese students and their parents in mainland China thereby undermining independence in academic excellence in some of the UK's finest institutions.

MP Tim Loughton, Co-Chair of All-party Parliamentary Group for Tibet in the UK, touched on many subjects including the case of Huawei and his recent presentation of Tibet Reciprocal Access bill in the House of Commons. He said that after a lot of pressure, Huawei no longer going to provide the next generation of telecom in the UK.

He also mentioned China's subtle yet effective influence in the UK boardrooms and expressed great concern about China's growing influence on university campuses through Confucius Institutes. He acknowledged these institutions as the mouthpiece of China's propaganda.

He also highlighted the unfolding Hong Kong issues and affirmed what is seen there is very much like 'salami slicing' of rights and liberty' of the people of Hong Kong. He informed about an expected statement in the UK House of common where it is likely that the extradition agreement between Britain and Hong Kong would be held suspended. He calls it a 'tangible move'.

As for the Reciprocal Bill that MP Loughton introduced in the House of Common last year, he said that he was greatly inspired by the US who first brought in the legislation.

"I took that piece of legislation and had it rewritten in the House of Common to suit the UK legislation and reintroduced it as private members bill".

"The legislation surely had a significant impact on China as various US Congress

members including Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and others have all been banned from entering China. I, therefore, want to continue pushing for measures such as this to show China that we are absolutely serious so that China cannot go on threatening countries into submission," he said.

In his concluding remarks, MP Loughton stated that in all the prevailing situations, it is important to not lose sight of the ongoing and long-standing atrocity and repression still taking place in Tibet.

Professor Kerry Brown, Director of the Lau China Institute at King's College, London highlighted three issues: Geopolitics, Opportunity, and Domestic issues in China. Professor mentioned that in his assumption China's recent issues/ clashes with America, Europe, UK, and Australia is very much unplanned. He further mentioned that because of high awareness of Xinjiang suppression the Tibet issue is receiving a greater awareness because the party secretary in Xinjiang was the party secretary of Tibet and that assures the replication of security measures and methods used in Tibet are now being used in Xinjiang today. In his final remarks, professor Kerry stated that the spotlight on the domestic issues in china as per his assessment is that the standardisation of ethnic minorities. That the ethnic minority issues are absolutely part of the security framework, a domestic policy framework which has no space for meeting other ethnic groups.

The panellists later took questions from the online audience which was read out to them by Representative Sonam Tsering Frasi who moderated the panel. Despite a minor technical glitch the discussion overall managed to highlight the eerie similarities of China's aggressive moves in Hong Kong today to what China did to Tibet.



## CTA President Calls on China to Heed the Demands of the UN Experts to Provide Information and Access to 11th Panchen Lama



CTA President Calls on China to Heed the Demands of the UN Experts to Provide Information and Access to 11th Panchen Lama

Five UN independent mandate holders: the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief issued a joint communication on 25 years long enforced disappearance of Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima by the government of China. In this regard, the President of the Central Tibetan Administration Dr. Lobsang Sangay issued the following statement:

**Statement by the President of the Central Tibetan Administration Dr. Lobsang Sangay**

**Date: 4 August 2020**

*Five UN independent experts-cum-mandates have issued a joint communication to the government of China demanding it to provide prompt and detailed information and access to Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima who is undergoing enforced disappearance since the last 25 years. The UN experts have further*

*appealed the government of China "to ensure that Tibetan Buddhists are able to freely practice their religion, traditions and culture without interference." The Central Tibetan Administration on behalf of all Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet, would like to welcome and thank the UN experts for their crucial and critical intervention.*

*Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was merely six years old when he and his entire family members were abducted by the Chinese authorities on 17 May 1995. He has been deprived of his religious education in Tibetan Buddhism for the last 25 years. It is unacceptable on every legal as well as moral grounds that a person even at the age of 31 should be denied freedom and the right to determine his own future.*

*The case of enforced disappearance of the Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima evinces the egregious human rights violations in Tibet including the violation of Tibetans' right to freedom of religion. As rightly noted by the UN experts, the regulation of reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddhas interferes in the Tibetans' right to select its own religious leaders and is aimed to serve*

*as a political tool to control the Tibetan populace into total subjugation. We, therefore, call upon the government of China to heed the demands of the UN independent experts to promptly provide regular information and access to Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, his parents and family members as well as Jadrel Rinpoche, former abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, the seat of Panchen Lama. Furthermore, the Chinese government should stop interfering in the religious traditions of the Tibetans and cease the destruction of the Tibetan cultural heritage.*

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### US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo wishes His Holiness the Dalai Lama a belated birthday

US Secretary of State Pompeo, at the press briefing earlier this week extended a warm belated birthday wish to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 85th.

Greeting the Tibetan spiritual leader at the beginning of his remarks, Secretary Pompeo said, "A belated happy birthday to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who celebrated his 85th birthday on Monday of this week".

A day before, Secretary Pompeo had announced visa restrictions on PRC government and Chinese Communist Party officials deemed responsible for restricting journalists, tourists, diplomats or other US officials from entering autonomous regions in Tibet under the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018.

