



# TIBETAN BULLETIN

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NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2022

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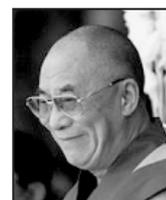
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# TIBETAN BULLETIN

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Editor  
Tenzin Phende  
Email: tibbul@tibet.net

Asst. Editor  
Tenzin Choetso  
Dawa Tsering

Layout & Design  
Dawa Tsering

Circulation Manager  
Norbu Wangdue  
Email: circulation@tibet.net  
Tibetan Bulletin is published by:  
Department of Information and  
International Relations,  
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## Tibetans Commemorate 33rd Anniversary of Nobel Peace Prize Conferment on His Holiness the Dalai Lama



*Sikyong addresses the gathering. Photo/Tenzin Phende/ CTA*

The 33rd anniversary of conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama was celebrated by the CTA officials at Thekchen Choeling.

It was attended by the Acting Chief Justice Commissioner Karma Dadul, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering, Security Kalon Dolma Gyari, DIIR Kalon Norzin Dolma, Election and Public Service Commissioner Wangdu Tsering Pesur, Parliamentarians and Secretaries and staff of the CTA and the general public.

Also in attendance was chief guest Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, member of Parliament- Lok Sabha; special guests Shri Sujeet Kumar, member of Parliament-Rajya Sabha and convenor of All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet; and advocate Tashi Gyalsan, the Chief executive councillor(CEC) of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council and the councillors of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council.

The programme began with the hoisting of the Tibetan national flag by the Sikyong and singing of the Tibetan and Indian national anthems, which was followed by the singing of the Nobel Peace Prize song by the TIPA artists.

In his address, Sikyong Penpa Tsering expressed his gratitude to His Holiness

the Dalai Lama and reiterated the relevance of His message of peace even in the 21st century when war and conflicts prevail. “His Holiness the Dalai Lama received the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his consistent advocacy of non-violence to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict. This award symbolizes recognition by the Nobel Committee for His Holiness’s constructive effort and commitment towards addressing international conflict resolution, human rights violations and global environmental challenges.”

“The endeavour to transform the 21st century into a century of dialogue and peace by learning lessons from the devastation of war and conflict of the previous century has not yet materialized. Therefore, it is evident that the broad vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to remain relevant and indispensable for the entire humanity,” he added.

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering delivered the Parliament’s statement noting that the day coincided with International Human Rights Day which was being celebrated across the world, however, the people in dictatorship countries were suffering under the most repressive conditions such as those inside Tibet. Chief guest MP Jamyang T. Namgyal from Ladakh addressed the gathering

highlighting the commonality between Tibetans and Ladhakis in terms of language and culture, particularly, His Holiness trust and confidence on Ladhakis to preserve and promote the distinct culture. He also expressed gratitude to the Tibetan administration for provision of education to Himalayan people who make up over 60% of the population in monasteries and schools in the north-east region.

Special guest MP Shri Sujeet Kumar similarly expressed the strong connection he felt towards the cause of Tibet and as someone who had visited Tibet in 2009 shared the repression he had seen and which has only multiplied over the years. He commended Tibetans for being the perfect guests and hailed the friendship of the two countries from time immemorial.

Advocate and the Chief executive councillor(CEC) of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Tashi Gyaltsan said that Ladakh held a special place in His Holiness’ heart and shared his hope that the latter would visit Ladakh soon.

The event also featured the launch of TIPA ‘s Yarkyi musical series by Jigme T. Namgyal, launch of a book by Dr Jigme Gedun on practice of Tibetan medicinal therapy by Sujeet Kumar, and the felicitation of Men Tsee Khang staff Kelsang Choedon on completion of 25 years of service.

Later, Sikyong Penpa Tsering attended the 25th Himalayan festival hosted by the Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association (ITFA), an organisation of Tibetans and Indians working in Dharamshala since 1995, which has organised a two-day fest on December 10-11 featuring Tibetan and Indian cultural events.

A similar celebrations were observed in Tibetan settlements and communities across the world to mark this auspicious day.

## Parliamentary Group of Friends of Tibet Launched in Mexican Congress



*Inaugural of the parliamentarian group of friends of Tibet in the Mexican congress.*

The Mexico Congress headed by Deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera launched the 'Tibet Friends' in the congress on 8 November 2022.

The session began with the presentation of the members of the legislative group, followed by the proposal and election of the composition of the board of directors, the installation and beginning of the work of the group of legislators friends of Tibet. The Technical Secretariat was presented and voted on, and the installation of the group of friends of Tibet was declared open.

Representative of Latin America's Office of Tibet, Jigme Tsering, read the letters sent by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the Tibetan parliament in exile and the letter sent by Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration where they welcomed the formation of the parliamentary group of friends of Tibet in the Mexican congress.

Representative Jigme Tsering read his speech, informing the deputies of the current human rights situation in Tibet, about the middle-way approach proposed by the Tibetan government in exile and evoked the illustrious Mexicans, who in the past decided to help and protect those in need despite external pressures.

Subsequently, the deputies friends of Tibet, headed by Deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera and the guests headed by Marco

Antonio Karam, president and founder of Casa Tibet Mexico, Tereluz Flores, coordinator for Latin America of the International Tibet Network, Raymundo Zaldivar coordinator of the Tibet MX support group, and Jesús Olivares, counsellor of Tibet Mx, gave a press conference where Deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera formally announced the founding of the group of friends of Tibet in the Mexican congress.

Later, Marco Antonio Karam read his speech where he spoke about the importance of preserving the rich culture of the Tibetan people, the environment and respect for human rights. The deputy members of the group of friends of Tibet expressed their joy and determination to work in favour of preserving the rich Tibetan culture. The representatives of the support groups for Tibet expressed their joy and appreciation to the deputies for the formation of the group of friends of Tibet in the Mexican congress and evoked the long Mexican tradition of friendship with the peoples of the world and recognised the tradition of asylum and shelter for all those who have needed the protection of the Mexican government. In the end, the official closing of the solemn event was carried out with the signing of the minutes that testify to the formation of the group of legislators- friends of Tibet.

