



TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 25 - ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

Focus

Press Statement From Tibetan Parliament on
Chinese Political Counsellor's Letter to Indian MPs

Feature

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Speaks on Facing Challenges
with Compassion & Wisdom

World Press

Minister, MPs Attend Tibet Event,
China Diplomat Writes to Them: Don't support

FOCUS

- 18 Press Statement From Tibetan Parliament on Chinese Political Counsellor's Letter to Indian MPs
- 19 All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet Successfully Revived Appointing Shri Sujeet Kumar as the New Convener
- 20 NBA Star Enes Kanter Freedom Attends 32nd Anniversary of Nobel Peace Prize Day Celebration in Boston
- 21 U.S. Lawmakers Urge Biden to Meet Dalai Lama

FEATURE

- 22 His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teaching on Cultivating a Good Heart
- 24 His Holiness the Dalai Lama Speaks on Facing Challenges with Compassion & Wisdom

WORLD PRESS

- 27 Minister, MPs Attend Tibet Event, China Diplomat Writes to Them: Don't Support

By Shubhajit Roy, Manoj C G, Liz Mathew,
The Indian Express
- 28 Xi Jinping's Pursuit of Dictatorial Rule Through Digital Totalitarianism

By Tenzin Dalha, Modern Diplomacy

REGULARS

News From Tibet & Exile3
Contact 31

Quotes32



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



Signed articles or quotations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Central Tibetan Administration.

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

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

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Central Tibetan Administration,
Dharamshala - 176 215 H.P. India

Tel: +91-1892-222510 / 222457

Vol. 25, Issue 6
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

45-year-old Tibetan Monk Released After Serving a Five-year Sentence



Thangkor Socktsang Monastery

Chinese authorities released Gendun Drakpa (Dapaka), a monk from Thangkor Socktsang Monastery in Ngaba (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province) in August 2021 after serving five years sentence, according to Free Tibet. He was reportedly hospitalised due to poor health following his release.

He is subjected to further restrictions and deprivation of political rights as both he and his family are placed on enhanced state surveillance. In addition, he is required to report to a police station monthly on indefinite parole.

Gendun was arrested and held in arbitrary detention for a year after an armed police raid of their monastery on 24 August 2015. Thereafter, he was charged with 'inciting separatism' and 'sharing information with Tibetans in exile' on the peaceful protests held by Tibetan nomads in 2015 against government land seizures in Ka Bharm Village, Ngaba. He was illegally sentenced for five years in prison in a secret trial without access to any legal rights including the absence of legal representation.

Tibetan prisoners often suffer long-term health problems due to prolonged torture, inhuman and degrading treatment inflicted on them in prisons. Kunchok Jinpa, Tenzin Nyima, and Tashi Phuntsok are part of an extensive list of Tibetan political prisoners, who have passed away after their release.

Chinese authorities arbitrarily detain and imprison Tibetans consistently under the euphemism of 'inciting separatism'. According to Chinese government, expressions of Tibetan culture and identity are often classified as act of separatism.

Sikyong Launches 16th Kashag's Flagship Initiative – Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group (V-TAG)

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration launched the 16th Kashag's new flagship initiative Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group (V-TAG) from Zurich on 6 November. The launch took place at a public meeting between the Sikyong and the Tibetan community of Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group or V-Tag is initiated by the 16th Kashag with the primary objective of reinforcing the existing advocacy campaigns across the world by providing a platform to every Tibetan to contribute in their own ways for the larger cause of Tibet.

In his address to the Tibetan public, Sikyong called on the Tibetan public to join the V-TAG initiative and said: "Tibetan community in diaspora is undergoing significant social and demographic changes. As of today, Tibetans are spread over 25 countries and have become nationals of their respective countries. Despite the challenges posed by such changes, their experiences of being nationals of the country, understanding of local languages and system of governance, provide a unique opportunity for them to actively engage in garnering international support for Tibet."

He also emphasised the importance of studying the developments in international affairs and Tibetan history to make the Tibetan movement more effective in restoring freedom for Tibetans. Sikyong further spoke about

the need for a fresh population survey of the Tibetan people in exile, explaining that whatever projects the Kashag initiates, it needs to reflect the realities on the ground which could only come about with accurate population data.

Dukthen Kyi, head of DIIR's Human Rights and Advocacy desk, introduced the concept of the V-TAG initiative. Karma Choekyi, President of the Tibetan community of Switzerland and Liechtenstein, delivered the welcome remarks while Representative Chhimey Rigzen read out a brief annual report followed by a presentation of cultural performances at the public meeting.



Sikyong's launch of V-tag for Tibetan community of Swiss & Lichtenstein.

The public meeting with Sikyong was attended by Khen Rinpoche of Rikon Choekor monastery, former special envoy Kelsang Gyaltzen, executive members of the Swiss and Lichtenstein Tibetan community, representatives of the local Tibetan associations, in addition to the Tibetan public of Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

Earlier in the morning, Sikyong met members of the regional Tibetan Women's Association of Zurich, and also members of the Tibetan Youth Association of Europe (TYAE). During the meeting, Sikyong spoke about the evolution of Tibetan democracy, the structure and functions of the Central Tibetan Administration, and the Middle Way Approach of the Central Tibetan Administration to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

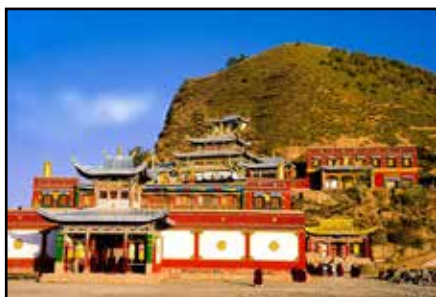
Tashi Shitsetsang, President of the Tibetan Youth Association of Europe (TYAE), expressed their pleasure at meeting the Sikyong and gave a brief explanation of the group's history.

Around 80 Tibetan Monks Forced out of Monasteries in Tibet's Tsongon Prefecture

Chinese authorities have forcibly expelled around 80 Tibetan monks from two monasteries in Tibet's Tsongon Prefecture (Ch: Qinghai Province), according to the Tibet Times.

According to the report, on 21 and 22 October 2021, 30 monks from Jakyung monastery and 50 monks from Ditsa monastery in Bayan County (Ch: Hualong), Qinghai Province, were expelled and sent back to their respective homes following a police raid.

The authorities have accused the monasteries of violating the decree, which forbids any individual, who is below the age of 18 years, from enrolling in monasteries to become a monk, claiming that they should instead be sent to schools.



Jakyung Monastery

The Chinese officials have reportedly instructed the expelled monks to further refrain from putting on the monk robes again and to quit attending school in the future.

Chinese authorities are also undertaking similar expulsion drives in other monasteries across Tibet to reduce the population of monks studying inside them.

Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and institutes are not only the symbol of Tibetan Buddhism, culture, and identity but more than that, for centuries, it is the place, where Tibetan Buddhism has been

conserved and prospered. By forcing these monks out of the monasteries, Chinese authorities have deliberately denied them the freedom of religion and belief and disrupted the passing down of Tibetan Buddhism and cultural knowledge to the newer generation.

It is a clear indication of China's assault on the practice of Tibetan Buddhism whereby monasteries will likely face a scarcity of monks and nuns in the future.

Tibetan Buddhist School in Kham Drakgo Forcibly Demolished

Chinese authorities in Drakgo (Ch: Luhuo) county in Tibet's traditional Kham province have ordered Tibetans to demolish a Tibetan Buddhist school after falsely alleging that the school has "violated" the land use law, according to the Tibet Times.

Gedhen Nangten School, under the administration of Drakgo's Ganden Rabten Namgyalling Monastery, was reportedly taken down by the school officials with the help of volunteer local Tibetans on 31 October 2021 after they received the official decree.

"The Chinese officials have ordered to the school administration to demolish the school voluntarily in the next three days or the government will dispatch units to carry out the destruction", said the source in the report. The authorities further threatened to confiscate the school furniture and properties as well.

Tibetan children, especially those from a poor financial background, who depends on the school for daily sustenance were evicted and forced to return to their homes following the demolition of the school.

According to a Tibetan source, the demolition was carried out on dubious allegations as the school was accused of violating land use law when it only applies to local residential buildings.

Moreover, in the past, the Chinese authorities have forcefully expelled

around 20 students from the school claiming that the students have not reached the appropriate age to attend schools and thus were sent back to their homes.



An image revealing the demolition of the monastery. Photo credit: Kalsang Norbu

Gedhen Buddhist School, located in Drakgo, now incorporated into Sichuan Province, was constructed in 2014 by scholars and monks of Gadhen Rabten Namgyal Ling Monastery. Before its closure, it accommodates around 130 students providing both traditional and modern educations, such as language and grammar classes including Tibetan, Chinese, and English, and Buddhist philosophy courses.

In the past, notably in 2008 and 2012, Drakgo county has witnessed various peaceful protests by the Tibetans against oppressive and unjust policies and decrees implemented in the region. The peaceful protests were frequently dealt with brutal repressions and crackdowns. Since then, the Chinese officials have further intensified and prioritized the surveillance and inspection of the local Tibetan's mundane activities.

Such an incident illustrates the recent surges in the Chinese government's drive to sinicize Tibetan culture and language, as Tibetan schools continue to be targeted. Tibetan schools being forcefully closed down under fabricated allegations is the recurrent theme.

The forced closure of the Tibetan schools has not only deprived Tibetan children of their right to learn their language and culture but also, coerced them to join Chinese government schools resulting in the continuation of cultural assimilation and language oppression.

Permanent Strategy Committee Holds First Meeting

Following the 16th Kashag's dissolution of the previous Task Force on Sino-Tibetan Negotiations, a new Permanent Strategy Committee has been established in its place. The new Permanent Strategy Committee is held its first meeting from 16 -18 November at Imperial Heights Inn, Dharamshala.

The principal agenda of the meeting was to deliberate on the programs and objectives of the new committee. The meeting was attended by all the members of the committee including advisors Kasur Tempa Tsering, Kasur Dongchung Ngodup, and former special envoy Kelsang Gyaltzen. The Secretaries of Department of Security, Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR), Tibet Policy Institute (TPI), and the political secretary of Kashag Secretariat are also in attendance of the meeting. Ngawa Tsegyam, Secretary from the Gaden Phodrang office, also attended the meeting on special invitation.



New Permanent Strategy Committee of the Central Tibetan Administration, 16 November 2021. Photo/Tenzin Phende/CTA

Although an internal meeting of the Permanent Strategy Committee was held earlier, this was the first meeting of the committee in which all the members and advisors were in attendance. The meeting was presided by Sikyong Penpa Tsering.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Tibetan Party Members in Tsolho Prefecture Subjected to Severe Restrictions on Religious Practices at Home

The Chinese government has recently imposed a strict ban on religious activities on all Tibetan Party members and cadres in Tsolho (Ch: Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) in Amdo (Ch: Qinghai Province), a reliable source said.

The ban required all party members to refrain from engaging in religious activities at home whereby they were forced to get rid of personal religious altars and shrines.

The punishment for not complying with the order includes facing lay off from government jobs and deprivation of fundamental rights including denial of state benefits and subsidies, according to our source.

“Such measures have pressured Tibetan Party members in the region into removing personal Buddhist shrines and altars at their homes against their will,” the source told our office.

Altars are commonly seen in Tibetan homes which have images of Buddha or other spiritual lamas or leaders in which they place their highest regards by performing rituals and offerings. It remains a crucial part of the practices in Tibetan Buddhism and to the Chinese authorities, a galling reminder of Tibetan culture and identity.

In addition, strict bans are imposed on holding prayer services implying further restrictions on funeral practices for the deceased family members and relatives, in a clear sign of assault on Buddhist customs and practices.

“While the current decree is only being implemented in some areas, it is very

likely to be expanded into other areas in the future,” said the source.

On 22 April 2021, the Chinese government introduced “Code of Conduct for Communist Party Members in the Tibet Autonomous Region for Not Believing in Religion (for trial implementation)” comprehensively detailing the prohibitions on the religious practices for party members in the “Tibet Autonomous Region”.

The “Code of Conduct” clearly forbids party members from engaging in any religious activity both in public and private life, including “advising their religious family members and relatives to not set up altars, place religious objects, hang religious pictures and photos of religious personalities at home.”

Due to the Chinese government's strict control and severe restrictions on the flow of information out of Tibet, there have been limited or no reports or information over the implementation of the ban, until now. The report of the ban imposed on the party members of the Tsolho TAP under this decree indicates and illustrates pervasive enforcement of the ban since it was introduced.

“Code of Conduct for Communist Party Members in the Tibet Autonomous Region for Not Believing in Religion” required the party members to adhere to Marxism materialism and atheism. They are also required to be fully loyal to the party and its constitution and advise their family members to realise that religion is incompatible with the Party's founding principles and mission.