## CTA President calls US sanctions on top Chinese officials of Xinjiang ‘a right and a timely message to China’

The United States on Thursday slapped sanctions on three senior officials of the Chinese Communist Party, including Chen Quanguo, party secretary of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and member of Politburo, for involvement in “gross human rights violations” against Uyghurs and other minorities in Xinjiang, also known as East Turkestan.

Just a day earlier, the US Department of State had announced visa bans against Chinese government officials deemed responsible for barring foreigners’ access to Tibet.

In a statement welcoming the US’ timely intervention, President Dr Lobsang Sangay called the sanction a ‘right action and message’ to China by the US Government saying ‘it cannot continue to act with impunity against Uyghurs, Tibetans and Mongolians.’

With Chen Quanguo, former Party Secretary of the so-call TAR, amongst the targeted officials, Dr Sangay expressed that ‘China’s unchecked human rights violations in Tibet has emboldened it to carry out similar violations in Xinjiang’ and that Tibet was a trial run for the Chinese government’s brutal campaign of oppression playing out in Xinjiang.

The statement acknowledged and appreciated the timely intervention by the US government and continued global leadership in safeguarding human rights and religious freedom around the world, especially in China.

Among those sanctioned was the architect of the grid-style surveillance and detention camps, Chen Quanguo. Chen developed the grid system of mass physical and technological surveillance when he was party secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region from 2011 to 2016. He later replicated the same tactics over an amplified scale in the Uyghurs



*CTA President calls the US sanctions on top Chinese officials ‘a right and a timely message to China’  
File image*

and other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang.

In Thursday statement, Secretary Mike Pompeo said Chen and two other Xinjiang officials—Zhu Hailun, Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Political and Legal Committee (XPLC) and Wang Mingshan, the current Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau (XPSB)—were now ineligible for entry into the United States. Their immediate families are barred as well.

“The United States will not stand idly by as the CCP carries out human rights abuses targeting Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and members of other minority groups in Xinjiang, to include forced labor, arbitrary mass detention, and forced population control, and attempts to erase their culture and Muslim faith,” Secretary Pompeo said.

In a coordinated statement, the US Treasury Department said it was building upon the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act in sanctioning the senior Chinese leaders, Chen Quanguo and Zhu Hailun, party secretary of the Xinjiang political and

legal committee.

“The entity and officials are being designated for their connection to serious human rights abuse against ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, which reportedly include mass arbitrary detention and severe physical abuse, among other serious abuses targeting Uyghurs, a Turkic Muslim population indigenous to Xinjiang, and other ethnic minorities in the region,” it said.

Also designated are the Xinjiang Public Security Bureau (XPSB), as well as the current Director and Communist Party Secretary of the XPSB, Wang Mingshan, and the former Party Secretary of the XPSB, Huo Liujun.



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## His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama's benevolence towards Tibetan people will never be forgotten; This year is dedicated to him: Sikyong on Kundun's 85th Birthday celebration

The coronavirus pandemic may have altered the look of events around the world, but in no way has it affected the sentiments and the spirit of Tibetans and millions of Buddhists around the world as they celebrate the auspicious birthday of their most revered leader. For them, the Dalai Lama is their very heart and soul and also the guiding light and source of inspiration in these times of great uncertainty.

This year's official celebration organised by the CTA turned into an unprecedented showcase of solidarity and celebration of the life of His Holiness with more than 140 political leaders, spiritual figures, nobel laureates and other eminent personalities from all over the world coming together to celebrate His Holiness' birthday through the CTA organised ceremony that was broadcasted live.

Video messages of gratitude and wishes from former US President, George Bush Jr, US Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, Nobel Laureate, German Minister, President of Hesse, Volker Bouffler, US Congressman, Jim McGovern, Australian Senator, Kimberly Kitching, Leader of the Liberal Party, Norway, Trine Skei Grande, National General Secretary, BJP, India, Ram Madhav Spiritual Head of Parmarth Niketan Ashram based in India, Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati, Bishop Gunnar Stalsett, Former National Security Advisor, India, Shivshankar Menon, MP and Co-Chair of APPGT, UK, Tim Loughton, and many others were screened at the official ceremony.

Wishes poured in from the Tibetan Buddhist community as well, led by heads of various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon tradition. His Eminence Sakya Gongma Trizin Rinpoche; His Eminence Gaden Trizin; His Eminence the 34th Kyabje



Artists of TIPA presents an ode to His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the official celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birthday. Photo/Tenzin Phende/CTA

Menri Trizin, spiritual head of Bon tradition; His Eminence the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the head of Kamtsang Kagyu school of Kagyu tradition; Rigo Tulku Rinpoche, Head of the Nyingma Monlam Committee and His Eminence the 2nd Kyabje Jonang Gyaltab Rinpoche, head of Jonang tradition in exile sent their greetings and prayers for His Holiness' long life through a series of video message screened at the event.

Although the physical gathering at the CTA headquarters was strictly restricted in accordance with the state and central guidelines, thousands of virtual audiences from around the world joined the celebration through the live broadcast.

Speaking on the occasion, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, the honourable President of the Central Tibetan Administration expressed his deep gratitude to His Holiness for leading Tibet through one of its darkest periods and nurturing the Tibetan exile community into the most successful refugee community with a robust democratic system.