Representative Jigme Tsering, Marco Antonio Karam, Tereluz Flores,

Raymundo Zaldivar and Jesus Olivares, were invited to the session hall of the Chamber of Deputies, where the annual budget was being discussed, and all 500 deputies were present. Deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera, speaking in front of the plenary, informed the deputies of the formation of the group of friends of Tibet, which was received with applause. Likewise, the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies welcomed the presence of Representative Jigme Tsering, Marco Antonio Karam, president of Casa Tibet Mexico, TereLuz Flores, coordinator of the International Tibet Network for Latin America and Raymundo Zaldivar, coordinator of the support group Tibet MX.

In the plenary hall, deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera introduced Jigme Tsering to his fellow legislators where other deputies joined the group of friends of Tibet after interacting with Representative Jigme Tsering, bringing the total to 19 deputies who formed the parliamentary group of friends of Tibet.

Thereafter, at the invitation of Deputy Caro Cabrera, Jigme Tsering, Marco Antonio Karam, Tere Luz Flores, and Raymundo Zaldivar visited the legislative precinct where they were informed about the history of the congress and the meaning of the murals and symbols represented in the Chamber of Deputies was explained.

## Permanent Strategy Committee Holds Third Meeting

The Permanent Strategy Committee of the 16th Kashag convened its third meeting in Dharamshala on 25 November 2022. The three-day meeting, held from 25-27 November, is chaired by Sikyong Penpa Tsering and attended by all the committee members, including advisors Kasur Tempa Tsering, Kasur Dongchung Ngodup, former Representative of His Holiness at Tibet Bureau in Delhi, and former special envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen. In attendance were also Secretary Karma Rinchen of the Department of Security, Secretary Karma Choeying of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR), Secretary Dawa Tsering of the Tibet Policy Institute (TPI), and political secretary Tashi Gyatso of Kashag Secretariat. Ngawa Tsegyam, Secretary from the Gaden Phodrang office, also attended the meeting.

During this three-day meeting, the Committee reviewed and discussed the progress of the ongoing strategic programs and deliberated on future advocacy initiatives per the committee's objectives.

Speaking to the media after concluding the meeting, Secretary Karma Choeying of the Department of Information and International Relations said the committee members discussed implications of the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party and China's forthcoming National People's Congress during the two and half day meeting. He further added that Sikyong Penpa Tsering briefed his recent official visitations to Europe and Japan, where he met and interacted with leaders, parliamentarians and officials.

After the dissolution of the previous Task Force on Sino-Tibetan Negotiations by the 16th Kashag, this new Permanent Strategy Committee was established. The Committee held its first meeting in November of 2021 and its second meeting in July of 2022 in Dharamshala.

## 11th Tibet Lobby Day Urges Australian Lawmakers to Enact Policy to Protect Succession of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

The 11th round of Tibet Lobby day of the Australia Tibet Council urged the Australian government to put forward a policy to protect the succession of the 14th Dalai Lama without any interference from the Chinese Government. The council urged the lawmakers to adopt a Reciprocal Access Legislation to impose restrictions similar to the ones China currently imposes on travel to Tibet and to allow key abusers of Tibetan human rights to be sanctioned under the Magnitsky Act.

A delegation of 15 young Tibetans across Australia met with close to 30 Australian MPs and Senators from all parties.

Over 1000 Australians have signed a pledge "to only recognise a Dalai Lama appointed via Tibetan Buddhist traditions and practices, without interference by the Chinese Government".

In her keynote address at the Australian Senate(Upper House), Senator Janet Rice of the Greens acknowledged the presence of Tibetan delegates comprising Representative Karma Singey, with whom the Senator attended the 8th WPCT in June, Tibetan Parliamentarian Tenzin Phonstok Doring and other dignitaries.

Highlighting the day's significance, she said the day was paramount for meeting Tibetan delegates with parliament members from across the political spectrum to advocate for peace, freedom and human rights in Tibet.

Senator Rice pointed out the concerns regarding the succession of the Dalai Lama and the concerns of missing 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet that was highlighted to her by the Tibetan delegation.

"Today, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima would be over 30 years old. Tibet's traditional practices, culture and Tibetan

Buddhism, are under threat. Carrying or possessing a photo of the Dalai Lama brings harsh penalties, including imprisonment," said Senator Rice in her testimony.

She conveyed her party's and the Australian government's faith in protecting human rights while delivering a strong assurance to speak out against human rights violations anywhere.

"We urge the Australian government to oppose any effort to interfere with the practices of Tibetan Buddhism and to only recognise the Dalai Lama, appointed by Tibetan Buddhist traditions and practices. I have lodged a motion to this effect on the Notice Paper today, which I will continue to raise in this place through every means possible," she added.

Tibet lobby day is an annual event organised by Australia Tibet Council in collaboration with Tibetan community associations where Tibetans and Tibet supporters come together in Canberra to meet with Australian parliamentarians to talk about different issues concerning Tibet.



Senator Janet Rice speaking at the Australian Senate (Upper House).

## Former Political Prisoner and Tibetan Monk Scholar Passes Away After a Long Illness

A Tibetan political prisoner who served six long years in prison for fabricated political crimes passed away early this month from prolonged injuries incurred in Chinese police custody, a reliable source said.

The public security bureau of the Sichuan and Karze (Ch: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture arrested Geshe Tenzin Pelsang, also known as Tenga, on 2 April 2012 at a meeting in Drakgo (Luhuo) without providing any explanation for the arrest. During the next 10 months, his whereabouts and well-being remained unknown.

On trumped-up charges of political crimes, the Chinese authorities in Chengdu sentenced four Tibetan monks including Geshe Tenga, two Tibetan monk teachers, and a rinpoche of the Drakgo Monastery to six years in prison. Another monk was sentenced to five years in prison and 36 Tibetans, both laymen and monks, were handed prison terms ranging from one to two years for alleged political crimes, according to the source.

Tenga was at the time the Drakgo Monastery's senior treasurer, and had no health issues. During his imprisonment, "he was subjected to severe and repeated torture and beatings by the Chinese police as a result of which he became very ill after three years of imprisonment", the source said. He was unable to receive timely treatment from doctors in the following years, and the lack of basic necessities such as food and clothing deteriorated his poor health which led to a series of unfortunate circumstances.

In April 2018, he was released from prison after completing his sentence. "His conditions were so severe that he needed his family members' assistance even in doing his business or walking around in the house", the source said. Furthermore, he was prohibited from visiting his monastery and meeting prominent individuals. His home was



(Late) Geshe Tenzin Pelsang

intruded every day by the authorities ordering him what things he should and shouldn't do, causing him physical and mental problems.