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His Holiness the Dalai Lama Grants First In-person Audience Since Lockdown to Sikyong Penpa Tsering

Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama granted an in-person audience to Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration at his official residence. This is His



Sikyong Penpa Tsering with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 15 December 2021. Photo/OHHDL

Holiness the Dalai Lama's first in-person audience since the Covid-19 pandemic began in early 2020. It is also Sikyong Penpa Tsering's first official in-person audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama since he assumed the responsibility of Sikyong in May 2021

Speaking to media persons following the audience, Sikyong expressed his gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for granting him the first in-person audience since the pandemic and pledged to work towards the resolution of the Sino-Tibetan conflict and serve the Tibetan public with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's guidance and blessings at heart.

"For the last one and a half years, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has not met any member of the public in-person due to the Covid-19 pandemic. From today, His Holiness has resumed in-person meetings with the public and the first audience was granted to me as Sikyong. And I would like to express my deep gratitude for that. Gradually, His Holiness the Dalai Lama will start granting audiences to one or two members of the public, although it still would not be possible for the large

majority of the people," Sikyong told reporters.

"As for me, my last in-person audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama was in October 2017. For the last four and a half years, I have not received any in-person audience with His Holiness although I have received four online audiences recently. So, I feel fortunate to have received this first in-person audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama today. I also pledge to perform my duties with the blessings and advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to serve the Tibetan public and our common cause," he added.

Tibetan Monk From Barong Monastery Disappeared Since His Arrest in September 2020

The Chinese authorities have arbitrarily detained Tenzin Dargye in Sershul (Ch: Shiqu) County more than a year ago. The official reason for his detention and physical well-being remains unknown at this time.



Monk Tenzin Dargye.

In September 2020, Tenzin Dargye, (age not confirmed) a monk from Barong monastery in Karze in Tibet's traditional Kham Province, now incorporated into Sichuan Province was detained along with another unidentified monk by the Chinese police after they repudiated the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the so-called "peaceful liberation of Tibet", according to our source. They are currently being held in incommunicado detention at the Sershul County Detention Centre.

According to our source, Dargye has vehemently opposed the anniversary by repeatedly stating "there should not be a 70-year anniversary" of the so-called peaceful liberation of Tibet. It is widely believed that he may also have been arrested for sharing information and writings, deemed politically sensitive by the Chinese government, on social media, said our source.

The unidentified monk also belongs to Barong monastery in Wonpo Township, Sershul County.

According to other news reports, Dargye was taken into police custody after he was found in possession of pictures of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama with many other politically sensitive material on his mobile phone. Several other monks may also have been arrested with him. "It has now been more than a year since his arrest, but his family still has no information about where he is being held or whether he has already been tried or not," reported RFA citing a source.

The situation around him has now worsened, as there has been no progress or news about Dargye's wellbeing and whereabouts, raising serious concerns for many over his condition in detention.

Amidst the recent upsurge of China's campaign against His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the clampdown on Tibetans, Dargye is the latest case in the long extensive lists of Tibetans held in incommunicado detention and enforced disappearance by the Chinese government.



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www.tibet.net

Fourth Geneva Forum Begins Deliberation on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Violations by China

As China continues to flout the universally accepted principles of human rights and the human rights protection and assessment mechanism of the United Nations, the need to hold China accountable for worsening human rights records has become more crucial than ever.

Given the necessity to preserve the international human rights system and to bring forth the ground realities in China, the Geneva Forum is now being held as an annual event. After much success of the previous two forums, this year forum focuses on the central theme- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Violations by China by bringing together a diverse group of human rights experts, practitioners, academics, activists, governments, diplomats, think tanks, civil society groups and affected groups to monitor and evaluate the human rights situation in regions under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and concurrently counter China's propaganda, challenge China to improve its worsening human rights record. Watch the inauguration of the Fourth Geneva Forum 2021 here

The forum also come at a time when China braces up for its third cycle of review of its compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which is expected to take place in early 2022. Despite China being legally bound to ensure all individuals within its jurisdiction enjoy the economic, social, and cultural rights protected therein, China's continuing push towards Sinicization (the process of bringing non-Chinese people under the influence of Chinese culture), fast economic development, and "socialist modernization" has resulted in the denial of many of the rights protected under the framework of CESC. The forum will thus report and deliberate on the non-compliance of the Covenant by China by highlighting the plight of Tibetans in Tibet, East Turkistan, Hong Kong, Macau and others.



Sikyong presenting a book to the Chief Guest and the Special Guests of the forum

Following the welcome note delivered by Representative Chhimey Rigzen, Tibet Bureau Geneva, the guest speakers each delivered their keynote address. The guest speakers at the forum include Sikyong Penpa Tsering of CTA, Chief Guest Hon. Jiri Oberfalzer (Vice-President, Senate of the Parliament, Czech Republic), and the special guest Nicolas Walder, Member of Parliament, Switzerland and Gelencsér Ferenc, Deputy Mayor of 1st District Budapest, Hungary.

In his inaugural address, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, democratically elected President of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) expressed solidarity with the Tibetans inside Tibet for going through extreme mental and physical suffering on a daily basis.

At the same time, Sikyong mentioned that he was sceptical about whether the United Nations is really paying attention to the plight of Tibetans and those oppressed by the repressive Chinese regime, recounting that the UN in the past has adopted resolutions on Tibet yet have failed in implementation.

"There is a certain feeling that the UN is a little undemocratic in its functioning," remarked Sikyong and added that the UN was unequal in many ways especially for people who are incarcerated and

suppressed as they are often found without space for representation and space to express their grievances to the world community.

Without such space to express the anguish and grievances, the Tibetans have resorted to self-immolations and so far, 155 Tibetans have self-immolated to oppose the Chinese regime.

"They have burnt themselves in the hope that the Chinese government will pay attention to their plight and resolve the Tibetan issue" explained Sikyong with a heavy heart.

Acknowledging the presence of prominent guests and dignitaries, Sikyong said it was a source of encouragement for the Tibetans and the Tibet issue.

While highlighting the overview of the situation in Tibet, Sikyong described how the Tibetan Language was used as a tool of propaganda by the Chinese government. But he also noted that there was a brief period of freedom for the Tibetans during the period of Hu Yaobang leadership, then Chairman of CCP. This short period of freedom allowed the Tibetans to learn and preserve the Tibetan language and resume their religious activities.

The Tibetan language which is the root of Tibetan identity is now being extinguished under Xi Jinping's leadership.

Another significant issue highlighted by Sikyong was the degradation of Tibet's environment under the Chinese government. The Tibetan Plateau which is widely known as the third pole is critically challenged by Tibet's climatic conditions which is also impacting the global climate. Sikyong prompted that Tibet's environmental issue needed to be effectively addressed emphasising the lack of transparency in how China is handling climate change and how China is one of the biggest polluters in the world.

Sikyong also highlighted the environmental issue prompted by the resettlement of nomads to compact settlements, an action he noted as depriving the Tibetans to take care of their own environment as he demonstrated that Tibetans have thousands of years worth of experience on how to manage the environment having lived there for eternity.

Another reason noted by Sikyong that defended Tibetans as the best caretakers of its environment was the Tibetan religion that teaches denouncement of any action that is detrimental to the environment and Tibetans have lived in perfect harmony with nature until China came and destroyed that harmony.

Considering how China has blatantly continued to disrespect the fundamental human rights and global order, Sikyong called out the democratic nations and the like-minded countries to boycott the 2022 Winter Olympics hosted by China and meanwhile, said that those participating in the game were much an accomplice in China's misdoing.

Sikyong contended that the exiled Tibetan administration was committed to making every effort to reach out to the Chinese government for a peaceful negotiated lasting solution to the Tibetan issue. And until Tibet's issue isn't resolved, he said the administration will not shy away from representing the

realities inside Tibet.

Special Guest, Hon. Nicolas Walder, Member of Parliament, Switzerland in his address described the large scale repression of Tibetans spanning over 7 decades as a dark spot for humanity.

"It is a dark spot that could cost us dearly at a time when the Chinese government is openly challenging the rules of international law on which our liberal democracies have been built," said the Swiss Parliamentarian.

However, Parliamentarian Walder noted that the Swiss government no longer hesitates to denounce the crimes of China and demand action from the international community while explaining several positive developments taken by the government of Swiss in regard to its policy on China.

He highlighted the recent acknowledgement of the Swiss Foreign Ministry on the increase in human rights violations in China while subsequently calling for greater firmness in action against China. He also mentioned the recent move by his party requesting a full report on the security of Tibetans and Uygur's minorities including a detailed assessment of the 30 years of human rights dialogue between the Swiss and China to be presented in the Swiss parliament.

Parliamentarian Walder added that his party has also pressured the government to promote human rights in China through the Swiss enterprises and Swiss embassy in Beijing. He also mentioned the upcoming meeting of the Swiss Foreign Affairs Committee to address the issue of crimes against humanity in China.

Hon. Nicolas Walder concluded his address by sending a message of hope to Tibetans and those oppressed by China by saying, "you have many friends around the world". He assured that he, along with the Swiss Tibet Friendship Group, will keep on pressurizing the Swiss government so it commits concretely to the defence of Tibetans.

Chief Guest Hon. Jiri Oberfalzer, Vice-President, Senate of the Parliament, Czech Republic underlined that totalitarian regimes like the Chinese government want absolute control over the bodies and souls of their subjects and anything that stands between its total claim is a fundamental threat to its power. In the case of Tibetans, the ruling power of the Chinese regime is terrified of religion, culture, in general people of any independent thoughts.

"Its external enemy is not only every free neighbouring country, but the whole free world for a totalitarian regime to remain in power anywhere in the world. It cannot do without concentration camps, gulags, and re-education centres" explained the Vice President.

He further added that without censorship, propaganda, and indoctrination of the general citizens, the Chinese government can think of no other ways to force abidance.

Vice President Jiri Oberfalze highlighted the emergence of coronavirus as an expose of the utter and cynical ruthlessness of the Chinese state power towards its own population and the peoples of the world. He added that China in doing so was following the examples of the Soviet Chernobyl model, whereby the main objective was to conceal and sweep under the rock any misconducts of the state and the party.

"Coming from a country that has its own totalitarians past, I know what I am talking about. In China, it is not just the minorities opposing the totalitarian claim and free-thinking dissidents who suffer but many in the process" Vice President Oberfalze remarked. He added that it was part of the totalitarian regime to achieve world domination not only by military force. He noted, "It only needs to make other countries dependent on it, economically and for the raw materials".

In conclusion, the Vice President of the Czech Republic's Senate House said it was unwise and foolish of the leaders of the democratic countries to overlook the unprecedented human rights violations in China just for the sake of economic

ties and profits.

“If we allow oppression anywhere in the world, we are contributing to the aggression in the whole world, step by step. Democratic countries should stop making the same mistake, ignoring the nature of their trading partner and building their own prosperity on the suffering of their people. We shouldn’t tolerate the evil even when it brings partial benefits”, he concluded.

Hon. Gelencsér Ferenc, Deputy Mayor of 1st District Budapest, Hungary associated the bullying behaviour of the Chinese government to that of a bully kid at school who thinks that the rules don’t apply to him, who is aggressive towards the other kids. “That the kid was only actually suffering a serious self-esteem problem who is afraid that the truth will come out much like what China is doing,” he said.

Likewise, the Deputy Mayor added that those oppressed and bullied accept such behaviour of China is because, most often, ‘they simply can’t comprehend the reasons of the bully and so they try to reach agreements and settle conflicts with a set of commonly accepted protocols’.

“By respecting each other’s borders, we expect our neighbouring nations to respect ours too. However, there are those in the international community, who out of fear, out of low self-esteem, or simply hoping to reach dominance, do not follow the rules and bully other nations” asserted the Deputy Mayor.

He further said it was high time that China is called out for its bully. He recounted and shared some of his personal experiences that have led him to be determined about raising the issue of Tibetans, Hong Kongers, and Taiwan.

“The least we can do is raise awareness. I am from Hungary, a country that knows submission well enough. We had 150 years of Ottoman subjugation, more than three centuries of Hapsburg rule, and almost 50 years of Soviet occupation. Presently, China is standing at the doorstep and politically buying

itself into Hungary” added the Deputy Mayor of 1st District Budapest while emphasizing that China should be made to follow the common values of basic human rights or they get punished through hard sanctions.

Deputy Mayor expressed his lament over Hungary’s relationship with China over a deal of building a 5G network in the country and now the government of Hungary is also intending to set up a campus for the Chinese University of Fudan. He explained that Fudan was a well-known and respected institute, however, its loyalty doesn’t lie with science but with the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. He asserted that the mayor of Budapest was willing to hold a referendum on whether Budapest should defund the university while pointing out he was hopeful that 90% of the citizens of Budapest would say no to the campus.

Besides Huawei and Fudan, Deputy Mayor mentioned the construction of Budapest Railways costing around an estimated 2.5 billion USD of which 85% is covered by a Chinese loan of EXIM bank and is constructed by Chinese companies, stressing that China was using Hungary as a pawn through debt trap diplomacy which was evident in Hungary constantly blocking EU statements condemning China and blocking sanctions imposed on China for its human rights violations.

In conclusion, Deputy Mayor reminded the government of Hungary that an economic deal of any kind with the Chinese government meant selling their conscience to China and standing up for the bully.