He further expressed that for the six million Tibetans His Holiness is the "glorious sun...the peerless teacher who has been guiding Tibetans through every hardship, both personal and national."

His Holiness' legacy of making this world a more peaceful, more compassionate through a universe of initiatives "continues to steer the world towards a more peaceful co-existence," Sikyong added.

In his tribute to His Holiness, Sikyong shared that the image of the Tibetan community as the most successful refugee community in the eyes of many around the world was the culmination of His Holiness' uniting efforts and supreme sacrifices. "Like a parent" he added that His Holiness has nurtured the Tibetans and "saved Tibet from becoming a mere footnote in the story of lost and forgotten nations."

In appreciation of such an outstanding contribution to Tibetan people and his tireless efforts in spreading the message of peace and compassion, Sikyong announced that the whole year starting July 1, 2020, to 30 June 2021 will be



*Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay offers obeisance before a portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the official celebration.*

dedicated as “Year of Gratitude” to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

He further urged Tibetans and friends around the world to “initiate and take part in activities in their capacities to create awareness about the life and four commitments of His Holiness.”

In his final remarks, Sikyong offered prayers and solidarity to all the nations and individuals affected by COVID-19 and extolled the teachings of His Holiness as a source of solace, hope, and blessing for thousands in these uncertain times.

Honourable Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile said the essence of marking the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is to remember Him as the destined deity of Tibet and his deeds, and to heed and respectfully study and follow advice and guidance of His Holiness.

“The magnitude of the debt of gratitude that all of us Tibetans owe to His Holiness for his boundless deeds in fields both religious and political is such that it could never ever be repaid,” he said, further adding that the best gift to His Holiness on his birthday would be remember and contribute to His Holiness’ four lifelong commitments.

“This will undoubtedly be the most meaningful way to present a gift to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on His birthday.”

“On this day of perfect bliss, we, on behalf of all Tibetans in Tibet and in exile, offer greetings with unshakable

devotion of body, speech, and mind to His Holiness the Dalai Lama repeated a countless times and, along with it, offer fervent prayers that His Holiness may live for a hundred aeons so as to provide us with great kindness the nectar-like teachings of clairvoyant guidance which is akin to the continuity of a summer stream at all times.”

The official function also featured the launch of a composition of 113 popular quotes fo His Holiness the Dalai Lama, an initiative of the Department of Information and International Relations as part of the CTAs’ yearlong gratitude campaign.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay and Speaker Pema Jungney felicitated two distinctive staff for excellence in service and three staff for completion of 25 years of service respectively.



*The gathering of high-level CTA dignitaries watching a compilation of video messages from leaders, Nobel laureates and friends of His Holiness the Dalai Lama from all over the world.*

The ceremony concluded on an auspicious note with the gathering of dignitaries reciting the mantra of Avalokiteshvara, Om Mani Padme Hung, a thousand times. Earlier this morning, in a special message to Tibetans, His Holiness had advised that reciting the mantra of Avalokiteshvara would be beneficial as Tibetans share a unique connection with Avalokiteshvara. His Holiness also affirmed that the positive virtue accumulated through such practice could also contribute to him living over 110 years.

Though the official ceremony ends here, public celebrations of His Holiness’ birthday continues across the world and most importantly, the CTA led “Year



*Sikyong unveils a booklet of 113 popular quotes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, an initiative of the Department of Information and International Relations as part of the CTAs’ yearlong gratitude campaign.*

of Gratitude” campaign—to celebrate and promote the lifelong commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama—will continue yearlong in every corner of the world, in a collective effort to offer His Holiness the greatest of all Dalai Lamas, the truly best gift on his 85th birthday.



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*continuation from page 35*

Indian constitution and his devotion to world peace that His Holiness should receive the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian honour, in our land. He is as much a jewel of India as he is of his homeland of Tibet. We are truly blessed to have him in our midst.

I, therefore, send my warmest and most affectionate birthday greetings to His Holiness on this auspicious occasion of His 85th birthday and I pray to the almighty for his good health and continued good health and wellbeing in the years ahead. May the blessings of the triple gem be on him always.”

## Former Indian Foreign Secretary says His Holiness the Dalai Lama should receive the Bharat Ratna

Former Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao Menon greeted Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 85th birthday in a video message broadcasted at the official celebration organised by the CTA.

The former Foreign Secretary also called for the highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna to be conferred on His Holiness the Dalai Lama in recognition of his enduring faith in the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Indian constitution, His advancement of democracy and devotion to world peace.

### Read the full statement here:

“The 85th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a very special and auspicious occasion for all of us. We deeply revere his humaneness, the awesome strength of his spirituality, the affirmed goodness that he embodies for people around the world. For us, his members of the global family, he embodies the message of the Gautama, the Buddha and of Mahatma Gandhi, that a life well-lived is the life that is committed to the values of peace, compassion, concern and empathy for the suffering and the downtrodden, respect for diversity and the passion for truth and nonviolent action.