During that time, his fellow monks and family members were gravely concerned about his health. Accordingly, Drakgo monastery's doctors treated him as much as possible. For a time, he recovered to some extent from the injuries. The illness has recurred since the beginning of this year, but he hasn't been able to receive the standard treatment due to political pressure. Thus, he died at the beginning of this month from injuries and wounds he'd sustained in prison.

### **Bloody Crackdown on Peaceful Protestors**

The Tibetan residents of the Drakgo County, including monks and laypeople, organized a demonstration against the discriminatory and repressive policies of the Chinese government in January 2012. Residents remonstrated against living under such policies and instead demanded freedom and religious rights. Chinese authorities abruptly broke up the protest march by firing gunshots randomly into the crowd, causing several Tibetans to die and many others to be injured. Yonten was among several Tibetans killed and at least 40 others severely injured in the retaliation.

Geshe Tenga offered condolences and advice to the families of the deceased and injured following the incident. Moreover, he provided sound guidance and treatment assistance to the victims. As a sign of solidarity, Tibetans from nearby counties including Tawu (Ch: Daofu) provided assistance and condolences to those injured in Drakgo.

### **True Tibetan Patriot**

Many Tibetans in Drakgo gathered together in the monastery following the event during which Geshe Tenga addressed them. The following is an excerpt from his speech:

"All parts of Tibet have witnessed peaceful demonstrations since 1959 when the Chinese invaded Tibet. Tibetans in Drakgo have protested continuously since 2007 as a result of China's oppressive policies and infringement on Tibetan rights and freedoms. This has left us unable to control our emotions and suffering any longer. Tibetans' desperate and genuine requests for freedom of expression and religious rights were met with brutal retaliation by Chinese officials. Such behavior is beyond comprehension. There is no point in telling or informing the Chinese leaders about anything. To maintain their position and power, the Chinese authorities brutally cracked down on the Tibetan people in the name of "protecting the motherland" and "securing the welfare of the people". We cannot accept such people as leaders or give them our consent."

"Even if it takes sacrificing oneself so that the Tibetan people are able to achieve their rights and freedom, it is critical to urge the Chinese people to combat hardline Chinese policies, expose and topple the government held by the adamant Chinese leaders. It is essential that Chinese citizens are fully aware of the importance of being able to enjoy freedom and equality. The Chinese people need to be informed that Chinese senior leaders will not stand a chance if

the whole nation stands against them.”

“Following are four important points on which we must speak up for: First, we all must mobilize our collective strength to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of Tibetans. As a second step, we must continue to advocate for freedom of expression and religion in Tibet so that His Holiness the Dalai Lama can return home. This will fulfill the wishes and requests of thousands of Tibetan people. Thirdly, we must strive to preserve Tibetan religion and culture, along with compassion and peace, so as to foster overall peace and prosperity for all sentient beings. Last but not least, we must continue to strive forward on the path of truth and non-violence to mobilize and win the support of people and intellectuals throughout the world for the cause of Tibet.”

“Not only are the aforementioned arguments in accordance with international laws and orders, but they also comply with Chinese laws and constitutions. As a result, our struggle for rights and freedom is one of courage and pride rather than one of unlawfulness and unreasonableness. Therefore, we should never give up and must always push forward to achieve our goals”, he said.

It is for this reason that the Chinese authorities arrested and sentenced him to prison.

Geshe Tenzin Pelsang was born in 1965 in Norpa village, Drakgo County, Karze Prefecture. As a child, he studied Tibetan Buddhism in the local monastery.

He studied Buddhism at the Drepung Loseling Monastery in south India in 1986. Upon graduation with a Geshe degree (a doctorate in Tibetan Buddhism), he returned to Tibet.

UMAYLAM 中間道路  
 ལྷོ་གཞི་ལུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་ལུ་ལྷོ་གཞི་ལུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་ལུ་  
 Middle Way Approach  
 Peaceful conflict resolution for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

## Sikyong Penpa Tsering Addresses State and District Level Officials of Arunachal Pradesh

After concluding his engagements with the Tibetan community in Tawang during his maiden visit to Arunachal Pradesh, Sikyong Penpa Tsering met and interacted with state and district officials on 11 November 2022 before leaving for Shillong.

Expressing appreciation to Central Tibetan Administration and other major Tibetan institutions for imparting shared cultural and religious education to the Monpa youths, Deputy Commissioner Kesang Ngurup Dama of West Tameng, in his introductory remarks, underlined the ongoing Sikyong’s official visit to the region as an instrumental in strengthening the close relationship between the two community.

In his address, Sikyong extended gratitude to the leaders and people of Arunachal for according elaborate reception. Highlighting concerns over the dwindling Tibetan population in exile, he underscored collaboration between the two communities in preserving common cultural heritages to the assemblage of local officials amassed at Zomkhang hall in Tawang.

Sikyong further gave a brief account of the CTA’s structure and functionings and accredited His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the Government of India for

building such a robust exile community. Apart from that, Sikyong informed the gathering about the ongoing adversaries that the Tibetans inside Tibet are facing because of the Chinese Communist Party’s brutal and self-serving policies. Specifically, he spoke concisely on the issue of His Holiness’ reincarnation while expressing concerns over Beijing’s prospective intervention. In the same vein, he also talked about the disturbances caused by the Chinese government on Tibet’s sacred environment, particularly the river system, that will affect downstream regions, including Arunachal and Assam.

Before concluding, Sikyong urged the gathering to be vigilant about China’s threats to the democratic and just society of the world.

The interaction was wrapped up with a vote of thanks from Jambey Wangdi, a Chairman of the Department of Karmic and Aadhyamic Affairs.

Monpa Institute of Performing Arts presented musical tribute in honour of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and tokens of appreciation were presented to Sikyong from the offices of Deputy Commissioner, Mon Mimang Tsokpa and Tawang Monpa Employees Society.



Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressing the gathering. Photo / Tenzin Jigme / CTA

## Japanese Parliamentary Caucus to Monitor Human Rights in China Formed



*Shimomura Hakubun, Chairman of the Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet speaking.*

Bipartisan Japanese parliamentarians supporting Tibet, Uyghur, and Southern Mongolian issues gathered on 5 December 2022 at the Parliament's conference hall and announced the formation of a Parliamentarian caucus to monitor human rights violations by the Chinese communist party. Keiji Furuya and Hiromi Mitsuybayashi of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were elected Chairman and General Secretary of the Caucus. In addition, Yoshiko Sakurai of the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, a Think Tank, was appointed advisor to the caucus.