The very same day, a panel of experts discussed the issue of Tibet’s stolen child-11th Panchen Lama Gendhun Choekyi Nyima. The speakers included Sikyong of CTA, Interim Vice President of International Campaign for Tibet Tenchoe Gyatso, Dr. Michael Van Walt Van Praag, Executive President of Kredha and Senior Fellow of the Sompong Sucharitkul Center for Advanced International Legal Studies, President of the World Uighur Congress

Dolkun Isa, Tsolongeral Khatgin, Secretary of International Human Rights Center for Mongolians, Dr. Tenzin Desal, Senior Research Fellow at Tibet Policy Institute, Dr. Martin A. Mills, Director of Scottish Center for Himalayan Research, Pierre-Antoine Donnet, French Journalist, and Vijay Kranti, senior journalist & photographer specialises in Tibet & China. The other speakers during the panel sessions also include the staff of DIIR of CTA.

The two-day Geneva Forum 2021 is jointly organised by the Tibet Bureau Geneva and CTA’s Department of Information and International Relations with an aim to build a network of organisations and experts focusing on human rights and religious freedom in China and develop coordinated efforts to challenge and improve China’s human rights record. It also expects to strengthen mainstream media attention and public discourse on the deteriorating human rights record in the most remote parts under the rule of the CCP.

Prayer Recitation Notice from Department of Religion and Culture

The Department of Religion and Culture, CTA issued an announcement from Ganden Phodrang for Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and Tibetans around the world to observe the prescribed prayers for a speedy resolution to the crisis induced by the COVID-19 pandemic and now the gradual spread of Omicron worldwide.

The Department of Religion and Culture also advised the monasteries to limit large gatherings while convening the prayers.



Imprisoned Tibetan Environmentalist in Critical, Near-death Condition in a Chinese Prison

A Tibetan man named Dhongye from Nagchu (Ch: Naqu) Prefecture in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) is reported to be in “a near-death condition”. His condition is critical as he has been suffering from injuries caused by prolonged torture in prison, a reliable source reported.



Tibetan environmentalist Dhongye from Nagchu. Photo:TCHRD

Dhongye was arrested in 2018 on charges of “leaking state secrets” after he was accused of sharing information to the Tibetans in exile on the anti-mining protest in Driru (Ch: Biru) County against the Chinese government’s plan to mine a sacred Tibetan Mountain. The 50-year-old businessman was an ardent advocate of environmental protection. After his arrest, he was held in incommunicado detention and was also subjected to a prolonged enforced disappearance. Only recently, it was discovered that Dhongye was being detained in Driru County prison. There has been no news about him being sentenced but he continues to be jailed in Driru County prison.

According to our sources, Dhongye is suffering from chronic health issues and is critically ill due to torture and ill-treatment in detention.

In the past, he had organized several environmental events and participated in many others. During these events, he would voice his concerns and call for the urgent need to protect Tibet’s environment. He also won the “Clean

Environment” competition held at Sernye village in 2013-2014.

Dhongye was born in Dhakra village in Shagchu (Ch: Xiaqu) town, Driru County, Nagchu.

Mining Exploitation in Driru County

In April 2018, Chinese authorities detained 30 Tibetans, including Dhongye, from the villages of Markor, Wathang and Gochu after news about the detention of Karma, leader of Markor Village, and the mining project was shared to exile Tibetan sources, reported the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

According to the report, Karma was detained in late February for challenging an official order that forced all residents of Markor, Wathang and Gochu villages to sign a document that allowed local authorities to conduct mining activities at the sacred Sebtra Zagyen mountain. However, Karma openly confronted government officials saying that he would only sign the document if they produce evidence of approval from veteran party leaders such as Tenzin and Rangdi.

When the news of Karma’s arrest became known to the exiled Tibetans, officials immediately summoned all for a meeting during which the Tibetans suspected of leaking information were detained.

Local Tibetans were concerned that mining would destroy the sacred Sebtra Zagyen Mountain, which is also home to endangered animals such as Tsoe (Tibetan antelope), Nah (Blue Sheep) and Gowa (Tibetan gazelle). There were fears that mining would also cause landslides at another sacred mountain called Drakar that lies on the right of Sebtra Zagyen, which in turn would block the water supply to the local villagers.

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17th Tibetan Parliament to Begin its 2nd and 3rd Session in March 2022

In accordance with Article 40 of the Charter of Tibetans-in-Exile, the 17th Tibetan parliament will hold its 2nd and 3rd sessions in March 2022.

According to the official announcement issued on 15 November 2021, the parliamentary secretariat said the 17th Tibetan parliament will hold its 2nd session from 14 March to 18 March 2022 for five days, and the 3rd session to be held from 21 March to 31 March 2022 for 10 days in the Parliamentary Hall, Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat.

All the members of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile are requested to report at the parliamentary Secretariat on 13 March 2022.



For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Statement of the Kashag on the 32nd Anniversary of the Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Today marks the 32nd anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama. On this momentous occasion, the Kashag on behalf of Tibetans in and outside Tibet, pays its immense gratitude to His Holiness and implore him to continue his meritorious services for aeons. We also extend our warm greetings to the Tibetan people.

On 5 October 1989, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced its decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. In the press release, the Nobel Committee said that “it wants to emphasize the fact that His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence.” And that His Holiness has “instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people.” The Committee further observed that His Holiness has “come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems.”

In accepting the prize, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said the prize is a recognition of the true values of altruism, love and compassion and non-violence, which he practices in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha and the great sages of India and Tibet. His Holiness said he accepts the prize on behalf of the oppressed, those who struggle for freedom and work for world peace, and of course the six million Tibetan people inside Tibet who have suffered and continue to suffer so much. His Holiness also said he accepts the prize as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of non-violent action for change – Mahatma Gandhi – whose life taught and inspired him.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s philosophy of love and compassion



Sikyong Penpa Tsering of Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). Photo/Tenzin Jigme /CTA

results from rigorous study, training and practice since his childhood. One can feel the immeasurable depth of his compassion through His Holiness’ ‘Words of Truth’, which he composed on 29 September 1960, barely a year and a half after coming into exile. In the ‘Words of Truth’, instead of harbouring hatred and enmity against the invaders of our country, His Holiness the Dalai Lama writes that their cruel actions done out of delusion are objects of compassion, and prays that they “achieve wisdom to abide in the glory of friendship and love.”

At a time when the whole of China, including Tibet, was in the throes of the disastrous Cultural Revolution, His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the Tibetan National Uprising Day statement of 10 March 1971 said that “in spite of the fact that we Tibetans have to oppose Communist China I can never bring myself to hate her people” and that hatred is weakness and anything achieved through hatred can neither be lasting nor binding. His Holiness asks how can we hate the Chinese whose minds are governed by their leaders and how can we hate the leaders who have themselves in the past been so persecuted and suffered so much for their nation.

At the same time, His Holiness the Dalai Lama laid the foundation for preserving and developing the Tibetan religion, culture and education, and sustaining livelihood of the Tibetans. His Holiness democratized the exile Tibetan governance and consistently appealed for support from the concerned countries and the United Nations to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict. The adoption of non-violence and mutually-beneficial means of dialogue with the Chinese government to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict in 1973 led to the establishment of contact with China and subsequent visits of Tibetans to meet their relatives in and outside Tibet and dispatch of a series of fact-finding delegations to Tibet.

In his letter to China’s paramount leader Deng Xiaoping on 23 March 1981, His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote that “we must improve the relationship between China and Tibet as well as between Tibetans in and outside Tibet. With truth and equality as our foundation, we must try to develop friendship between Tibetans and Chinese through better understanding in the future. The time has come to apply our common wisdom in a spirit of tolerance and broad-mindedness to achieve genuine happiness for the Tibetan people with

a sense of urgency.” Consequently, four fact-finding delegations and two exploratory missions were dispatched to Tibet. Although no meaningful solution to the Sino-Tibetan conflict came out, these efforts had significant influence on the Chinese government to adopt liberal policies on the revival of Tibetan religion and culture and language, and improvement in Tibetan people’s standard of living in Tibet.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama began his foreign visits with Southeast Asia in 1967, Europe in 1973, North America in 1979 and to most of the free countries from 1980. Although the visits’ objective was non-political issues like religion and culture, His Holiness made tireless efforts to seek resolution of the Sino-Tibetan conflict through dialogue and create a strong basis that Tibetan Buddhism and culture have the potential to bring peace and happiness to humanity. His Holiness made the promotion of secular values such as altruism, love, compassion, non-violence, peace and harmony among societies and nations his life-long commitment. These efforts won great admiration and support of the people across the world.

On 21 September 1987, His Holiness the Dalai Lama presented the Five-Point Peace Plan including his vision to transform Tibet into a zone of peace at the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus. His Holiness reiterated his sincere belief in the process of dialogue with an open mind and desire to resolve conflicts. Similarly, in his Strasbourg proposal at the European Parliament on 15 June 1988, His Holiness the Dalai Lama urged the Chinese government and the leadership to give serious and substantive consideration” to his proposal, and that only dialogue and a willingness to look with honesty and clarity at the reality of Tibet can lead to a viable solution. His Holiness expressed his wish to conduct discussions with the Chinese government and hope that China will respond accordingly to the proposal made in a spirit of reconciliation.

The basis of these two proposals was not to revive demand for independence of Tibet. Rather the proposals are aimed at

transforming Tibet into a zone of peace which is in the larger interest of entire humanity. As such the Nobel Committee rightly recognized that “His Holiness the Dalai Lama has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems.”

These two proposals came amid a period of slight liberalization in China and the opening up of China and Tibet to foreign tourists. Viewing with suspicion a series of proposals made by the exile Tibetan administration to send trained teachers from the exile community to Tibet, open a liaison office in Lhasa, dispatch fact-finding delegations and exploratory missions to Tibet, the Chinese government responded to these overtures by showing gestures to engage in dialogue and conduct talks at any place and time convenient to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan side proposed Geneva as the venue and January 1989 as the date for the talks. However, the talks could not take place due to various pretexts given by China. During the course of these developments, large-scale demonstrations broke out in Lhasa on 27 September 1987, 1 October 1987 and 5 March 1988, which were brutally suppressed by the Chinese government and eventually martial law was declared for the first time in Lhasa on 7 March 1989. With the sudden death of the 10th Panchen Lama in 1989 and the suppression of the 4 June Chinese students’ democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, the brief period of liberalization came to an end.

The conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama strengthened the determination and courage of Tibetans inside Tibet, and helped Tibetans in exile find a new approach on the international stage. It has built a solid foundation and an unending well-spring of support for the issue of Tibet among the Chinese intellectuals and the international community. It also helped create a valid basis for Middle-Way Approach as the lasting means to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

A remarkable initiative of His Holiness

the Dalai Lama which drew the world’s admiration was his groundbreaking week-long meeting with western scientists in Dharamsala in October 1987. Establishing a basis that science and Buddhism share common aim for the benefit of the humanity, it has built a bridge between Buddhist science and modern science, leading to the meeting between world renowned scientists and His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 33 Mind and Life conferences till 2019.

Although we are able to celebrate today’s joyous occasion, Tibetans inside Tibet don’t even have the freedom to keep a photo of their most revered leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Today is also the World Human Rights Day and as the day is observed around the world, Tibetans in Tibet are denied the basic rights and freedom of expression, learning and practising their own language, religion, movement, and assembly. Moreover, they have to continuously suffer under the Chinese government’s repressive policy to annihilate the Tibetan people’s identity and destroy Tibet’s natural environment. The Chinese government’s policy in Tibet are harmful rather than beneficial to both Tibet and China, and therefore it is bound to fail. We are firmly committed to make efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict through dialogue with the Chinese government based on the Middle Way Approach. Until the Sino-Tibetan conflict is resolved, we will carry out international campaigns to seek support for the Tibetan cause. We will soon submit a document to the Chinese government to end or rectify its wrong policies in Tibet.

The Kashag calls on every Tibetan especially youths living in the free countries to actively engage in our recently launched Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group (V-TAG) campaign and contribute their abilities and skills to make the truth of Tibetan cause prevail. It is the most important duty of the Tibetans in exile under the Charter to make every effort until the Sino-Tibetan conflict is resolved. Hence, we believe that the Tibetans will take part in the V-TAG campaign. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always said Tibetans

in exile have the duty to act as the free spokesperson of Tibetans in Tibet.

Taking the opportunity, I extend my warm greetings and deep gratitude to India, the United States and other

governments, Tibet Support Groups and friends for their unwavering support for the cause of Tibet.

Finally, I pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the apostle of

world peace. May all of the wishes of His Holiness be fulfilled and may peace prevail over the world.

The Kashag
10 December 2021

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile on the Commemoration of the 32nd Anniversary of the Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

Today is a momentous occasion of an outstanding event in our annual calendar, marking the 32nd anniversary of the conferment of the world's most renowned and prestigious award, the Nobel Peace Prize, on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the crown ornament of the material and spiritual world including the heavenly spheres, the spiritual lord of the three world realms, a champion of peace in this world, the master of the entire corpus in this world of the teachings of the Buddha, the destined deity of the Snowland of Tibet, the most exalted protector of the world who has appeared in human manifestation, the protector of the entirety of the Tibetan people and their irreplaceable leader, a common treasure of mankind, and the omniscient victorious one. Such is the auspiciousness of the occasion on which we with joy, faith and gratification offer our greetings and congratulations to His Holiness on behalf of the Tibetan people both in Tibet and in exile. It is no doubt an occasion on which we fondly remember the immense debts of gratitude we owe to His Holiness.