At a time when the world is being swept by the forces of hypernationalism, the fracturing of democracies, the rise of authoritarianism, the tyranny of the majority, the anthropological threat of a global pandemic, His Holiness has upheld our faith in justice, kindness, tolerance, equality and the fellowship of all humanity, overcoming the high barriers and walls of divisiveness and the rivalries of power politics. From my early childhood, I have learnt much from the teachings of His Holiness, and I have been privileged to have met and interacted with him. He is undoubtedly, one of the greatest, most charismatic, most inspirational and most historic figures of our time. His spontaneous



Former Indian Foreign Secretary greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th birthday. Screenshot image

laughter, the joy and the humanistic sensitivity that he exudes, the words of wisdom that he always speaks leave a powerful impactful, a lasting impression on us all.

This is a belief that is shared by millions of his followers around the world, and through all the trials and the tribulations of life, His Holiness teaches us also the virtue of laughter, of being optimistic, of healing our sorrows in the golden sunshine of smiles. He has taught us the virtues of hope and optimism.

His Holiness is an honoured member of our Indian family and we welcomed him as a much-esteemed guest to our country 61 years ago, at a time of great pain, suffering, and sorrow in his homeland of Tibet and among the Tibetan people. Through the years he has symbolised the indomitable spirit of his homeland, the rich beauty of its culture, its strong religious heritage together with the courage, the fortitude and the forbearance of his brave people.

The ties between India and Tibet are etched across history, our peoples have interacted closely over millennia, our friendship is immortal, the divine message of Lord Buddha has bound our

hearts and minds together through the centuries. Today more than ever before the message of His Holiness about the need for peace within ourselves and in peace in our region and the world, acquire fundamental importance. His Holiness has always spoken out candidly against unbridled power and hegemony, aggression and violence, and emphasised the need for peaceful resolution of differences through civilised dialogue in a spirit of equality and mutual benefit. He has rightly said that real peace is a manifestation of true compassion for all humanity.

We must heed his words constantly both in our thoughts and in our actions, For us, Indians, he is a truly beloved and precious presence, and I know that Mother India holds him very, very close and dear in her heart. I truly believe as a patriotic Indian who is sincerely grateful for all the gifts he has given us, of tolerance, compassion, of harmony, of the love of peace. His respect for democracy and the advancement of democracy and his enduring faith in the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the

*continued on page 34*

## US Ambassador to India greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th Birthday

The US Ambassador to India, Kenneth Ian Juster greeted His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the auspicious occasion of His 85th birthday. The following is a transcript of the US Ambassador's greetings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the special occasion via a video message.

“Your Holiness, it is a special privilege to know you and to be the chief guest at this celebration of your 85th birthday. The esteem in which you are held by the people of the United States is a demonstration of the deep and enduring affinity between Americans and Tibetans, beginning with President Franklin D Roosevelt who sent you the gift of a pocket-watch when you were a young boy. Successive US administrations of both political parties have admired your tireless efforts to seek freedom for Tibetans, preserve the Tibetan culture and bring an end to strife and hostility around the world.

The presentation to you in 2007 of the Congressional gold medal by your friend President George W. Bush stands as the preeminent demonstration of the high regard in which you are held in the United States of America. In the words of President Bush during the presentation ceremony in the US capital, “You are a universal symbol of peace and tolerance. A shepherd for the faithful and the keeper of the flame for his people. This is why all of us are drawn to a noble and spiritual leader who lives a world away.” I believe the warm feelings between Americans and Tibetans spring in part from the recognition that your's is a just and noble struggle. A struggle to secure for your people the same self-evident and unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness that our founding fathers enshrined in the “Declaration of Independence”. You may have read these words on the walls of the Jefferson memorial when you visited that landmark in 1991. We like to think that these words may have had some influence on Your



*US Ambassador to India, Kenneth Ian Juster greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the 85th Birthday. Screenshot image*

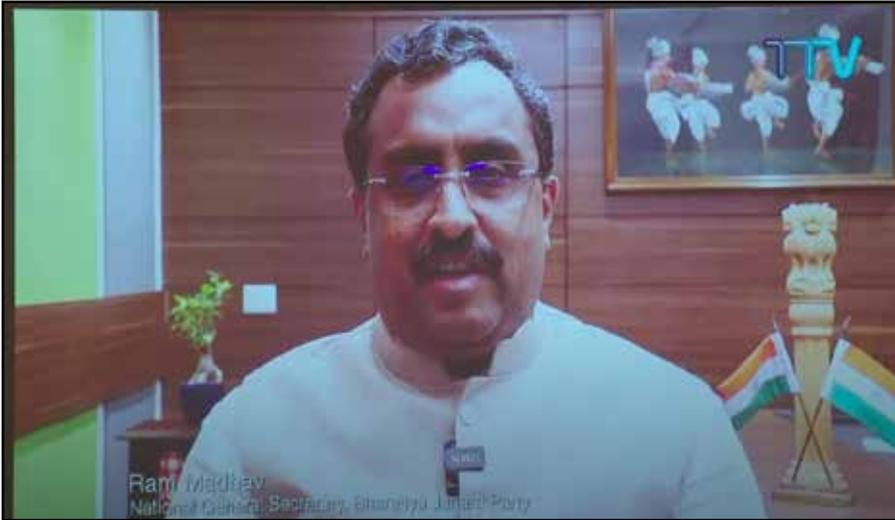
Holiness when you created a democratic framework for your own people. Your abdication in 2011 of temple authority in favour of the elected-Central Tibetan Administration extended to thousands of Tibetans around the world the right to chart their own destiny. We are proud of our longstanding relationship with the Central Tibetan Administration which helps support the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Tibetans who have sought refuge in India.