The day coincided with the Japanese House of Councillors passing a resolution condemning human rights and religious freedom violations by China this morning. The resolution expressed grave concern about the serious human rights situation in East Turkestan, Tibet, Southern Mongolia, Hong Kong, and other regions.

Lawmaker Keiji Furuya, Minister Takaichi Sanae, Shimomura Hakubun, and Think Tank Director Yoshiko Sakurai spoke on how international communities' continued silence has emboldened China to commit atrocities on its people and the people of the occupied regions with impunity. They said the time has come for us to safeguard international norms and speak against Chinese hegemonic and aggressive provocations.

Shimomura Hakubun, Chairman of the Japan Parliamentary Support Group for

Tibet, welcomed the formation of the caucus and spoke on cultural genocide happening in Tibet and the peaceful approach adopted by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict.

Representative Tsewang Gyalpo Arya thanked the lawmakers for forming a caucus to investigate and act on human rights violations by China in the occupied regions of Tibet, Uyghur, and Southern Mongolia. In addition, he took the opportunity to thank the Members of the House of Councillors for passing a resolution to condemn human rights violations by China and urging the Japanese government to adopt a clear stance and policy on the matter.

Representative Arya informed the lawmakers about the "International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet – INPaT," revived during the 8th World Parliamentary Convention on Tibet (WPCT) in Washington, DC, in June this year. Japanese translation on the purpose of the INPaT was distributed with a request to the parliamentarians to join the Network.

Among the special speakers invited to speak on the issues were Dr. Lobang Sangay, Harvard Scholar and former Sikyong of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA); Dolkun Isa of the World Uyghur Congress; Prof Ohno Akira of Shizuoka University; and Daichin Olhunud of the Southern Mongolia Congress. They spoke on the gross violation of human and religious freedom by the CCP in their home countries. They thanked the Japanese parliamentarians for supporting their struggle for freedom and justice.

Lawmaker Hiromi Mitsuybayashi, who moderated the sessions, thanked the parliamentarians, speakers, staff, and the media for their support and participation in the meeting.

## Tibetan Ngaba Kirti Monk Sentenced to Two Years and Six Months in Prison

Lobsang Choephel, a Tibetan monk from Kirti Monastery in Ngaba (Ch: Aba), was sentenced to two years and six months in prison by the Chinese authorities in early October 2022, according to a reliable source.

According to the source, the Chinese authorities arrested him in the summer of this year and held him in custody until he was sentenced in October. At this time, the source says that the reason for his arrest, as well as his current location and well-being, remain unknown.

In 2011, Lobsang Choephel was arrested for resisting and protesting against the "patriotic education campaign" or "legal education" that the Chinese authority had forced on monks along with an indefinite ban on normal religious activities at the monastery, reported the Central Tibetan Administration. As part of the patriotic education session, Tibetans are forced to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Lobsang Choephel hails from Chakhog Chukleygap in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Ngaba (Ch: Aba), in the traditional province of Amdo. His parents are Gatse and Nekyi, and since childhood, he has been a monk at Kirti Monastery. His younger brother Lobsang, a monk at Kirti monastery, had previously been imprisoned by the Chinese police.



*Lobsang Choephel from Ngaba Kirti Monastery*

## US Lawmakers Seek UN Investigations into China's Boarding Schools in Tibet



*Picture of a school in Tibet*

A pair of United States legislators have requested that the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights probe into reports that children in Tibet are being forcibly separated from their parents and that these practices constitute serious human rights violations and cultural and linguistic erasure.

In a letter sent to Volker Turk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Senator Jeff Merkley and Representative Jim McGovern, Chair and Cochair respectively, of the bipartisan and bicameral Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), cited report on China's state-run boarding schools where around 80 percent of Tibetan children are being deprived of their rights and face the threat of losing their Tibetan identity under a "highly politicized curriculum".

Based on the Tibet Action Institute report from 2021, the congressmen stated that separating children between the ages of 6 and 18 from their parents for admission to "colonial" boarding schools is an integral part of China's policy of "sinicizing" Tibetan language by integrating children into a Mandarin Chinese-based curriculum. The discriminatory nature of the policy is evident by the high number of Tibetan children attending these schools compared to students residing elsewhere in China.

Tibetan parents are also frequently forced to send their children to these schools, which results in "mental and emotional distress" for their children due to the separation from their families,

harsh living conditions, and bullying, the congressmen noted, "which interferes with parents' right to preserve their family unit integrity and choose their children's educational path".

China violated its obligation to respect the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which requires the state not to interfere with the exercise of cultural practices and rights as a state party, Merkley and McGovern wrote. This right is intrinsically connected with the right to education, which allows individuals and communities to pass on values, religion, customs, language, and other cultural references to future generations.

The Central Tibetan Administration's spokesperson Tenzin Lekshey explained that China's boarding schools in Tibet "target and exploit minorities, especially Tibetans, who are deliberately cut off from learning their mother tongue, culture, and religion". The Central Tibetan Administration thanks the US Congress for asking the UN to investigate forced family separations through the colonial boarding schools in Tibet," Lekshey said.

China is violating its obligation to "respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations without unlawful interference" and to "ensure the rights of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities...to use their own language" as required by the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the letter noted. As a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, China's boarding school policy violates Article 18 of the Covenant, which requires states to respect liberty of parents to provide moral education for their children in accordance with their convictions.

The letter made an appeal to the UN High Commissioner to include it as an issue of concern in the upcoming Human Rights Council in March next year as

well as urge the Special Rapporteurs and experts to request a visit to Tibet to assess the human rights impact of the residential schools and to assess the impact of similar policies used in the past that erased and changed identities as a form of "cultural genocide" against indigenous children, lawmakers remain determined to prevent such policies from affecting Tibet.

## Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval Marks His First Visit to CTA

After his mayoral meeting with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama on 5 December 2022, the Mayor of Cincinnati, Aftab Karma Singh Pureval paid a visit to the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPiE) where he met Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang and standing committee members of TPiE.

Thereafter, he visited the Kashag Secretariat where he interacted with Sikyong Penpa Tsering-led Kashag comprising Education Kalon Tharlam Dolma, Security Kalon Gyari Dolma and Department of Information and International Relations Kalon Norzin Dolma.