Today, the 10th day of December 2021, is not only the 32nd anniversary of the day in 1989 when the Nobel Peace Prize Committee honoured His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama with the Nobel Peace Prize, which is the world's most outstanding award. It is also marked as the Human Rights Day across the world. It is therefore incumbent on all Tibetans to be aware that this is a distinctly important day of great grandeur and solemnity. In presenting the Nobel Peace Prize to him in 1989, the Noble Peace prize Committee said that in pursuing his struggle for the just cause of Tibet,



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE). Photo/Tenzin Jigme /CTA

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama had consistently opposed the use of violence and instead advocated peaceful solutions that are fundamentally based on tolerance and a mutually beneficial middle way approach. The Committee lauded His Holiness for having come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals based on negotiations for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems. It also said His Holiness had developed his philosophy of peace from a great reverence for all things living and upon the concept of universal responsibility embracing all mankind as well as nature. It was with offering of admiration and praise for these contributions that the Nobel Peace Prize Committee honoured His Holiness with this globally most prestigious of award. Year by year, the renown and activities of His Holiness have been

expanding like the waxing of the moon towards the luminosity of its fullness. This in turn has meant that multitudes of countries, groups and associations across the world – both in the East and West – welcomed and honoured him with awards, honours, compliments and certificates numbering many hundreds. As a result, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has today come to be recognized as one of the most revered great leaders of the world.

While accepting the Nobel Peace Prize His Holiness said: “I feel honoured, humbled and deeply moved that you should give this important prize to a simple monk from Tibet. I am no one special. But, I believe the prize is a recognition of the true values of altruism, love, compassion and nonviolence which I try to practise, in accordance with the teachings of the

Buddha and the great sages of India and Tibet. I accept the prize with profound gratitude on behalf of the oppressed everywhere and for all those who struggle for freedom and work for world peace. I accept it as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of nonviolent action for change – Mahatma Gandhi – whose life taught and inspired me. And, of course, I accept it on behalf of the six million Tibetan people, my brave countrymen and women inside Tibet, who have suffered and continue to suffer so much.” The conferment of this most prestigious of award on His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama resulted in enormous increase in the number of people from numerous countries across the world, both in the East and West, taking interest in and lending support to the issue of Tibet. This in turn led to the issue of Tibet and the struggle of the Tibetan people spreading to the realm of the environment of awareness all across the world. And that was not all, for it also led to the vigour of the benefits of the Tibetan culture and spiritual tradition percolating to every nook and corner of the world.

The Nobel Peace Prize for the year 2021 has been awarded to two journalists – Ms. Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Mr. Dmitry Andreyevich Muratov of the Russian Federation. And in its official announcement of the award, the Nobel Peace Prize Committee said the prize was awarded jointly to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov “for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and sting peace.” On behalf of the entire Tibetan people – both in Tibet and in exile – the Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to extend its greetings in admiration, compliment, and congratulations for the contributions of these two outstanding personages.

Based on the philosophy and practices of the Buddhist religion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has preoccupied himself with the enormous challenge of seeking to help ensure the wellbeing of all sentient beings. In particular, he has, undaunted by multitudes of difficulty and hardship, overseen the wellbeing of all the sentient beings of the Snowland

of Tibet with great kindness. With this in mind and in order that the Tibetan people may realize complete freedom based on liberty, equality, and fairness, His Holiness took the important political decision of presenting to them the gift of democracy. And it is thanks to his efforts in this direction that for more than 61 years thus far, the Tibetan people have been able to proceed on this great highway of democracy. And we owe all this solely to the leadership and kindness of His Holiness.

In a democracy differences based on opinions are bound to arise, leading to all sorts of disputes. This is a common phenomenon in all democratic countries, whether in the East or in the West. Nevertheless, whenever differences arise in the views of the people in responsible positions in the Central Tibetan Administration and in the views of broad masses of the Tibetan public, the issues should be settled through the test of thorough public discussions under the inimitable leadership and guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Such an approach will be in accord with the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and is also a great merit of the democratic way. This is also critically important from the perspective of the Tibetan people’s struggle for their fundamental cause. We therefore especially reiterate our call on all concerned people to be extra-vigilant in keeping this firmly in their minds.

In keeping with his life-long activities for the sake of sentient beings, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has listed four principal commitments of his life. His first principal commitment is his effort as a human being to enhance secular ethics or universal values. His Holiness says adhering to secular ethics in a person’s conduct is the basis for ensuring the happiness of everyone – the concerned private individual, his family, and his community as a whole. Secondly, as a person devoted to the Buddhist religion, he is committed to encouraging harmony among the world’s different religious traditions. He says that despite the differences in their ideologies and doctrines, all the religions of the world are same in their

teaching of the practices of compassion, love, tolerance, contentment, and ethical conduct. Likewise, they are alike in their capability to lead their devotees towards the enjoyment of a life of happiness. Thirdly, as a Tibetan, as someone with the status of the Dalai Lama, and especially as a person who is the repository of the hopes and trust of both the lay and religiously ordained communities of the Tibetan people – both those living in Tibet and in exile – His Holiness has committed himself to take active interest in the fundamental cause of the Tibetan people and the natural environment of Tibet, and to act as a spokesperson for the freedom of the people of Tibet living under subjugation. Fourthly, as a follower of the ancient Indian spiritual traditions, His Holiness has devoted himself to reviving the ancient Indian knowledge in the fields of psychology, logic, meditative practices based on philosophical postulations, and secular ethics by combining them with the modern education system. The goal of this is to strive to develop a global human society that is rooted in compassion and loving-kindness.

The immense kindness His Holiness the Dalai Lama has shown to all sentient beings in these fields means that it is incumbent on all Tibetans, especially those of us living in exile, to make whatever efforts we can at the individual level, through other people, and by means of inspiring people of other ethnicities toward realizing his objectives behind taking up these commitments. This will be in keeping with the especially intended purposes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and is therefore an unavoidable duty of all Tibetans. Each and every one of us should therefore undertake a study in these enormously great commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, implement them in practical terms, and propagate them. This is of crucial importance whether we view it from the perspective of the world as a whole or of each concerned individual among us, as well as from the perspective of both this life and the next.

Today is also the world Human Rights Day. Though having used armed

aggression to invade and occupy Tibet, China claims to have peacefully liberated it and commemorated its 70th anniversary of that occasion this year. Along with it, the government of China published a so-called white paper titled “Tibet Since 1951: Liberation, Development and Prosperity” which was nothing but a compendium of lies and distortions of historical facts of various kinds. The Winter Olympic Games for the year 2022 is scheduled to be held in China’s capital Beijing. Giving this honour to the capital of communist ruled China is neither just nor morally justifiable. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile is resolute in never endorsing this event being held in the Chinese capital. We are also of the view that the time has come for the international community too to think likewise and act accordingly.

The government of China remains relentless in carrying out immeasurable oppression and torture on the Tibetan people in Tibet. Likewise, it remains continuous in paying no respect at all to the fundamental human rights of the people of East Turkestan (Xinjiang), South Mongolia (Inner Mongolia), and Hong Kong. In particular, it has imposed enormously tight restrictions on people throughout the three traditional provinces of Tibet. Under it, Tibetan political prisoners are still being subjected to immeasurable ill-treatment and torture. Numerous places of religious worship and study have been destroyed. At both monasteries and in communities throughout Tibet, people are being forced to put on display portraits of top leaders of the Communist Party of China. And they are being routinely subjected to indoctrination sessions of various kinds of the Communist Party of China with the objective of wiping out the cultural and religious traditions of the Tibetan people. Likewise, in all the major areas of Tibet, influxes of Chinese immigrants are being encouraged to transfer as

much as possible of them for permanent settlement. The aim is to turn the Tibetan people into an insignificant minority in their own homeland and to transform them into Chinese people in their nature and character. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to urge the government of China to put an immediate end to the ongoing implementation of this heinous policy.

Both the government and people of Tibet remain unwavering in their commitment to the mutually beneficial middle way policy which reflects a profoundly envisioned, forward looking desire of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. To firmly remain within the bounds of non-violence in seeking a resolution of the issue of Tibet is the desire and plan being still pursued by all of us on the Tibetan side. Just recently, the government of China again sought to make the antithetical point that it was open to discussing with His Holiness the Dalai Lama only matters concerned with his personal status, while denying the very existence of the issue of Tibet as such. It thus became ever more clear that the leadership of the government of China had no firmness of desire or determination to resolve the issue of Tibet. Nevertheless, thanks to the expansive kind deeds of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the courage and patriotic loyalty of the Tibetan people in Tibet, there is an ever growing awareness of and attention to the issue of Tibet. The Tibetan people living in exile will make good use of the opportunity provided by these developments in campaigns to internationally raise the understanding of the issue of Tibet to an ever higher level and in efforts towards seeking a resolution thereof. The aim will be to garner even more international support for the struggle of the Tibetan people, for strengthening the foundation of the status of the Tibetan people’s organizational set up, and for

the preservation – without any danger of loss – of the Tibetan people’s religious and cultural heritage, and their ethnic identity. Every effort by whatever means will be directed at taking the issue of Tibet forward on this basis.

All the members of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile have now already taken their oath of office. And they will shortly be undertaking visits to the different Tibetan settlements and communities. After that, they will be divided into groups with the allocations of settlements and communities for their inspection tours. The Tibetan public in the concerned settlements and communities are accordingly urged to take as much part as they could in cooperating with their tour programmes. Likewise, it is important that people elected to the Local Tibetan Assemblies and other elected officials to different local posts have a clear understanding of their jobs and responsibilities. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile plans to organize training workshops at as many Tibetan settlements and communities as possible for this purpose. We appeal to all the elected leaders and officials in these settlements and communities to show a high level of interest to take part in them.

Finally, we pray a countless times that with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the core, all the great religious leaders of Tibet, irrespective of their sectarian affiliation, may live for a hundred aeons, that their noble wishes may be seen fulfilled with spontaneity, and that the just cause of Tibet may be seen resolved, so that the very fortunate event of Tibetans in Tibet and in exile being reunited will be seen definitely accomplished.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile

10 December 2021



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Geneva Forum 2021 Declaration

We, the speakers and participants of the fourth Geneva Forum 2021 on “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Violations by China”,

Are appalled at the persistence of systematic and gross violations of human rights by the Government of People’s Republic of China (PRC) and its ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in China and in other regions under its control, and specifically for the breach by the PRC of its obligations under the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in Tibet, East Turkestan and Southern Mongolia;

Underline the illegitimacy of Chinese rule of Tibet and East Turkestan and Inner Mongolia, and the breaches of international obligations with regard to the governance of Hong Kong;

Are Alarmed by and Condemn the PRC’s repression and its acts of cultural genocide, including its implementation of policies of “Sinicization” of Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongolians, in particular, as regards the Tibetans, the denial of access by Tibetans to education in their mother tongue; the violation of religious freedom and undermining of the Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation practice and protocols; involuntary family separation policies; and through these and other policies, the destruction of the distinct Tibetan culture, way of life and national identity; and as regards the Uyghurs and other Turkic people of East Turkestan, their subjection to similar violations and their abhorrent massive arbitrary incarceration in internment camps;

Are Deeply Concerned about the continued refusal of the Government of the People’s Republic of China – despite numerous calls by independent UN experts and concerned governments – to disclose the whereabouts of the ‘disappeared’ Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and to allow access to him by an independent monitor to ascertain his health and well-being;

Are Deeply Concerned also by the injurious design and implementation of environmental policies of the Government of the PRC, which fail to provide mechanisms for free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) by Tibetans, Uyghurs and others and for redress and accountability for violations, whereas such mechanisms are essential to safeguarding human rights.