For the American people, your work is in many ways a continuation of the legacy of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Your unwavering sense of purpose calls to our minds the words of Dr King in his letter from Birmingham jail when he wrote that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability, it comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of leaders and you, Your Holiness epitomise this type of leadership. We are also proud of the role the US Embassy in New Delhi, in its own modest way, has played in nurturing the affinity between our peoples. This includes our reception in 1946 for the delegation of the Tibetan government that congratulated my country on the end of World War II. To the late Gene Smith whose work at the

Embassy's Library of Congress Office rescued thousands of priceless Tibetan texts from the deprivations of China's Cultural revolution. We know how much remains at stake for your people and we look forward to more years of your leadership in the service of freedom for Tibetans and their survival of Tibetan culture and identity.

I would like to close by returning to President Roosevelt, whose gift to you in some manner may have led us here today. Confronting a different era when the world seems locked in conflict, President Roosevelt remarked in a final message to the American people, “If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the signs of human relationships, the ability of all peoples of all kinds to live together and work together in the same world at peace.” I can think of no one who better exemplifies these words than Your Holiness. Like the era of President Roosevelt, we too are living in challenging times, in our case due to the pandemic. Yet this celebration today of your 85th birthday and your life's work gives us great hope for the future and the promise of a more peaceful world. Happy birthday to you, Your Holiness and many happy returns.”

## BJP National General Secretary Ram Madhav's birthday message for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birthday



On the propitious occasion of the 85th birth anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, National General Secretary of BJP Honourable Shri Ram Madhav offered his greetings to His Holiness.

In his birthday message, he said “I am deeply honored and pleased to offer my greetings and best wishes on the 85th birthday of His Holiness for his long life and serving not only the Tibetans but for the entire humanity. Yesterday, we the Hindus have celebrated Guru Purnima, a day dedicated to offering our obeisance to our gurus and masters. His Holiness is also a great guru and master for mankind. I offer my obeisance to this great

guru of spiritual enlightenment, compassion, and bliss”.

“His Holiness has complete 61 years of living in India. When he came, he came as a refugee but today every Indian regard him as an elder in the family. His Holiness used to jovially say that while his body is Tibetan, his blood is Indian since he has been eating the rice and daal of this country for last so many years.

His Holiness is as much revered spiritual master to us as he has been to many Tibetans and others. His Holiness has regraded Hinduism and Buddhism as twins following identical paths one with

the conception of Atma and the other as Anatma. I also remember him once narrating to me his conversation with Indian PM Morarji Desai. “We are two branches of the same tree Dharma”, Morarji told His Holiness to which His Holiness has promptly responded by saying, “You are the tree and we are a branch. This humility is the hallmark of His Holiness and in fact, the Emory University where he was an honorary professor His Holiness has described the essence of his philosophy in four words- humility, honesty, transparency, and compassion.

His Holiness is the living manifestation of these supreme qualities. The compassion the essence of Buddhism has taken a human form in His Holiness. He is compassion incarnate. Holiness, I have had the great privilege of visiting Taktser, your birthplace. I also had the honor of visiting the famed Potala Palace in Lhasa. Everyone loves you there. As you rightly emphasised several times the Tibetan religion, culture, and language survived in the land of Tibet among the 6 million Tibetans despite heavy odds. It is a spirit that continues to purvey the spaces of the mind of millions in Tibet and all over the world.

May the divine further through you in many years to come. My prayers”.

## Kyabje Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche greets His Holiness on 85th birthday



*Kyabje Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the 85th Birthday.*

On the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birthday on July 6, birthday wishes poured in from Heads

and figures of various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon tradition.

His Eminence the 2nd Kyabje Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche, head of Jonang tradition in exile, offered heartfelt greetings. In his video message, Rinpoche expressed fervent prayers for His Holiness' long life and fulfilment of all his noble aspirations.

Rinpoche said, “As per CTA's plan to dedicate 2020 through 2021 to His Holiness as the “Year of Gratitude,” I express my deepest gratitude for his

tireless efforts for the benefit of the humanity and the Tibetan people in particular.”

“It's important for all of us to fulfil His Holiness' wishes and chiefly his lifelong commitments: to develop compassion and love, religious harmony, protect Tibetan culture and identity.”

For detailed news visit:  
[www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net)

## 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th birthday



*17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th birthday*

On the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birthday on July 6, wishes poured in from heads and figures of various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon tradition. A compiled video messages from the heads of Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, Nyingma, Bon and Jonang tradition of Tibetan Buddhism were screened at the CTA's official celebration this morning.

Extending his greetings on the joyous occasion, His Eminence the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, the head of Kamtsang Kagyu school of Kagyu tradition said, "To His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Nobel Laureate, the kind protector of the Land of Snow, Lord of the Victorious Ones, I offer my infinite good wishes on his eighty-fifth birthday. Along with these, I wish him a very long life and pray that all his compassionate wishes and instructions will be spontaneously accomplished." Read the statement published on the official website of HE Gyalwang Karmapa here.