In addition, Mayor Pureval toured The Tibet Museum, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA) and Petoen school at the premise of Gangchen Kyishong on the same day.

Mayor Pureval is the highest-ranking elected Tibetan American in the USA.



*Mayor Aftab Karma Singh at Tibet Museum.*

## Outset of Brainstorming and Strategic Meeting of Tibetan Parliamentarians



*The four-day Brainstorming and Strategic meeting of Tibetan Parliamentarians.*

The four-day Brainstorming and Strategic Meeting of Tibetan Parliamentarians commenced at Nibaana Resort. This meeting is organised by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat.

The meeting started with the opening remarks from the Speaker of the TPiE Khenpo Sonam Tenphel highlighting on the importance and the objectives of this meeting, with focus on the current situation inside Tibet, Tibet's critical environment and the human rights situation along with in-depth structural formation and the conferences of the People's Republic of China.

Deputy Speaker of TPiE Dolma Tsering Teykhang briefly introduced the first Speaker of the session – Jampa Samten, the Professor of Tibetan History at Central University for Tibetan Studies at Varanasi, India. Thereafter, Professor talked in length on the Historical Status of Tibet and the proofs of Tibet being a sovereign state as per UN definition of statehood followed by the Q&A session, where the Parliamentarians actively participated.

Tibet Policy Institute's Research Fellows- Dechen Palmo, Tenzin Tsultrim and Tsering Samdup were introduced by the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretary General Sonam Dorjee. They touched the topics on the Environmental Status of Tibetan Plateau, the Human Rights Situation and the Status of China's Economic Strategy inside Tibet respectively. Every session was followed by a comprehensive interaction between

the parliamentarians and the resource persons.

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### IPAC Petitions Group of Global Legislators to Sanction Firms Abetting PRC's Mass DNA Collection Campaign

The members of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) on 16 December wrote to 15 global legislatures, expressing deep concerns over the PRC's conduction of mass DNA collection in Tibet and East Turkistan region to enhance surveillance on minorities, including overwhelming numbers of children, without individual's consent.

Apprising the legislators of the systematic-mass DNA collection reported by the Human Rights Watch and others, IPAC appealed to them for immediate actions to investigate and suspend commercial activities with companies like ThermoFisher Scientific and PRC-state-funded gene firm BGI Group who provide the government with technologies to carry out biometric surveillance.

Senator Penny Wong (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia), Hadja Lahbib (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium), Mélanie Joly (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada), Jan

Lipavský (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic), Joseph Borrell (High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy), Catherine Colonna (Minister for European and Foreign Affairs of France), Simon Coveney (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland), Gabrielius Landsbergis (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania), Nanaia Mahuta (Minister for Foreign Affairs of New Zealand), Nikola Dimitrov (Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia), Bogdan Aurescu (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania), Tobias Billström (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden), Ignazio Cassis (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland), Dmytro Kuleba (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine), and James Cleverly (Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom) were the group of legislatures who received a copy of the letter sent by the IPAC.

The letter condemning China's illicit and illegitimate collection of DNA samples was undersigned by IPAC members, namely Senator Claire Chandler, Australia Senator Janet Rice, Australia, Samuel Cogolati MP, Belgium, Georges Dallemagne MP, Belgium, Arif Virani MP, Canada, Ondřej Benešik MP, Czech Republic, Eva Decroix MP, Czech Republic, Senator André Gattolin, France, Engin Eroglu MEP, EU, Anna Fotyga MEP, EU, Malcolm Byrne MP, Ireland, Mary Seery Kearney MP, Ireland, Senator Michael McDowell, Ireland, Senator David Norris, Ireland, Žygmantas Pavilionis MP, Lithuania, Dovilė Šakalienė MP, Lithuania, Simon O'Connor MP, New Zealand, Antonio Miloshoski MP, Republic of North Macedonia, Cătălin Teniță MP, Romania, Niels Paarup-Petersen MP, Sweden, Fabian Molina MP, Switzerland, Nicolas Walder MP, Switzerland, Oleksandr Merezhko MP, Ukraine, Lord David Alton MP, United Kingdom, Lord James Bethell MP, United Kingdom, Judith Cummins MP, United Kingdom, Timothy Loughton MP, United Kingdom, Siobhain McDonagh MP, United Kingdom, Marie Rimmer MP, United Kingdom.

## Former Tibetan Political Prisoner Agyal Tsering Passes Away at 71



Former Tibetan political prisoner Agyal Tsering (late)

A former Tibetan political prisoner monk Agyal Tsering passed away on Sunday morning, 18 December 2022, around 8:15 a.m. local time in Tibet, according to a reliable source. He was 71 years old.

On 8 March 1990, he was initially arrested by the Chinese police in Kyegudo (Ch: Jiegu), Yulshul Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province. He was later imprisoned for 18 months on suspicion of distributing books containing His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's lectures and speeches and disseminating leaflets calling for Tibet's independence. While in prison, he endured multiple torturous ordeals.

On 24 October 1999, he was arrested again in Karze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture with two other monks, Geshe Sonam Phuntsok and Sonam Choephel. Few days later, on 31 October, around 3000 Tibetan citizens held a peaceful protest in Karze and demanded the release of the three monks. The Chinese government responded by deploying police forces who fired shots into the crowd and arresting at least 80 Tibetans. Agyal Tsering was sentenced to three years of imprisonment after the incident.

Among Agyal Tsering's generous deeds were leading various fundraising events to erect a prayer wheel (Tib: རིས་མེད་ཐབ་བསྟན་ཚོས་འཁོར་དར་རྒྱས་གྲིང་།) in Yulshul's Chumarleb (Ch: Qumalai) county for the benefit of the residents, as described in Nagtsang Nulu's autobiography at the time.

Agyal Tsering was born in 1952 to Samten (བསམ་མ་གཏན།) and Yangkyi (དབྱུང་ས་གླིང།) in the village of Rongpa Tsajori (རོང་པ་ཚ་རྫོང་།) in the Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the traditional province of Kham. Also known by the names of Lama Lobsang, Apho Agyal, or Lobsang Tenzin, he was a monk at Tehor Dhargay monastery.