Are Gravely Concerned by the PRC’s coercive labor and nomad relocation programs, under the guise of ‘poverty alleviation’, in East Turkestan and Tibet and the denial of judicial recourse for affected people;

Recognize and Emphasize that these and other violations of human rights of Tibetans and Uyghurs by the PRC are consequences and symptoms of the PRC’s violation and denial of the fundamental right of the Tibetan people and the people of East Turkestan to self-determination, provided for in common Article 1 of the ICESCR and the ICCPR, the exercise of which is a prerequisite for the enjoyment of the other rights enshrined in these Covenants;

Are Gravely Disturbed by the PRC and its Communist Party’s growing role, influence and impact on the international human rights system, which it undermines as it attempts to redefine it to serve its own political interests;

Welcome the concern expressed by the UN human rights experts, UN Member States and civil societies, in this past year regarding the situation in Tibet, East Turkestan and Southern Mongolia, including on the violations of Economic, Social, and Cultural rights in these regions;

Welcome in particular the joint statement by over 50 UN experts to establish an independent mechanism to closely monitor, analyze and report annually on the human rights situation in China and regions under its control and the

comprehensive list of issues transmitted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in relations to third periodic review of China;

We Therefore,

Call Upon the Government of People’s Republic of China to:

– RESPECT AND GUARANTEE all human rights and their universal validity, in compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

– STOP WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT the policies of repression, forced and coerced labor, and forced “Sinicization” of Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongolians;

– IMMEDIATELY DISCLOSE the location of internment camps, in particular in East Turkestan, the number and identity of detainees and to release the detainees forthwith;

– IMMEDIATELY DISCLOSE the whereabouts of the ‘disappeared’ Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, to release him, and to fully respect his rights to freedom of movement and to freely exercise his spiritual responsibilities;

– FULLY RESPECT, PERMIT AND FACILITATE WITHOUT DELAY the exercise of the full right to self-determination by the Tibetan people and the people of East Turkestan;

— RESTORE AND RESPECT the autonomy of Hong Kong as established in its Basic Law, the Constitution of the PRC and the Joint Declaration;

Call Upon the UN Human Rights Council to follow up with the June 2020 joint statement by UN experts to act with a sense of urgency, and create an independent mechanism to monitor the human rights situation of Tibetans, Uyghurs, of Chinese and others;

Call Upon the Committee on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in its ongoing review of the report of the People's Republic of China to the Committee, to urge the Chinese government to abolish policies, such as coercive settlement and labor programs, that are in contravention of the Covenant;

Call Upon the international community to urge the Chinese government to ratify core ILO Conventions on forced labor;

Call Upon the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to address the denial of access of Tibetans to education in their mother tongue and to more consistently protect Tibetan cultural heritage with UNESCO world heritage status;

Call Upon parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and to the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a

strong rights-based approach to policies on climate change and biodiversity, while acknowledging the urgent need for transparency and accountability of stakeholders when implementing such policies, in particular of the People's Republic of China

Call Upon all States and international institutions to counter and report on extraterritorial policing and acts of intimidation against exiled Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians, human rights defenders and political dissidents by the PRC;

Call Upon all States and their governments not to send representatives to the Olympic Winter Games 2022 in Beijing, in protest of the gross violations of international law;

Call Upon governments to refrain from any statements or acts that expressly or implicitly recognize Tibet to be a part of China unless the PRC has reached a mutually beneficial and

satisfactory agreement with the Dalai Lama, his representatives and with the democratically elected leaders of the Central Tibetan Administration;

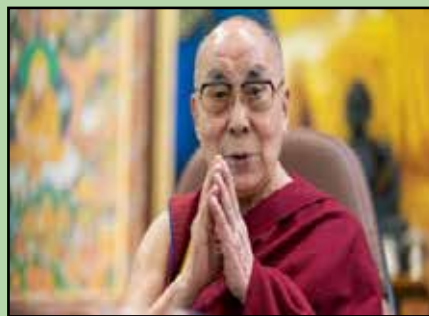
Call Upon all States and their governments, international institutions and business enterprises, including multinational corporations, to oppose coercive labor practices of the PRC in Tibet and East Turkestan, to provide detailed reports examining supply chains with regard to use of forced or coerced labor, and to ban products produced through forced and/or coerced labor, and to fully and meaningfully implement relevant human rights treaty obligations and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in their dealings with the People's Republic of China, including the obligation to respect and promote the realization of peoples' right to self-determination, and to stop all governmental and corporate activities that violate any of these rights.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Commends the Joint Statement of the Five Nuclear-weapon States

Following the recent joint pledge signed by the five recognised nuclear-weapon states affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has issued a statement warmly commending their action.

"As an avowed campaigner for demilitarization throughout the world and the elimination of all nuclear weapons," His Holiness wrote, "I firmly believe this to be a positive initiative.

"Despite many great developments that also took place, the 20th century was an era of violence that included the horrific use of nuclear weapons. It was a time during which some 200 million people are said to have been killed. This joint statement reflects the reality that we live in an increasingly interdependent world, and represents an opportunity to make



this 21st century an era of peace and cooperation.

"It is essential that all of us, including the UN and its member nations, make concerted efforts to end the threat of nuclear weapons and dedicate ourselves towards total nuclear disarmament."

His Holiness declared that he firmly believes in the oneness of humanity and considers the well-being and security

of all human beings to be of supreme importance. As such, he stated that he is convinced that when there are issues between countries, they should be resolved through dialogue in a spirit of accommodation, understanding and diplomacy. He ended with the observation that history provides ample evidence that violence never leads to lasting peace.



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Press Statement From Tibetan Parliament on Chinese Political Counsellor's Letter to Indian MPs

The Political Counselor of the Chinese Embassy to India has written a letter to several elected honorable members of the Indian Parliament who attended the dinner reception hosted by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 22 December 2021 after the revival of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet.

Historically Tibet has never been a part of China. Since the illegal and violent occupation of Tibet, China has oppressed the Tibetans under its brutal and draconian policy. Tibetans inside Tibet are deprived of their fundamental rights and the situation inside Tibet remains grim till date. Hence, the Tibetan issue is not an 'internal affair' as China has repeatedly claimed but a critical concern on Tibetan existence. The violation of international human rights law and hegemony of the neighboring nations by China should be a concern for the international community. China in the name of economic development has only fulfilled its growing greed

and is systematically destroying Tibet culturally, environmentally and eradicating the Tibetan identity. Now China is displaying its dominance of free nations and democratic countries around the world including India. Despite illegally occupying Tibet and forcing a large number of Tibetans to flee the nation, China continues its surveillance upon each move of Tibetans residing across free countries.

By sending the letters to honorable members of the Indian Parliament, it becomes evident that China is intimidated by the growing support for the Tibet movement around the world. The leaders of free countries have all the rights and responsibilities to support the just cause of Tibet and we vehemently condemn this move by China.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile does not consider it a matter of surprise because the Chinese government has been performing similar behavior in the past.

China has yet again called the Central Tibetan Administration a "separatist political group" whereas it remains the sole legitimate representative of Tibet and Tibetans across the world. CTA has been supported warmly by many nations in our endeavor of protecting the fundamental rights of Tibetans inside Tibet and protection of our cultural identity. The active non-violent movement of Tibet has been widely appreciated by the international community. Considering the growing aggression and propaganda narrative by CCP, at this date no nation would believe such a posterous claim by China.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile openly welcomes an equal and non-conditional negotiation with the Chinese government.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

Date: 31st December 2021

Sikyong Launches 16th Kashag's Flagship Initiative Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group (V-TAG)

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration launched the 16th Kashag's new flagship initiative Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group (V-TAG) from Zurich on 6 November. The launch took place at a public meeting between the Sikyong and the Tibetan community of Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group or V-Tag is initiated by the 16th Kashag with the primary objective of reinforcing the existing advocacy campaigns across the world by providing a platform to every Tibetan to contribute in their own ways for the larger cause of Tibet.



To register, visit Tibet.Net web page link: <https://tibet.net/tibet-advocacy-group/>

All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet Successfully Revived Appointing Shri Sujeet Kumar as the New Convener

All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet (APIPFT) has been successfully revived after the Tibetan Parliamentary delegation's steadfast lobbying for many days. The Parliamentary delegation consists of Parliamentarians Serta Tsultrim, Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobsang Phende, Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar, Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, and Choedak Gyatso has reached out to 38 lawmakers in this campaign. On 21 December, Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile visited Delhi, and on the morning of 22 December, the Speaker chaired a meeting attended by members of the delegation, Representative and Secretary of Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Delhi, and Director of ITCO. Later in the evening, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile in coordination with India-Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO) organized a dinner reception for the APIPFT members at The Imperial Hotel, New Delhi.

At the dinner reception, the revival of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet was officially announced with the unanimous appointment of Shri Sujeet Kumar, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Raj Sabha from Odisha as the Convener of the Forum.

The dinner meeting was attended by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel; Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & Information Technology of India; Shri Ramdas Athawale, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment; Shri K.C. Ramamurthy, Member of Rajya Sabha from Karnataka; Smt. Maneka Gandhi, Member of the Lok Sabha; Shri Janardan Singh Sigriwal, Lok Sabha Member from Bihar; Shri Swapan Dasgupta, Rajya Sabha Member from West Bengal; Shri Sujeet Kumar, Rajya Sabha member from Odisha; Shri Jairam Ramesh, Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka; Shri Manish Tewari, Lok Sabha member from Punjab; Shri Chandeshwar Prasad,



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel with Shri Sujeet Kumar, the Convener of the Forums.

Lok Sabha member from Bihar; Smt Rani Pratibha Singh, Lok Sabha member from Himachal; delegation members; Parliamentarian Kunchok Yangphel; Shri R. K. Khrimey (National Convener of Core Group for Tibetan Cause and former Parliament member); and Director and staff of ITCO.

It started with the introduction of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet, its formation, and evolution by ITCO Co-ordinator Jigme Tsultrim. Followed by key-note addresses by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Parliamentarian Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar, APIPFT Convener Shri Sujeet Kumar, and Shri Jairam Ramesh, Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka.

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel in his address applauded the unwavering support of the Indian lawmakers to the Tibet and Tibetan cause and extended his gratitude to the government and people of India for hosting His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetans for the past more than 60 years. He further highlighted the significance of India's support for Tibet's issue especially of the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet. Urging the continued support

of the MPs both inside and outside of Parliament, the Speaker appealed to the Indian lawmakers to engage in Tibetan events and programs.

He further spoke on the sufferings of the Tibetan inside Tibet under the brutal regime of the People's Republic of China, where they are deprived of basic human rights including the right to religion, culture, language, and so on. Moreover, Tibet, the roof of the world, is getting unimaginable environmental destruction which will cause serious consequences to the neighboring countries including India. To learn and understand the functioning of the Central Tibetan Administration, the Speaker extended an invitation to the members of APIPFT to visit Dharamshala.

While Parliamentarian Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar extended her gratitude on behalf of the delegation to the Indian Ministers, Parliamentarians, and officials for their warm welcome during the campaign and urged for their continued support for future Tibetan Parliamentary campaigns. She also extended her gratitude to India and its people for hosting His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration, and

Tibetans. In the past 6 decades, India has become a home to the Tibetans after the usurpation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China and Tibetans will be forever indebted to India for all the support provided. She finally appealed to the Indian Parliament Members to table and adopt Tibet-related resolutions in the Indian Parliament.

Thereafter, Shri Sujeet Kumar, the Convener of APIPFT, explained how the political party 'Biju Janata Dal' was named after Odisha's former Chief Minister Shri Biju Patnaik, who was a strong Tibet supporter. The MP further shared that he had the opportunity of having an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and he has been a follower of His Holiness for over 12 years. The APIPFT Convener, who had visited Tibet in 2009, firmly contested that Tibet was never a part of China and India does not share a border with China. He called for conferment of Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honor, on His Holiness and need of adopting a policy like the US Tibet Policy and Support Act in the Indian Parliament.

Finally, Shri Jairam Ramesh (Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka), who has a keen interest and knowledge of Tibet's culture, ideology, history, and environment, spoke about the significance of Tibet to India in terms of culture and environment, in addition to political issues. He further spoke of his book on Buddhism and how delighted he is to have the Foreword on the book from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The dinner meeting successfully concluded with discussions between the Tibetan MPs and Indian MPs.



For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

NBA Star Enes Kanter Freedom Attends 32nd Anniversary of Nobel Peace Prize Day Celebration in Boston



NBA star Enes Kanter Freedom with the Tibetan community of Boston, 11 December 2021.

The Tibetan Association of Boston celebrated the 32nd anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 11 December. The celebration was held at the Boston Tibetan Association's community center. The chief guest at the celebration was Boston Celtics NBA star Enes Kanter Freedom. Other guests at the celebration include former Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay who helped facilitate the invitation of the basketball star to the celebration.

Addressing the Tibetan community at the celebration, Enes Kanter Freedom spoke about how he came to learn about His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan people, and the just cause of the Tibetan people. He further spoke about his discovery of the Tibetan culture and the sufferings of the Tibetans and other peoples under China.

"I do a lot of work with a lot of communities but the Tibetan community is definitely one of the most kind, lovable, and passionate people that I have ever met," the NBA star declared. "When I check my Instagram and see all the messages that you guys have sent to

me, it really touches my heart. I try to share them as much as I can. Not just in America, but all over the world, you can see what kind of people Tibetans are," he added.

Speaking about his background, he explained how he came to learn about His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his messages of peace, love and compassion. "I was born in Switzerland but I am from Turkey. I came to the US when I was 17 years old in 2009. I remember after I came, one of my friends in America was a Buddhist. Until then, in my whole life, I had never met a Buddhist before. It was through him that I was introduced to this culture, religion and people. When I have conversations with him, he would try to explain to me about His Holiness the Dalai Lama, about the culture, about the food, and about the people in Tibet. And I was really inspired," he said.

"That was the first time I heard about you guys and about His Holiness the Dalai Lama. And I started to follow His Holiness the Dalai Lama on social media. I was a teenager at the time and the best way to follow someone was through social media. His messages were

really inspiring and touched my heart. I read about his life, and what the Tibetan people are going through. And all the messages that I have seen were about unity, compassion, love, and kindness. The one message that really spoke to me was: we can be from different religions, cultures and different colors, but the most important thing in life is to leave our differences on the table and try to find what we have in common. How can we make this world better together. The key word was together,” he explained.