"This year the Central Tibetan Administration has organized a celebration to remember His Holiness' kindness. Ignoring numerous difficulties and full of life, from the past to the present moment His Holiness has been engaging with powerful compassion in immense and vast activity for the planet in general and for Tibet in particular. It goes without saying that with a mind filled with gratitude, we should support his efforts with our body, speech, and mind.

"Especially, for the sake of all Tibetan people, through his loving-kindness, His Holiness seeks to increase their harmonious relationships with each other as well as their freedom and happiness. Further, for benefit of the whole world, through his kindness and promotion of nonviolence, he encourages us to study Buddhist philosophy and engage in practice. By uniting traditional Buddhist teachings with contemporary ways of scientific thinking, he makes clear what we should abandon and embody.

"All of these activities bring benefit universally and individually, for self and other. For this reason, more than ever before, we should pay attention and make serious efforts to follow his teachings, which give clear guidance on what we should give up and take up.

"What is most important is that for our part, we strive to foster activity that, in accord with the wishes of His Holiness, benefits living beings in general as well as all Tibetans and those who walk the path of virtue.

"All along, His Holiness has been giving us abundant advice. The two main points we should take away from his teachings are the need to transform our minds and to increase our understanding of what to abandon and what to embody. The outcome of our practice depends on our individual efforts. If we do not try to do this, then the counsel he has given us becomes meaningless: it is critical that we put it into practice.

"At this fortunate time, we are able to meet and listen to the teachings of His Holiness, who is like the Buddha himself. If we are going to make these connections with him, now is the time to do it. Thinking that we will do it in the future has no benefit. Using his Holiness' name to seek benefit to ourselves brings us no advantage. Not only will it not help us, we could actually be harming ourselves and others as well. One could say that there is no greater negative

action that using Chenrezik's name for our own benefit and harming others.

"His Holiness looks after the Tibetan people like a parent cares for their child nurturing them with affection and love. Tibetans argue about the three different regions of Tibet and about the different spiritual traditions in Tibet. This is like a child who does not care for its elderly parents and upsets them. This disruption of harmony will be the greatest disappointment for His Holiness. To speak honestly, I have the feeling that from his point of view, more than those who criticize him personally, he is disturbed by those who do not take into consideration all Tibetans, but promote inner strife among them.

"It is very easy to say "gratitude," and very difficult to analyze one's own inner feelings and actually put gratitude into practice. Why is this so? Naturally and innately, we all have a very dense habit of grasping onto the characteristics of an object and grasping onto the reality of a self. Therefore, we must train by making a real effort to develop our ability to care for others more than ourselves and think carefully about the meaning of what constitutes the public good.

"We should listen to and reflect again and again on His Holiness' teachings, and not only think about them but actually put them into practice. This way we will become better people and continue to develop ourselves further.

"In conclusion, I pray that His Holiness will remain with us for a long time and that all his activity will be spontaneously accomplished. Thank you."



## The great legacy of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama surpasses that of all the previous Dalai Lamas: Sakya Trizin Rinpoche on His Holiness' 85th Birthday

Head of the Sakya tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, His Eminence the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, in his heartfelt greetings on His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 85th birthday, expressed profound gratitude to His Holiness for his extraordinary leadership of the Tibetan Buddhism and service to humanity.

Rinpoche also offered fervent prayers, on behalf of the Sakya Buddhist community, for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to live for eons and eons to benefit Buddha dharma and all sentient beings.

"The legacy of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama is unfathomable, so much so that the greatness of His Holiness' legacy far surpasses that of the combined lineage of previous Dalai Lamas," His Eminence said.



*Sakya Trizin Rinpoche greets on His Holiness' 85th Birthday*

"Following in the noble footsteps of Sakya Gongma Trichen Rinpoche, I avow to continue to uphold and abide by the advice and guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and serve his benevolent wishes," Rinpoche said, reaffirming his unfaltering devotion and respect for His Holiness.

Rinpoche's video message was screened at the official celebration of His Holiness' 85th birthday organised by the CTA at its headquarters.

Messages from heads of other traditions of Tibetan Buddhism: His Eminence Gaden Trizin, spiritual head of the Gelug tradition; His Eminence the 34th Kyabje Menri Trizin, spiritual head of Bon tradition; His Eminence the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the head of Kamtsang Kagyu school of Kagyu tradition; Rigo Tulku Rinpoche, Head of the Nyingma Monlam Committee and His Eminence the 2nd Kyabje Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche, head of Jonang tradition in exile were also screened at the event.

## Kyabje Gaden Tripa greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th birthday



*Kyabje Gaden Tripa greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 85th birthday*

Paying glowing tributes to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the occasion of his 85th birthday, His Eminence the 104th Gaden Tripa urged all Tibetans to take a pledge on the day to implement His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teachings and make His constant messages of oneness and compassion the guiding principles of their lives.

"His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the ultimate protector of all, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet," the head of the Gelug tradition said, extolling His Holiness' tireless and decades-long work in promoting Tibet's religious and cultural heritage as well as campaigning for a better, compassionate humanity.