## Monk Jigme Gyatso Held in Custody for More than a Year Without Verdict



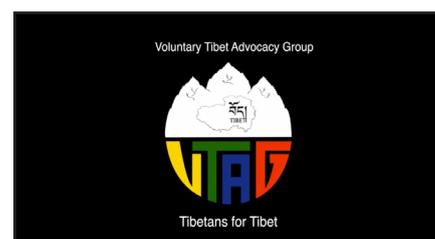
Monk Jigme Gyatso (L)

A Tibetan monk named Jigme Gyatso from Tibet's Tsongon Buddhist University in Qinghai's capital, Xining, has been detained by the Chinese government for over a year without a verdict.

According to reliable sources, In June 2021, the Qinghai Provincial police officers arrested Jigme Gyatso on charges linked to distributing poetry books to fellow monks at the Tsongon Buddhist University during a graduation ceremony.

The whereabouts of monk Jigme Gyatso remain unknown for over a year since his arbitrary arrest. He continues to be in custody without a verdict.

Jigme Gyatso, 36, is a native of Dosum (Ch: Duosong), Yulgan (Henan) and Thongko Dewa township in the Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (Huangnan). He is better known by his pen name 'Nublung' and had once won a poetry competition organised by the Lhoka prefecture in the southeastern Tibet Autonomous Region. Poets from all over the three regions of Tibet participate in this competition.



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## Tibet Support Groups Adopt Declaration to Recognise CTA as Legitimate Representative of Tibetans Worldwide



Rinchen Khandu Khirmey, National Convenor, Core Group for Tibetan Cause.

The two-day conference of Pan India Tibet Support Groups held in Delhi concluded on 30 November with the adoption of many notable declarations pursuant to the Tibet Policy and Support Act 2020 passed by the US Congress. The declarations adopted serve as a roadmap to induce clear policies on Tibet by the government of India.

Some of the significant demands of the representatives include the Indian government's recognition of the Central Tibetan Administration as the legitimate representative of Tibetans worldwide while ushering complete support of the Middle Way Approach of the CTA in resolving the enduring Sino-Tibet conflict. In addition, the delegates petitioned to denounce China's intervention in the reincarnation of Tibetan tulkus and called for more political involvement or support to defend the national identity of the Tibetan people.

The key-note speakers at the valedictory session of the two-day conference include Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, Dr Neerja Madhav, renowned author and friend of Tibet, Dr K.C Agnihotri, Former Vice Chancellor of Himachal Pradesh Central University,

and Secretary Karma Choeying of DIIR.

The Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament lauded the Core Group for Tibetan Cause's leadership in ensuring the Tibetan movement's sustenance. He acknowledged in gratitude India's considerable support to Tibetans for the last 60-plus years, adding, "India is the only country who held our hand when we needed it the most; therefore, we are indebted to the Indian government and its people,".

While the Tibetan cause continues to receive ample support from governments and policymakers worldwide, many still view Tibet as an internal affair of China. The Speaker warned that accepting the legitimacy of China's claim over Tibet is to breach international human rights law. He further cautioned India about China's capability to stretch its authoritarian regime beyond Tibet, which they have repeatedly demonstrated through incursions and military confrontations at the Indo-Tibet border. He pointed out that so long Tibetan issue remains unresolved, India's long-standing border clash with China will remain undeterred.

"The centrality of Tibet is a key factor in resolving the China-India conflict. Therefore India can't avoid Tibet as

Tibet remains the key factor in the Sino-Indian conflict. Therefore, the need to resolve the issue of Tibet is imperative for India's stability and peace with China," he said. Speaker also underscored the threat of China's hunger for global domination and its pursuit of expansive goals, urging India and the neighbouring Asian countries to form a multilateral alliance to counter China.

Secretary Karma Choeying detailed pressing issues concerning Tibet and the Tibetan people, particularly highlighting the geopolitics of Tibet's climate change, its transboundary rivers, and large-scale cultural genocide authorised by the Chinese government.

Being the primary source of ten major rivers, Tibet supports the lifeline of over 1.9 billion people in South and South East Asia, including India and China. However, because of the global rise in temperature, the Tibetan plateau has recorded a significant temperature increase over the last decade. Underlining the deteriorating environmental situation inside Tibet, Secretary Choeying strongly urged global initiative in calling out China for indiscriminately destroying the ecology of the Tibetan plateau under the guise of 'development'. He cautioned India to pay considerable attention to the rejuvenation and revitalisation of Tibet's ecology and perhaps prioritise this concern in their policies on China.

"Ecology is not a political subject per se, yet it remains an integral subject of political discourse when we face transnational and transregional challenges due to ecological disturbances," said the Secretary of the DIIR and additionally demanded international scrutiny in the massive dams projects launched by China which he contended was an invitation for a grave ecological disaster. He supplements his statement with a presentation of the reality of Tibet's ecology, detailing how the ecology of Tibet has worsened since

its occupation by the PRC. He spoke about the geopolitical tensions China has created with Tibet's bordering nations which once used to be a demilitarised zone of peace.

Besides the ecological concerns, Secretary Choeying directed the gathering's focus on the existential threat caused by China's belligerent policies in Tibet, reflected through the extermination Tibetan language, culture, and national identity. And most recently, the prevalence of colonial boarding schools, coercive measures of collecting mass DNA samplings etc., are some of the excessive violations of the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights.

"Rather than fulfilling the aspirations of the Tibetan people inside Tibet, China is consumed by the colonial mindset of securing their illegitimate rule over Tibet," asserts Secretary Choeying. For Tibetans now, he noted, their friendship with India and the latter's support for Tibet's truth and just cause reassures the Tibetan people to continue their non-violent struggle against China's iron fist.

Dr K.C Agnihotri claimed Tibet's occupation by China as one of the most regrettable days in the history of India, which could have been avoided if it weren't for India's negligence. Whether it was fear or appeasing the Chinese government, he affirmed it was a grave mistake to let China occupy Tibet. Because of India's failure then, the constant fear being crept in by China's military incursions along the Indo-Tibet border is undoubtedly the price India is paying, he added while recounting the period of peace along the edges before Tibet was invaded.

"When Tibet wasn't occupied, no security concerns daunted India to guard their border with Tibet, which is a stark contradiction today, as more money and resources are spent by India on border security," said the former Vice-Chancellor.