Recounting how he became committed to social causes, he said: “I sat down this summer and studied what the Uyghurs are going through, what Hong Kongers are going through, and what Tibetans are going through? And I was ashamed of myself because for the last ten years I was in the NBA but I didn’t do anything about these issues. I asked myself why I did not speak about these issues before. And I wanted to change this. From that day, I decided I am going to do anything I can to be the voice of all those innocent people out there who don’t have a voice,” he remarked.

The celebration also included presentation of Tibetan cultural performances by Tibetan school students, and serving of traditional Tibetan foods like Momo and noodles.

Speaking to tibet.net, Kelsang Phuntsok, President of the Tibetan Association of Boston, said that the Tibetan Association of Boston is deeply grateful that the NBA star was able to come to the celebration and address the Tibetan community. He also added that the NBA star thoroughly enjoyed the Tibetan cultural performances and the Tibetan food, and appreciated the Tibetan people’s hard work and resilience in the face of adversity.



U.S. Lawmakers Urge Biden to Meet Dalai Lama

The Hindu



The 14th Dalai Lama. File | Photo Credit: AFP

They called on the United States to press Beijing to resume dialogue with the Dalai Lama’s representatives U.S. lawmakers across party lines on Tuesday urged President Joe Biden to meet with the Dalai Lama in a bid to ensure that Tibetans’ rights remain high on the agenda.

Since George H.W. Bush in 1991, every sitting U.S. president has met the Tibetan spiritual leader except Donald Trump as the now 86-year-old Dalai Lama slows down his once frenetic travel schedule.

In similar letters, 38 senators and 27 House members also called on the United States to press Beijing to resume dialogue with the Dalai Lama’s representatives that last took place 12 years ago.

“President Biden can demonstrate the importance of His Holiness’ moral message and example by inviting His Holiness to meet in the Oval Office,” the Senate letter said.

A focus on Tibet would be a “tangible manifestation of a principled foreign policy that prioritizes human rights and the quest for human dignity,” said the letter led by Republican Marco Rubio and Democrat Patrick Leahy.

If the Dalai Lama is unable to travel, the senators said Mr. Biden should send Vice President Kamala Harris or another senior official to see him in India, where the Nobel Peace Prize winner has lived since fleeing a Chinese offensive in Tibet in 1959.

China’s lack of interest in dialogue has led many observers to believe that Beijing is waiting out the Dalai Lama, hoping that the global movement he has built for greater rights in Tibet will wither away without the leadership of the Buddhist monk turned cultural icon.

The lawmakers encouraged the Biden administration to keep insisting that China not intervene in the selection of the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation, amid fears that the officially atheist government will seek to impose and groom a pliant successor.

The letters were addressed to Uzra Zeya, the under secretary of state for civilian society, democracy and human rights, ahead of her expected appointment as the Biden administration’s coordinator on Tibet.

The Dalai Lama did not visit Washington during Trump’s presidency and the pandemic disrupted travel, limiting opportunities for a meeting.

But the monk had also openly criticized the famously sensitive Trump, saying he lacked “moral principle” and criticizing his stance on climate change and migrants’ rights.

John Bolton, Trump’s national security advisor turned critic, in a book said the president objected when Nikki Haley, then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, requested to meet the Dalai Lama, fearing she would jeopardize a trade deal with China.

Trump later became a vociferous critic of China. Both the Trump and Biden administrations have stepped up criticism over Beijing’s treatment of another minority, the mostly Muslim Uyghurs, describing its campaign as genocide.

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Teaching on Cultivating a Good Heart

dalailama.com

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited to talk to the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan (FCCJ) about Cultivating a Good Heart. He was warmly welcomed by the FCCJ President, Mrs. Suvendrini Kakuchi, who introduced Pio d'Emilia, moderator for the event.

d'Emilia told His Holiness how happy he was to see him and began the day's conversation by asking him what kind of world is round the corner, whether people will be kinder or not.

His Holiness responded that a good heart, a warm heart, a more compassionate heart is the basis of our survival. At least as far as mammals are concerned, we are biologically inclined to treat each other with affection.

"As soon as we're born, our mothers take care of us. If they didn't, we'd die. Even an unborn child is affected by their mother's mood and whether she has peace of mind. We are social animals. Our survival depends on others. As human beings we thrive on affection, which is one of the reasons all religious traditions emphasize how important it is. People with little interest in religion are also human beings and for them too experiencing loving kindness contributes their being able to live a happy life.

"I find I have friends wherever I go because I don't distinguish between people on the basis of where they come from, what race they belong to or what faith they follow. As far as I am concerned, other human beings are like brothers and sisters. As a result, people are generally kind and friendly to me. They respond to my happy, smiling face, although it might be different if the Dalai Lama scowled and snapped at people instead.

"Warm-heartedness is effective even in relation to animals. If you smile and you're kind to a dog, it wags its tail, but if you frown and complain its tail droops.



FCCJ President, Mrs. Suvendrini Kakuchi, welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the start of his talk to the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan (FCCJ) online from his residence in Dharamsala, HP, India on November 10, 2021. Photo by Ven Tenzin Jamphel

"Modern education doesn't give enough attention to the importance of warm-heartedness. Young children are simply cheerful at home, but once they start going to school that exuberance gives way to other concerns. To balance this, the contribution warm-heartedness makes to our being able to live happy lives should be included in the curriculum. People need to understand that giving way to anxiety and anger even disturbs our sleep, whereas if you have peace of mind, you sleep well. Warm-heartedness can benefit the whole of humanity.

"Now, do you have any questions?"

Pio d'Emilia asked the foreign correspondents to introduce themselves briefly and to make their questions clear. The first question concerned how to retain your peace of mind even under fearful circumstances.

"Instructions about how to cultivate and retain peace of mind are largely missing from our general education," His Holiness replied. "In fact, as I mentioned before, if we have peace of mind, we'll be able to overcome anxiety and fear. A warm-hearted person is peaceful and happy. I'm a refugee and I've found cultivating inner peace to be

very helpful. The key is to have a warm-hearted attitude.

"Because of our Buddhist training, which derives from the Nalanda Tradition, we Tibetans rely on reason. Our peace of mind is rooted in reason. We tend to tackle our emotions, especially anger, which so easily disturbs our mental equilibrium. Training the mind enables us to reduce anger and fear while increasing our compassion, something I've been familiar with since I was young."

His Holiness was asked what he would do first if he was elected leader of the world's 26 million refugees. He replied, "I'm just another human being, another Tibetan. I'm not interested in being a leader. I've entirely retired from taking part in political activity." He was also asked if he had any regrets and he answered, "No. When I look back over my life, I've thought of all human beings as my brothers and sisters, and I've tried to keep my peace of mind. So, no, no regrets."

Asked by an Indonesian correspondent how he would advise Muslims when it comes to living in peace with others, His Holiness remarked that all seven billion human beings experience similar

emotions, but some are subject to manipulation by leaders who emphasize anger and division. He suggested that sometimes politicians politicize religious loyalties and exploit differences of religion, but ultimately, the choice of religion is a personal matter. Cultivating warm-heartedness and a sense that all human beings are our brothers and sisters, on the other hand, reflect our relations towards the whole of humanity.

One questioner sought to compare the situation Taiwan now finds itself in to Tibet in 1949. His Holiness observed that the people of Taiwan are mostly Han and they have preserved many aspects of China's ancient tradition and culture including Buddhism. He suggested that mainland China can provide Taiwan with economic opportunities, while learning about China's ancient values and traditions from Taiwan.

"I really pray," he said, "that they can find a way to work together peacefully."

"When I was in China (1954-55), I met Chairman Mao and other leaders. I was impressed by their Marxist values. However, on one occasion Chairman Mao declared that religion is poison and at that moment I realized how opposed he was to religion."

Another questioner wanted to know how His Holiness views Xi Jinping's embarking on a third term in office and whether, in the light of what's happened in Hong Kong and Xinjiang, the world should boycott the impending Winter Olympics. In his response His Holiness made clear he had no comment about Xi Jinping. He remarked again that when he met Chairman Mao and other leaders, he found aspects of their ideology attractive, but not their insistence on strict control. He indicated a hope that things will change under the leadership of a new generation. Regarding Tibet and Xinjiang, he noted that some Chinese communist leaders do not understand the role and value of different cultures, nor that there are a variety of peoples within China, including Tibetans, Uighurs and so forth.

His Holiness was asked if he had any advice about how to help the community cope with the difficulties thrown up by the Covid-19 pandemic. He replied that there are experts better qualified to advise than him.

Another foreign correspondent asked if His Holiness had any plans to meet Xi Jinping.

"No specific plan," he disclosed. "However, for several years I've expressed a desire to visit Wu Tai-shan on pilgrimage. If I were able to do that, I could stop off in Beijing to meet with Chinese leaders. In addition, I'd like to be able to call on old Chinese friends, former officials and military officers. I'm getting older and they are aging too, so I'd like to see how they're getting on."

An Arabic correspondent asked whether His Holiness would like to visit Mecca, the holiest place in the Islamic world.

"I'm keen to make such a pilgrimage," His Holiness told him, "as part of my efforts to promote inter-religious harmony. If the opportunity should arise, I'd be happy to take it. In the past, here in India I've visited different places of worship. These included the Jama Masjid in Delhi, where I put on the traditional white cap, the 'topi' or 'taqiyah' and joined in the prayers."

The same correspondent wanted to know whether His Holiness wouldn't prefer to live in Tibet.

"I've lived here in Dharamsala in the Kangra Valley for several decades now," he replied, "and I enjoy it. I can communicate with everyone from here wherever they are. I'm free. Some years ago, I told former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh that I'd like to remain here for the rest of my life because here I have complete freedom."

When a question was raised about his having met several previous Popes but not the present incumbent, His Holiness was clear that if Pope Francis was willing, he'd be very happy to meet him.

With regard to coping with the Covid-19 His Holiness repeated once more that he is not an expert, but that in all circumstances, if you are able to maintain peace of mind, you'll feel happier, less anxious and even physically stronger.

A Taiwanese journalist recalled that His Holiness had previously spoken of visiting Taiwan again and asked whether he still planned to do so.

"Just now," His Holiness observed, "relations between mainland China and Taiwan are delicate, so for the time being I'd prefer to remain peacefully in India. I don't want to provoke any local political difficulties. However, the modern technology of the internet and so forth enable me to communicate with people elsewhere. I'm dedicated to making whatever contribution I can to the well-being of my Taiwanese brothers and sisters, as well as my brothers and sisters in mainland China."

"Politically I take a Middle Way Approach. I'm not seeking the complete independence of Tibet. My position is open, so, we'll see. The situation is quite complicated, and I sometimes feel that this simple Buddhist monk doesn't want to become involved in complicated politics."

Finally, Pio d'Emilia, challenged His Holiness to say who he thinks will visit China first, the Pope or the Dalai Lama, to which His Holiness retorted, "Only God knows." and laughed.

d'Emilia mentioned that the FCCJ had, in the past, enrolled His Holiness as an honorary member. The foreign correspondents have renewed it, and he showed him the certificate. d'Emilia told His Holiness the FCCJ looks forward to his being able to come and collect it in person.

His Holiness's response was, "Thank you—see you again."

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama Speaks on Facing Challenges with Compassion & Wisdom

dalailama.com

His Holiness the Dalai Lama opened this morning's conversation with his old friend Father Laurence Freeman OSB, Director of The World Community for Christian Meditation, by wishing him "Good morning," and "Tashi Delek". Freeman replied that it was a great joy to see His Holiness and that he hoped he was very well.

"Since we've known each other for so many years," His Holiness continued, "I'm extremely happy to have this opportunity to talk to you again."

Father Laurence explained that he was sitting in France, in the meditation hall at Bonnevaux or Good Valley, the new centre of the World Community for Christian Meditation. It has been a place of meditation for about a thousand years. The WCCM has been there for the last three years. He mentioned that he had been looking again at His Holiness's book, 'The Good Heart', that was written as a result of their meeting in London in 1996.

"Now, everybody, even animals, wants peace," His Holiness declared. "When we're born, we receive our mother's maximum affection, without which we would not survive. That's how life begins. We human beings are social animals, naturally concerned about the welfare of others. That's part of our nature."

"Unfortunately, in more modern times we have seen greater emphasis on developing the human intellect, but not enough on cultivating a warm heart. Although it's human nature to be compassionate, the last century saw too much fighting. However, most people now are fed up with violence. Many see that too much money is spent on weapons, whereas to be more peaceful we should be aiming for a demilitarized world."

"In today's reality, we can no longer concern ourselves only with 'my country' or 'my continent'. We live



His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his old friend Father Laurence Freeman OSB, Director of The World Community for Christian Meditation exchanging greetings at the start of their online conversation on December 1, 2021. Photo by Ven Tenzin Jamphel

in a global economy beyond national boundaries. Therefore, we need to think in terms of the oneness of humanity.