"Besides his illustrious contribution to the flourishing of Tibetan Buddhism and culture, His Holiness has also dedicated his life to service of humanity, promoting universal religion of peace, compassion and oneness of humanity across the world," Kyabje Gaden Tripa said.

As he concluded his remarks, Rinpoche made a moving appeal for all the Tibetans to endeavour ceaselessly towards implementing the advice and

guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and treat this day as an opportunity to renew one's devotion and commitment to His Holiness.

Messages from heads of other traditions of Tibetan Buddhism: His Eminence Sakya Trizin, spiritual head of the Sakya tradition; His Eminence the 34th Kyabje Menri Trizin, spiritual head of Bon tradition; His Eminence the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the head of Kamtsang Kagyu school of Kagyu tradition; Rigo Tulku Rinpoche, Head of the Nyingma Monlam Committee and His Eminence the 2nd Kyabje Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoche, head of Jonang tradition in exile were also screened at the event.

For detailed news visit:  
[www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net)

## “The luminous legacy of His Holiness is boundless as the sky and ocean,” says Kyabje Menri Trizin Rinpoche on His Holiness’ 85th birthday

On the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s 85th birthday on July 6, wishes poured in from heads and figures of various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon tradition. A compiled video messages from the heads of Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, Nyingma, Bon and Jonang tradition of Tibetan Buddhism were screened at the CTA’s official celebration on 6th July.

Speaking on the occasion, His Eminence the 34th Kyabje Menri Trizin, spiritual head of Bon tradition said, “On behalf of the Bon Buddhist community, I extend my profound greetings and gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on this auspicious occasion of his 85th birthday.”



*Kyabje Menri Trizin Rinpoche on His Holiness’ 85th birthday*

Rinpoche further expressed appreciation to the Central Tibetan Administration for its noble initiative of celebrating and promoting the lifework of His Holiness through the yearlong ‘Year of Gratitude’ campaign.

“The luminous legacy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is as boundless as the sky and ocean,” he said. “His immeasurable contribution to the land and the people of Tibet is such that we couldn’t repay our the debts of gratitude for eons and eons if we tried.”

However, reminding that the offering of practice is the best gift to one’s teacher, Rinpoche urged all the Tibetans to remember His Holiness’ lifelong teachings and advice and implement them in everyday lives.

## DOE announces extension of scholarship application deadlines

Applications for Master degree/ M.Phil/ Ph.D. scholarships of the Department of Education (DoE) and Dalai Lama Trust (DLT) scholarship for the year 2020 has been extended to further dates:

The Dalai Lama Trust Post Graduate scholarship application deadline has been extended to 5 PM on 15 September 2020.

The DoE Post Graduate scholarship application deadline has been extended to 5 PM on 15 September 2020.

Sikyong Professional Scholarship application deadline has been extended to 5 PM on 15 September 2020.

\*Interested applicants are advised to submit their online form before the deadline. Failure to do so shall be deemed ineligible.

For queries, contact:

Sangay Lhadon: For DLT. PG scholarship

Lobsang Dhargye: For Ph.D., M.Phil, UG.

General, Vocational & Diploma courses.

Tenzin Tashi: For PG/Masters courses.

Phone: +91.01892.226695, 222572, 222721

Email: [doe.lobyon@tibet.net](mailto:doe.lobyon@tibet.net), [scholarship@tibet.net](mailto:scholarship@tibet.net)

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# 'Eat the Buddha' Reports From the 'World Capital of Self-Immolations'

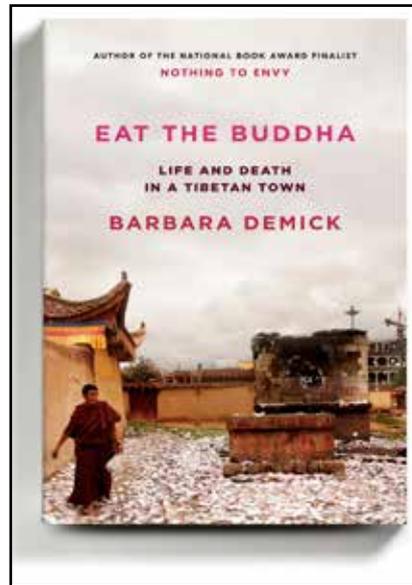
By Parul Sehgal | New York Times

In "The Unwomanly Face of War," an oral history of World War II, the Nobel Prize-winning writer Svetlana Alexievich recounts a strange little story. A woman leaps into dark water to rescue a drowning man. At the shore, however, she realizes it is not a man she has hauled from the water but a gigantic sturgeon. The sturgeon dies.

Censors initially cut the scene from Alexievich's book. You're not asking about the right things, they remonstrated. Focus on bravery, on patriotism. Let's have less about fear, and less about hairstyles. There was no place in the canon for her sort of wartime stories, Alexievich recalled in an interview with *The Paris Review*. There was no place for reality, which comes stuffed with sturgeons and all manner of misapprehensions and muddle; reality, which shows notable indifference, if not outright hostility, to plot.