While the statehood and nationality of countries like India and several others are directly associated with land, he

reiterated the case to be different for Tibetan people as he pointed out the association of their national identity to be linked to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Because of this, when the Chinese military invasion of Tibet started gaining momentum, the Tibetan people's immediate concern was the safety of His Holiness. Therefore, so long as Tibetans are emotionally and spiritually attached to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Speaker noted, "China's attempt to exterminate the national identity of Tibetans is futile". Dr Neerja Madhav spoke about how

her involvement with the Tibetan cause developed through Geshe Jampa, her first writing on the problem of Tibetan refugees living in India, including their social and political angst. Since then, she has decided to use her skills in writing as a medium to raise awareness about the Tibetan issue. Through her written materials, Dr Neerja Madhav has consistently urged the Indian government to break its silence on the cultural genocide in Tibet and speak on the human rights violations of Tibetan people.

## Canada's Parliament Unanimously Passes Motion Endorsing Tibet's Middle Way Approach

The Canadian House of Commons unanimously passed a motion on 14 December 2022 endorsing Tibet's Middle Way Approach and supporting the resumption of a dialogue between the Tibetan representatives and the Chinese government.

The motion was first presented in the House on Tuesday by MP Garnett Genuis, a stalwart Tibet supporter whose deep concerns for Tibet and determination to help Tibetans persuaded the House to agree with his motion to take proactive actions to render Tibetans genuine autonomy through a mutually beneficial middle way approach.

After the House pronounced its decision to support the motion, MP Garnett tweeted the victory statement saying, "Canada's Parliament just unanimously passed my motion endorsing the Middle Way approach – genuine autonomy for #tibet within the framework of the Chinese constitution. Thank you to the Tibetan community for your leadership and advocacy".

A unanimous passage of a motion such as this one is another feather added to Tibet's cap that would serve as a great advantage for the Tibetan people's struggle.



Canada's Conservative MP Garnett Genuis speaking at the House of Commons.

## Statement of Kashag on 33rd Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

On this special occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Kashag offers its deep reverence and bow in gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Kashag extends its heartfelt greetings to the Honourable Members of the Indian Parliament, distinguished guests from Ladakh, Union Territory of India, Tibet Support Groups and the Tibetan people all over the world.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama received the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his consistent advocacy of non-violence to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict. This award symbolizes recognition by the Nobel Committee for His Holiness's constructive effort and commitment towards addressing international conflict resolution, human rights violations and global environmental challenges.

The endeavour to transform the 21st century into a century of dialogue and peace by learning lessons from the devastation of war and conflict of the previous century has not yet materialized. Therefore, it is evident that the broad vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to remain relevant and indispensable for the entire humanity.

Peace can be achieved when there is no war and when there is harmony without enmity. In order to realize the common aspiration of the humanity for a peaceful world, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has consistently encouraged Oneness of the Humanity without discrimination based on race, religion and nation and to cultivate the universal values of love, compassion and altruism. In his teachings, His Holiness the Dalai Lama often emphasizes compassion as the source of peaceful mind in healthy body; and happiness in this and future lives. His Holiness from a young age has been practicing Bodhicita and emptiness as method and wisdom. It is rare to find

such a spiritual leader in this world.

If every individual takes the initiative in putting into practice the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the well-being of humanity, it can greatly contribute to the elimination of war, exploitation, aggression and repression, which are obstacles to peace in the family, society and the world at large. For us Tibetans, the best way to celebrate this occasion is to seek resolution of the Sino-Tibet conflict, based on the teachings and messages of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which is the true source of our inspiration.

Today we are observing the 74th anniversary of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and also the International Human Rights Day. However, the violations of basic human rights remain unabated across the world. We stand in solidarity with those who are suffering under repressive regimes and authorities. We also express our deep admiration for those individuals and groups who are striving for human rights and fundamental rights.

The first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphasises on freedom and equality of all human beings. Similarly, Lord Buddha asserted that "freedom is happiness, falling under other's control is suffering. Your own self is your own master; who else could it be? If you become your own master, you gain success, dignity, happiness and freedom from suffering". The great Indian saint Shantideva prayed for the absence of conflict and violence, thereby leading to the attainment of absolute freedom. On the contrary, if one's thoughts and actions come under the influence of others, then freedom will be lost.

In Buddhism, not just humans but all the sentient beings have equal potential to attain Buddhahood. In Buddhist prayer of refuge, all the sentient beings are considered equal and they pray through

four immeasurable virtues of loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic-joy and equanimity for all the sentient beings. Lord Buddha emphasized that his teachings do not discriminate between caste and creed. Based on this far-reaching idea of equality, he embraced those considered as low caste such as butchers, fishermen and cobblers into the Sangha.

Today, even though numerous countries have signed the International Bill of Human Rights, cases of suppression and marginalization of minority nationalities and communities around the world still persist.

Across Tibet, unrelenting gross violations of human rights are taking place. In recent years, under a broad policy objective of the Chinese government, it has enforced forging of uniform Chinese national identity, Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism and discriminatory language policies. This has resulted in coerced enrolment of Tibetan children in colonial-style boarding schools. These coercive policies are causing an unprecedented threat to the survival of distinctive Tibetan identity. Unless the Chinese government is eager to follow Mao Zedong who was seeking an opportune moment by waiting for Tibetans to resist and then suppress them, it is pertinent to seek methods which conforms to the international laws and norms. This is in the long-term interest of the country's harmony and national stability.

With an already entrenched and pervasive Chinese Communist Party and state control all over Tibet, the Communist Party system is being strengthened by increasing the party membership. Likewise, village leaders are being recruited into CCP and they are tasked with the responsibility to "crack down on separatism and maintain stability". In large villages, the permanent "work teams" are systematically implementing measures to "reform village system,

eradicate old systems and transform habits, customs and traditions”. Through the Gridlock Management System, PRC authorities continue to conscript local Tibetans. For instance, among the 48,000 personnel of the grid management system sent to Qinghai province from 2011 to 2018, 34,000 were deployed in the Tibetan areas. This year, 23 towns in Pekar, which are currently administered under Driru County with a population of 10,400 people are divided into 50 grids and are being tightly controlled and closely monitored by 57 grid leaders, 280 grid examiners and 140 volunteers.

Besides this, to make the grid system more intrusive in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), “Double-Linked Household Management System” has been set up. Under this system, neighbourhoods have been divided into small groups of 5 to 15 households, each with lay people, monks and nuns and government officials who are tasked with maintaining “social stability and security control”. Every year, a model “Double-Linked Households” at the village, township, county, prefecture and region levels are selected and awarded monetary prizes. Their children are also given bonus points in the university entrance and staff recruitment exams.