"As a refugee, I'm stateless, but I live here in this free, multireligious country a free man. I have many opportunities to hold discussions with Christians, Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Sikhs and so forth. And today we have a real opportunity to promote religious harmony. You, my spiritual brother, and I have a responsibility to work for inter-religious harmony, especially between Christianity and Buddhism."

"I often point out that in the last century Mahatma Gandhi promoted 'ahimsa' in terms of non-violence and many people around the world followed his example. Today, we must make every effort to encourage another Indian tradition that is thousands of years old—'karuna' or compassion. Christianity, like other religions, emphasizes the importance of loving-kindness. The reason you give is that we are all created by one God. We are all the children of God, who is by nature infinite love, therefore, we too, should be warm-hearted towards others."

"My whole life I've been committed to promoting warm-heartedness. All

our major spiritual traditions have the potential to do this too. So, harmony among religions is essential."

Father Laurence praised His Holiness's words as a perfect introduction to the theme the WCCM have chosen for the year—Unified Consciousness: One Mind, One Heart. He recalled His Holiness's remarks that modern education spends much time on the head, the intellect, where there also needs to be effort to cultivate a warm heart.

He invited His Holiness to reflect on this theme and talk about how heart and mind can be combined in a unified consciousness. Essentially, how can someone be transformed into a more loving person.

"As someone who has given his life to helping human beings transform themselves, what do you understand about a unified consciousness of heart and mind?"

"Education is of universal value," His Holiness replied. "Up to now modern education has focussed on developing the brain, the intellect, rather than the heart. If you have a warm heart, you'll have peace of mind, but if you're

preoccupied with a sense of competition and the frustration that comes with it, you won't.

"As I mentioned before, last century, Mahatma Gandhi presented the importance of the notion of non-violence. In this century, it will be similarly powerful if the whole world is able to give more attention, not just in churches and temples, but through education, to warm-heartedness.

"Whoever I meet, I smile. People love it. Even dogs respond to a smiling face with a wagging tail. If you frown at them their tails droop. We must make every effort to promote warm-heartedness, which is something all religious traditions can contribute to as well."

"Your smile has lit up the world for years," Father Laurence replied. "Maybe when world leaders meet, we should ask them first just to smile at one another."

His Holiness was quick to point out that we can't blame world leaders for how they are since they are also products of an education system that prizes competition and fame. This is where modern education is inadequate. We need it teach the value of warm-heartedness and how to cultivate it in order that we all have good health and peace of mind. All of us seven billion human beings, he suggested, are essentially the same. We are brothers and sisters. We need to learn in a secular way how to be more warm-hearted.

Father Laurence referred to the great sense of hope he feels when teaching children to meditate.

"Children respond positively to a smiling face because it indicates a warm heart," His Holiness replied. "If their teacher smiles, children will be happy and enjoy their class, but if the teacher is stern, they'll want to leave as soon as they can. They naturally appreciate the teacher who shows a genuine concern for their well-being.

"Warm-heartedness should be presented from a secular point of view, not as a factor of religious practice. It's

something that improves our health and well-being. When you have peace of mind, your brain functions better. When you're full of anger or fear, it doesn't work so well. You're able to study better if you have peace of mind."

Father Laurence wondered how His Holiness sees the future of religion. His Holiness answered,

"I feel that education is of universal value, but that religion is a personal and private choice. What you believe is your own business. However, the underlying message of all religions focusses on the importance of love and compassion.

"If religious teachers could get together and discuss these things, it would be very good. Perhaps religious scholars could also discuss them in terms of education. If we're warm-hearted we'll enjoy good health and peace of mind. I think our various religious traditions can contribute to a clearer understanding of this.

"Although I'm a Buddhist monk, I don't try to propagate Buddhism. I'm more concerned instead with how Buddhists can contribute from what they know about peace of mind to a more widespread human happiness. If I may say so, I've come across narrow-minded Christians whose main concern is to propagate their faith. However, there are others, who are wiser, who look to see how they can contribute to the welfare of others."

Father Laurence recalled that in their previous dialogues His Holiness had spoken of spiritual practice that brings the heart and the intellect into harmony. He asked His Holiness to speak about this state of compassion.

"A calm mind is essential in the process of education," His Holiness observed. "You can't study if you're overwhelmed by anger or jealousy. So, if you are to study well, it's important that you find peace of mind. Warm-heartedness is of universal value. This is why I'm hoping that when the pandemic has subsided, I'll be able to go to Delhi and discuss with educators how to incorporate and

develop the idea of warm-heartedness in education in general.

"Warm-heartedness leads to a healthy mind. Peace of mind allows us to sleep soundly. I'm not talking about the benefits of the next life or of finding God, but of being a peaceful person with a calm mind and a warm heart here and now."

Father Laurence told His Holiness that they'd known each other for 40 years since they first met in Montreal in 1980. He considers it to have been one of the great blessings of his life. "But when I look at us now, we don't seem physically to have changed in all these years. What has been the fruit of your life?"

"I'm half joking," His Holiness responded, "but there's less hair on the top of our heads. Perhaps our shiny scalps indicate greater wisdom."

Noting that the WCCM is active in different parts of the world, Father Laurence said he would like to introduce three members who wanted to put their own questions to His Holiness. The first was Sarah Bachelard, who is an Anglican priest in Australia. She asked how meditation can lead to social transformation.

"We have five sense organs and five sense consciousnesses," His Holiness told her. "But we also have mental consciousness. Our sense consciousnesses respond to the physical world, but meditation is to do with our primary mind, our mental consciousness.

"If you teach meditation in schools, students could close their eyes, if they find that's more comfortable, and think about the nature of their minds. It's helpful to learn to distinguish between sense consciousness and mental consciousness and to learn to pay attention just to the mind. When you quieten your attention to your senses, it leads to a quieter mind and a sense of being more grounded.

"At the beginning it's better to meditated alone. Once you have some experience, it may help others if you meditate

together. This won't be the case if you let your mind wander and you're still looking here and there, wondering what this or that person is thinking. To begin with meditate for ten minutes, then extend this to thirty minutes, an hour and longer periods."

Nick Scrimenti who is studying theology at Harvard University wanted to know what can be done to address the climate crisis.

"In ancient times we thought only of our own locality, but now we have to think on a global level," His Holiness advised. "We have to consider all seven billion human beings in addition to the well-being of the whole planet. Tibet, for example, is the source of the great rivers of Asia, so what happens to the climate on the Tibetan plateau can affect many people's lives.

"Global warming is very serious. If we don't act to address it, the world will become intolerably hot. When I was a child in Tibet, the mountains around Lhasa were covered in deep snow. These days the snow is greatly reduced. We have to recognise how global warming, like the global economy, affects us all. When it comes to taking action, warm-heartedness gives us inner strength."

Angelina Chan, a member of the WCCM board asked His Holiness what advice he might give to the next Dalai Lama.

"No idea," His Holiness retorted. "And I don't think there's any hurry to be thinking about the 15th Dalai Lama. As long as I'm alive, I'll try to contribute to creating a better, more peaceful world with a healthy environment. I'm not very concerned about the next Dalai Lama. Things are changing. The question of improving education is a matter of concern to the wider public. When it comes to the Dalai Lama or the Panchen Lama, we're just talking about individuals."

Father Laurence's final question was about how contemplative traditions can help distinguish between illusion and reality.

"The time has come," His Holiness asserted, "to cease thinking only in terms of 'my locality', 'my country'. The present reality is that we have to think about the entire world, how climate change affects the whole planet and every one of us on it. Likewise, because the global economy impacts us all, we have to take everyone into account. We have to take the oneness of humanity seriously.

"If we educate the current younger generation along these lines, they will grow up to be much more aware of the world in its totality as well as humanity as a whole. This is the new reality—we live in a global economy and a global ecology. In my own meagre experience,

I've realized that when I lived in Tibet, I really only thought about Tibetans. However, since I came to live in India, I've learned to think of the well-being of all seven billion human beings."

"As a refugee you've become a citizen of the world," Father Laurence interjected.

"Yes, I no longer think only of the welfare of Tibetans, I think of all human beings, indeed all sentient beings."

Father Laurence disclosed that he had hoped that he could invite His Holiness to the inauguration of Bonnevaux, but circumstances have intervened. Instead, Giovanni, a member of the community requested him to bless this centre of meditation and world peace.

"Certainly, I feel a special connection to my Christian brothers and sisters. I pray that those who really try to put the message of God—compassion and forgiveness—into practice will be effective."

"Thank you," Father Laurence replied. "Your blessing is a great source of strength for us as we open to the world. We ask you to keep us in your heart, as we keep you in ours. We pray that you remain in good health so your smile continues to illuminate the world. Thank you for all you've taught us over the years of our friendship."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Condoles the Demise of Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Immediately on being informed that his "respected elder spiritual brother and good friend" Archbishop Desmond Tutu had passed away, His Holiness the Dalai Lama composed a letter to the Archbishop's daughter, Rev. Mpho Tutu.

"Please accept my heartfelt condolences," he wrote, "and convey the same to your mother and other members of your family. I pray for him.

"As you know, over the years, your father and I enjoyed an enduring friendship. I

remember the many occasions we spent time together, including the week here at Dharamsala in 2015 when we were able to share our thoughts on how to increase peace and joy in the world. The friendship and the spiritual bond between us was something we cherished.

"Archbishop Desmond Tutu was entirely dedicated to serving his brothers and sisters for the greater common good. He was a true humanitarian and a committed advocate of human rights. His work for the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission was an inspiration for others around the world.

"With his passing away, we have lost a great man, who lived a truly meaningful life. He was devoted to the service of others, especially those who are least fortunate. I am convinced the best tribute we can pay him and keep his spirit alive is to do as he did and constantly look to see how we too can be of help to others."

Minister, MPs Attend Tibet Event, China Diplomat Writes to Them: Don't Support

By Shubhajit Roy, Manoj C G, Liz Mathew, The Indian Express

China's unusually worded letter, sent Thursday by the Political Counsellor at its Embassy, is being seen as an undiplomatic move by Delhi, as foreign diplomats writing to MPs in India in this manner has not happened in the recent past.

A week after a group of Parliamentarians, including Union MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar, attended a dinner reception hosted by the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, the Chinese Embassy in Delhi has expressed "concern" over their participation and asked them to "refrain from providing support to the 'Tibetan independence' forces".

Under the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet, at least six MPs cutting across party lines had attended an event on December 22 at a hotel in Delhi. They included Union MoS for Entrepreneurship, Skill Development, Electronics & Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar, BJP's Maneka Gandhi and K C Ramamurthy, Congress MPs Jairam Ramesh and Manish Tewari, and BJD's Sujeet Kumar. The Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, was also present.

China's unusually worded letter, sent Thursday by the Political Counsellor at its Embassy, is being seen as an undiplomatic move by Delhi, as foreign diplomats writing to MPs in India in this manner has not happened in the recent past.

Reacting sharply to the letter, BJD's Kumar said: "Who is the Political Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy to write to a Member of Parliament of India, the largest democracy? How dare you send letters to Indian MPs? If anything, you can raise your protest through official channels. I think the MEA (Ministry of External Affairs) should take a stand."

The letter comes almost four years

after the Government had asked "senior leaders" and "government functionaries" to not attend the events organised by Tibetans in India, citing bilateral ties.

In the letter, Political Counsellor Zhou Yongsheng wrote: "I have noticed that you have attended an activity held by the so-called 'All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet' and interacted with some members of so called 'Tibetan Parliament in Exile'. I would like to express our concern on that."

The Counsellor wrote: "As is known to all, the so-called 'Tibetan Government in-exile' is an out-and-out separatist political group and an illegal organization completely in violation of China's Constitution and laws. It is not recognized by any country in the world. Tibet has been an inseparable part of China since ancient times, and Tibet related affairs are purely China's internal affairs that allow no foreign interference."

The letter stated that in a series of political documents, the Indian Government has recognised that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and reiterated that it does not allow Tibetans to carry out anti-China political activities.

"China firmly opposes any anti-China separatist activities conducted by 'Tibetan independence' forces in any capacity or name in any country and opposes any forms of contact by officials of any country with them," the letter said.

Addressing the MPs, Zhou wrote: "You are a senior politician who know the China-India relations well. It is hoped that you could understand the sensitivity of the issue and refrain from providing support to the 'Tibetan independence' forces, and make contributions to China-India bilateral relations."



When contacted, Chandrasekhar told The Indian Express: "I was a member of the Indo-Tibetan Parliamentary forum under the chairmanship of (BJP veteran) Shanta Kumarji and I was invited in the capacity. I attended the dinner."

BJD's Kumar, who is also convenor of the forum, said: "Personally speaking, I don't consider Tibet to be a part of China. That is separate because the Government of India's official policy is different. But this Parliamentary forum on Tibet is to support the cause of Tibetan cultural and religious beliefs, and is between the people of India and the Tibetan government-in-exile. One should not read too much politics into it."