Perhaps an alternative canon exists, in the work of oral historians like Alexievich, and in the deeply reported narratives of journalists like Barbara Demick. The method is programmatic openness, deep listening, a willingness to be waylaid; the effect, a prismatic picture of history as experienced and understood by individuals in their full amplitude and idiosyncrasy. Alexievich collects the daydreams of her subjects. In Demick's impressive account of life in North Korea, "Nothing to Envy," she described a society on the brink of starvation, cut off from the world, lacking even electricity. But she told love stories, too. Darkness proved to be a surprising boon; some North Koreans told her they grew to need it, as it conferred the only freedom they knew. Young people fell in love in the dark: "Wrapped in a magic cloak of invisibility, you can do what you like without worrying about the prying eyes of parents, neighbors or secret police."

"Eat the Buddha" is Demick's third



book, all of them told in rotating perspectives — a model inspired by John Hersey's "Hiroshima," and one she has made her own. In "Logavina Street," she described daily life during the Bosnian War through the lens of one neighborhood in Sarajevo. "Nothing to Envy" followed six refugees from the port city of Chongjin. The close focus gives her work its granularity, but it also allows her to crosscheck the stories of her subjects. "Good reporting should have the same standard as in a courtroom — beyond a reasonable doubt," she has said. In her latest, the masterly "Eat the Buddha," she profiles a group of Tibetans with roots in Ngaba County, in the Chinese province of Sichuan, which bears the gory distinction of being the "undisputed world capital of self-immolations."

Despite the Buddhist taboo against suicide, some 156 Tibetans — at the time of Demick's writing — have set themselves on fire in recent years, protesting China's rule. They have perfected their technique, wrapping themselves in quilts and wire to prevent rescue, dousing themselves in gasoline and swallowing it, too, to ensure they will burn from the inside. Almost a third of these people — monks, mothers,

ordinary citizens — have come from Ngaba and the surrounding region.

Why Ngaba? "Why were so many of its residents willing to destroy their bodies by one of the most horrific methods imaginable?" This mystery hooked Demick, who arrived in China in 2007 as the Beijing bureau chief of *The Los Angeles Times*. On the face of it, Ngaba is better off than many of its counterparts, she observes. The residents are comfortable, the infrastructure comparatively decent. (The government invested in a "blitz" of modernization in the hopes of quelling the uprisings). Some attribute the protests to the harsh and oppressive police presence. But Demick argues that the roots run deeper. Ngaba was the site of Tibet's first meeting with Chinese Communists, in the 1930s. "The people of this region have a particular wound causing excessive suffering that spans three generations," the monk Kirti Rinpoche testified before a U.S. congressional commission in 2011. "This wound is very difficult to forget or heal."

Fleeing Nationalist forces, the Red Army marauded through monasteries. They burned holy books and manuscripts, and survived by boiling and eating the skin of drums and the votive offerings to the Buddha (from which the book gets its title). Demick traces this first encounter, and the ensuing violent history, through the testimonies of her cast of characters: students and teachers, market sellers, the private secretary to the Dalai Lama, the former princess of the Mei kingdom.

These scenes are narrated as flashes of memory, anchored by the types of details children remember, giving them an unbearable vividness and horror. One man recalls hiding himself as a little boy when his house was invaded by Chinese soldiers. He emerged to find his grandfather gone and grandmother badly shaken, her scalp bleeding. He remembers wondering: Where are her



## TIBETAN MEDIA

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

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

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

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## TIBETAN BULLETIN

### Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

#### INDIA

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

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

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

#### NEPAL

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

#### UNITED STATES

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

#### BRAZIL

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

#### SWITZERLAND

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

#### JAPAN

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

#### UNITED KINGDOM

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

#### FRANCE

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

#### BELGIUM

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

#### AUSTRALIA

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

#### RUSSIA

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

#### SOUTH AFRICA

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

#### TAIWAN

Tibet Religious Foundation of H.H. the Dalai Lama  
10th Fl. 4 & 5, No. 189, Sector - 2, Keelung Rd.,  
Taipei, Taiwan (ROC)  
Tel: +886-2-2736-0366 Fax: +886-2-2377-9163  
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## **QUOTES**

*“I admire the spirit of the European Union. In the past, European countries like France and Germany were arch enemies, they fought and killed each other. But after the second world war, their two leaders, Adenauer and de Gaulle decided it would be better to form a union of states in Europe. Since then peace has prevailed there.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

*“Tibetans acknowledge with deep gratitude the debt we owe to His Holiness, the greatest of all the Dalai Lamas. We proudly celebrate His life and legacies and pray that His Holiness will live for eons and that all His wishes be fulfilled. We pray for the day when Tibetans in Tibet will get to seek His Holiness’ blessing and teaching from his seat in the Potala palace in the Land of Snow. May His Holiness’ light continue to shine upon us.” CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay on 85th Birthday of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*

*“Relying primarily on the power of compassion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has directed his efforts at promoting the potential of ethical values that are inherent to all human beings. On that basis, His Holiness has been unrelenting in his efforts at promoting the protection of the natural environment, inter-religious harmony, cessation of warfare and conflicts and so on by exhorting the concept of universal responsibility aimed at the realization of global peace.” Speaker Pema Jugney of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 85th Birthday of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama.*