Kumar said: "The stated goals of the Parliamentary forum is not to advocate for the independence of Tibet or anything controversial. It is largely to build a relationship between the government-in-exile and the people of India because of the shared history, shared civilization and linkages..because of Buddhism, because of trade between Tibet and India in the past. The idea is to build on those linkages. I think I have already received four or five letters from the Embassy. I give them befitting replies, too," he said

When contacted, Congress' Jairam Ramesh confirmed that he has received a letter from the Political Counsellor. "When I was asked to speak (at the event), I said I never go to any evening functions but I have made an exception because of my profound admiration for the Buddha, deep respect for the Dalai

Lama and in gratitude for the role Tibetan sources have played in the rediscovery of India's Buddhist heritage."

India has had a consistently supportive policy towards the exiled leaders of Tibet. In a careful balancing act on its pledged support to Tibetans while seeking a peaceful relationship with China, India's position has been to recognise Tibet as an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China. It "continues to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the vexed boundary issue" with China.

Sixty years ago, around 80,000 Tibetans, along with their spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, left Lhasa after a failed uprising against the Communist rule and arrived in India.

The Tibetan exile administration, called CTA, is based in Dharamshala where the spiritual leader also lives. Around 140,000 Tibetans now live in exile, over 100,000 of them in different parts of India. Over six million Tibetans live in Tibet.

In 2018, the Centre had advised senior ministers and bureaucrats to stay away from 'Thank You India' events organised by Tibetan leaders.

The Indian Express had reported on an official note dated February 22, 2018, advising "senior leaders" and "government functionaries" of the Centre and states to stay away from events organised by Tibetan leaders, citing "very sensitive times" in bilateral relations on India and China.

The note was sent by then Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale to Cabinet Secretary at the time, P K Sinha, who issued a directive two days later..



Xi Jinping's Pursuit of Dictatorial Rule Through Digital Totalitarianism

By Tenzin Dalha, Modern Diplomacy



In the age of rapid technological advancement, as the news outlets in China increasingly goes digital, and as television goes mobile, the digital ecosystem has become one of the major concerns to the Chinese leadership and its rule. As part of its political propaganda, Beijing has been setting different communication strategies to control the outflow of news by instrumentalizing and implementing stringent laws to dominate international cyberspace. Through the implementation of three recent laws – the Cybersecurity Law, Data Security Law (DSL), and Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) – China has taken a range of measures that restrict cross-border data flows and enforce data localisation.

The Chinese cybersecurity law was enacted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on November 7, 2013, and it came into effect on June 1, 2017. The law is widely seen to be in line with the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) which aims to promote domestic industries such as cloud computing and big data processing. The 14th Five-Year Plan aims to centralize and control China through a digital ecosystem. As outlined in the 14th FYP:

We will welcome the digital age,

activate the potential of data factors of productions, promote the construction of a cyber powerhouse, accelerate the construction of the digital economy, digital society, and digital government, and leverage digital transformations to drive overall changes in production methods, lifestyle, and governance.

The legislation passed by China's largely rubber-stamp parliament accelerates the damage it could do for global trade and services. According to the law, it requires companies to store all data within China and it also includes contentious requirements to pass the security review, within China's stated goal to achieve "cyber sovereignty." The idea is that the state should be permitted to govern, monitor, and control data flow in their digital ecosystem.

The law forces the foreign companies operating within China to either invest in domestic server infrastructure following the law or partner with service providers such as Tencent, or Alibaba, thus saving capital expenditure costs for the foreign companies. The law is seen as a boon to domestic companies and has been criticized by the international community as creating unfair competition against international technology companies such as Microsoft and Google.

Since the law came into practice, many foreign technology companies have already complied with the law. Apple has established a data center for Chinese users in a contractual arrangement with state-owned firm in Guizhou with \$1 Billion in partnership. The Company has close ties to the Chinese government and transferred the operation and source of iCloud data to China.

In July 2017, Apple pulled out 60 VPN services from its AppStore in China. Meanwhile, online services, such as Skype which refused to store their data locally and was thereby delisted from China's domestic app stores. Since, China is home to Apple's manufacturing services, Apple and other companies who are investing in China need to place human rights over profit-making.

The requirement for data localization in article 37 of the Cyber Security Law is also seen as a move by Beijing to instrumentalize Chinese laws to prosecute entities and individuals who are viewed by the Chinese government in violation of its laws. Critics have concluded that the law exemplifies the practice of digital totalitarianism by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Xi Jinping's Web of Laws

Since President Xi Jinping took the reign of China in 2013, he was instrumental in creating mass surveillance in cyberspace by cracking down on online activities which are deemed to be politically sensitive. Xi would also upend and reform the Chinese internet governance to gain greater control over cyberspace than his predecessors. He also oversaw the creation and expansion of the Great Firewall.

Hence it is not a surprise when President Xi Jinping himself emphasized the link between the two concepts: "Without cybersecurity, there is no national security." With the rising power of the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), the country's internet regulator, China has strictly extended its iron grip and tightened control over the flow of information.

The Data Security Law (DSL)

On August 20, 2021, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China (PRC) passed the Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL), which came into effect on November 1, 2021. This Law curbs what information companies can gather and sets the standard for how it must be stored. It triggered concerns among foreign business companies and civil societies.

Before the implementation of the Data Security Law, there are more than 56 million LinkedIn members in China, which makes it lucrative and the third-biggest market after the United States and India. Because of the DSL, the company felt "a considerably more difficult operating environment and higher regulatory requirement." Following this, the tech giant LinkedIn decided to withdraw despite China's lucrative market.

Yahoo, one of the foremost search engines entered the Chinese market in the year 1998. It was a roller coaster ride for them to operate in China. On 15 Feb, 2006, Yahoo, Microsoft, Cisco, and Google were criticized in the US Congressional hearing for yielding to pressure from China for censoring their content. On 7 September, 2005, Yahoo is charged with supplying sensitive information to the Chinese authorities which led to the jailing of journalist Shi Tao. The recent timing of Yahoo pulling out from China, coincided with the implementation of China's new data protection law on 1 Nov, 2021, marking an important milestone in China's effort to create stricter guidelines on the Chinese digital ecosystem.

The new law intrudes upon individuals' rights to freedom of expression, opinion, privacy, and access to information. It also forces individuals to self-censor and restricts sharing images or videos that are perceived by the Chinese authorities as politically subversive. The law too limits the conditions where companies can gather personal information and set rules for how it is being used. DSL also

stipulates that the companies operating in the country must hand over their data if requested. For instance, one of the largest companies, Alibaba was fined a record of \$2.8 billion after an anti-monopoly probe found that it has abused its market dominance. Other than heavy fines, the laws have also raised concerns among both foreign and domestic companies that they would have to hand over intellectual property rights or open a backdoor channel to operate in China's market. The law is widely criticized for limiting freedom of speech. For example, the law explicitly requires most online services operating in China to collect and verify the identity of their users, and, when required to, surrender such information to law enforcement without a warrant. For instance, article 33 states that:

When institutions engaged in data transaction intermediary services provide services, they shall require the party providing the data to explain the source of the data, examine and verify the identities of both parties to the transactions, and retain verification and transaction records.

Digital activists have argued that this policy dissuades people from freely expressing their thoughts online, thus it further stifles free expression and reduces them as a sitting duck.

Passang (name changed) who spoke on the condition of anonymity, has recently arrived from Tibet. He expressed his fear and said: "I was more afraid that these data security laws will also be practiced extensively in Tibet. Under the authority of the newly-appointed party secretary of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, Wang Zunzheng, the Chinese authorities frequently advise Tibetans not to engage in any anti-social activities including contacting their family members and acquaintances outside Tibet. I have personally witnessed many Tibetans detained under vague and fictitious charges such as 'leaking state secrets' and 'inciting separatism.' Tibetans are jailed and interrogated with no apparent evidence of any wrongdoing. We are more concerned about the next

year’s winter Olympics in China and its further places restrictions on the online activities, particularly on social media.”

Tibetans are subjected to arbitrary arrests, detention, and torture for exercising their rights to freedom of expression in cyberspace. Since the law applies to data handling activities in China as well as those outside China, which will result in more scrutiny of data protection and direct suppression of freedom of expression and rights to privacy.

Digital Totalitarianism: How does CSL directly impact Tibet?

China’s intensive use of high-tech surveillance, including artificial intelligence (AI) and espionage method has further stifled the voices of the Tibetan people, leading to self-censorship. Under Xi’s authoritarian rule, through the manipulation of a series of new laws, Beijing continues to subdue freedom of expression and infringe directly upon individuals’ privacy and daily lives.

A senior Tibetan journalist, who wants to remain anonymous said: “The implementation of cyber security law makes it difficult for gathering any information from Tibet, especially getting information from the capital of Tibet, Lhasa. This has become almost impossible. The Chinese police consider monks to be troublemakers. Monasteries are kept under strict vigilance, the Tibetan monks are forced to install surreptitious monitoring apps on their smartphones. The dubious logic given by the authorities was that the app is meant to alert in case of accidental fire. But in reality, it is intended to monitor their daily conversations. He further explained that “we need to find different avenues to pass the messages of the Tibetan people from Tibet to tell the world about the increasing suppression under the Chinese regime.”

Many Tibetans are arrested knowingly or unknowingly. In March 2018, Woechung Gyatso, a Tibetan Monk was arrested and severely interrogated, and detained in Qinghai on suspicion

of sharing politically sensitive content on social media and is being held at an undisclosed location.

In a recent notice, the Chinese authorities in the “Tibet Autonomous Region” announced criminal prosecutions against individuals who use online communication as a tool to engage in activities against the Chinese Communist regime. The general public is ordered to report any rumors circulating on social media and those who are involved in spreading them. On 18 January 2021, a Tibetan named Tse was arrested for spreading rumors on the WeChat group about Coronavirus. Another notice on 24 November, 2020 was also publicly posted about a week ago, which said that the authorities would “strike hard” against offenders as “per law.”

Sharing the photographs, teachings, and talks of the Dalai Lama in viewed by Chinese authorities as illegal and this has resulted in Tibetans being arrested in Tibet. For instance, the Chinese authorities have arrested several Tibetans from Karze (Tibet) for celebrating the 86th birthday of the Dalai Lama.

Through their extensive propaganda machinery, China claims that Tibetans enjoy the freedom of expression and freedom of religion belief in Tibet. The Chinese government has steadfastly maintained a complete crackdown on any expression of reverence to the Dalai Lama, and even the possession of his picture is criminalized.


Recently, a Chinese court in Tibet sentenced writer and educator Go Sherab Gyatso to a 10-year prison sentence. He was known for his outspoken advocacy and activism towards the protection and preservation of Tibet’s environment, religion, language, and culture.

In order to fulfil his dream of retaining power, Xi has been bending laws in the pursuit of digital totalitarianism and has been implementing a series of sophisticated strategies to further control the already suppressed society. By doing this, general secretary Xi Jinping is destroying the dreams of common Chinese people and it will also

further tarnish China’s nosediving image exacerbated by Coronavirus. To achieve a truly healthy “Digital ecosystem,” Chinese leaders may review the CSL and its related laws, and implement a stand-alone data protection law that adequately safeguard people’s rights and also give a space to breathe for foreign and domestic companies. China also need to reconsider policies related to data localization, not just to enhance the security of the internet and preserve human rights, but also to ensure society’s overall mental health and progress in the long run. Because to fulfil China’s dream, China may first need to fulfil the common Chinese peoples’ dreams and also the dreams of Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Southern Mongolian people.

**Important Notice
Regarding Eligibility
for Tibetan Scholarship
Program (TSP)**

Announcement



TSP2023
TIBETAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2023

The Department of Education, with utmost importance, would like to once again, bring the attention of all future prospective candidates for the Tibetan Scholarship Program to a new TSP eligibility criteria as required by the US State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Beginning from the TSP 2023 batch, all TSP prospective candidates must have an IC valid for a minimum of three years from the commencement of the program. This is a mandatory requirement and we urge all the applicants to prepare well in advance to avoid disqualification.

Department of Education,
Central Tibetan Administration

TIBETAN MEDIA

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Web: www.bod.asia

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

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

Tibet Bulletin (Official Chinese bi-monthly)
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QUOTES

“Warm-heartedness is effective even in relation to animals. If you smile and you’re kind to a dog, it wags its tail, but if you frown and complain its tail droops.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during Teaching on Cultivating a Good Heart on 10 November 2021

“I feel that education is of universal value, but that religion is a personal and private choice. What you believe is your own business. However, the underlying message of all religions focusses on the importance of love and compassion.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama Speaks on Facing Challenges with Compassion & Wisdom on 23 December 2021

“The conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama strengthened the determination and courage of Tibetans inside Tibet, and helped Tibetans in exile find a new approach on the international stage. It has built a solid foundation and an unending well-spring of support for the issue of Tibet among the Chinese intellectuals and the international community. It also helped create a valid basis for Middle-Way Approach as the lasting means to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict.” Sikyong Penpa Tsering in the Statement of the Kashag on the 32nd anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama on 10 December 2021.

“Both the government and people of Tibet remain unwavering in their commitment to the mutually beneficial middle way policy which reflects a profoundly envisioned, forward looking desire of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. To firmly remain within the bounds of non-violence in seeking a resolution of the issue of Tibet is the desire and plan being still pursued by all of us on the Tibetan side.” Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel in the Statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 32nd anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama on 10 December 2021.