Last month, the Chinese government announced that it has built and started operating a big cloud computing data centre in Lhasa to monitor data of 300 million people in Asia. The centre will be used for compiling data through the ongoing surveillance systems such as CCTV camera, facial recognition, Global Positioning System (GPS) and large-scale collection of DNA. It will also enable digital dictatorship with unprecedented power of surveillance and control.

Although there is no system of appointing government officials in areas below village and township levels in China, over 20,000 permanent government or party officials were sent to the “TAR”. Moreover, six office buildings and staff quarters were built for every village administrative district in the “TAR”.

The Chinese government is claiming that these measures are aimed at maintaining stability and falsely accuses Tibetans of “separatism and disturbing social security”. To maintain stability, every movement of Tibetans are watched round-the-clock through enforcement of communist ideology and policy of one nation, one culture, one religion and one language. Moreover, the Tibetans are forced to express gratitude to the Chinese government and coerced to follow the so-called advanced Chinese culture and way of life. This system of all-encompassing control of society is unheard of in the world. No one other than the Chinese government in this world can think of such policies which violate people’s inherent human rights and dignity.

The Preamble of the forty-year-old PRC Constitution opposes Han chauvinism. However, the Chinese government continues to ruthlessly pursue policies of discrimination, suppression and extermination of other nationalities.

The Central Tibetan Administration is making consistent efforts to seek a mutually-beneficial and a lasting solution to the Sino-Tibet conflict through the Middle-Way Approach based on non-violence and negotiation. It is because we consider the sustenance of the Tibetan people’s cultural, religious, linguistic identity and natural environment as crucial to our existence. Despite all odds, we stand firm in our efforts and commitments to reach out to and engage with the Chinese leadership to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict.

The visionary leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has resulted in the establishment of separate Tibetan settlements, schools, monastic and cultural institutions in exile. These have empowered the Tibetans to preserve our distinct national identity and strengthen the freedom movement. Today, the dispersal of compact communities through relocation to cities in India and other foreign countries, alongside the plummeting Tibetan birth rates in exile and decline in new arrivals from Tibet, have become a significant challenge.

Therefore, the last parliamentary session amended the rules and regulations to enable the settlement people to favourably contribute land and house to the Central Tibetan Relief Committee for redistribution to those who came from Tibet in the last four decades and do not own anything to call their home.

This is the first step towards rebuilding compact communities. The Kashag will undertake the majority of the needs of the Tibetan community in the next fiscal year. In the next few months we will be embarking on acquiring land sufficient to provide to those who don’t own any homes. Therefore, we urge generous Tibetans to contribute to this noble project.

Recognising the drastic decrease in the number of students in the Tibetan schools, in the interest of students, we shall make long-term effort to consolidate the schools to make best use of the existing scarce resources.

We would like to commend the participation of a good number of Tibetans in the Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group, some of whom have already launched their advocacy campaigns in their respective countries. It is of paramount importance to harness their potential, ability and skills to strengthen our movement in the dynamic global political situation. Therefore, we urge everyone to join this campaign.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has time and again reassured us to live a long life. To realize this it is of utmost importance for the Tibetans and followers alike to keep our spiritual commitment and act in accordance with the visions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Finally, we pray for the long life and good health of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and freedom for the Tibetan people. May freedom and human rights prevail throughout the world!

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## Statement of TPiE on 33rd Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

Today is a momentous occasion of outstanding significance, for it marks the 33rd anniversary of the conferment of the most renowned prize for peace in this world, the Nobel Peace Prize, on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, which took place on the 10th of December in 1989. With the feelings of joy, devotion, and gratification, and with obeisance and admiration, as well as prostrations of gratitude, we offer our greetings of congratulations countless times to His Holiness on behalf of all Tibetans in Tibet and in exile. By this, I am referring to the His Holiness who showers great compassion on all sentient beings, including those in the heavenly realms, irrespective of the absence of any prior interactive relationship; who is the master of the entire corpus of the teachings of the Buddha on this earth; who is a great champion of peace in this world; who is the patron guardian as well as the irreplaceable leader of all the Tibetan people; and who is the omniscient, all-seeing, universally precious one.

His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama is unsurpassed in His implementation of the view of dependent origination and the practice of nonviolence, which He carries out in scrupulous compliance with the terms in which they were taught by the fourth of the perfect guide Buddhas. And this is the basis on which He leads the entire world on the path of nonviolence. In addition, His Holiness has directed the totality of the movement and campaign actions for the realization of the fundamental cause of the Tibetan people towards the means solely of nonviolence. He is therefore a leader whose practice as well as guidance is directed at making efforts to resolve all disputes and conflicts across this world by nonviolent means. This was the reason why His Holiness the Dalai Lama was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. The award recognized as well as ushered Him in as a great champion of world peace. At the same time, the award brought a

tide of new boost to the Tibetan cause with a great increase in international understanding of and attention to it. Hence the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama has served to convince people to have faith in the method of nonviolence. And it also became an admirable symbol of the recognition of the justness of the struggle of the Tibetan people. Hence the purpose of marking this anniversary will be well served if all Tibetans – those in Tibet and the others living in exile – could reaffirm their faith in and pledge accordingly their commitment to the path of nonviolence in their bodily, speech, and mental conducts on the basis of being fully convinced of its value and effectiveness.

The natural inclination of a human being is such that he is filled with the spirit of competition towards achieving progress by means of acquiring material wealth, undertaking ventures and projects of all kinds for this purpose, and so forth. And in such an utterly degenerate period as today, when people seek to outcompete each other in a constant game of victory for oneself and defeat for others, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the unsurpassed leader of the Tibetan people, has embarked on a mission to develop peace and harmony in this great family of humanity. For this purpose, He has kept emphasizing the point that all human beings in this world are alike in desiring to live a happy life and in having aversion to pain and suffering. On successive occasions, His Holiness has sought to drive home the point that developing harmony and peace in human society should begin, first of all, within one's family; that it should then be gradually extended to the community in which one lives; and then further on, across one's country, with the aim to eventually encompass the entire world. People in countries across the world have taken his advice to heart and in gratitude showered him with honorary citizenships, awards, recognitions, and so forth in numbers too numerous to

mention. It was in continuation of the conferment of such an endless stream of honours that His Holiness was, on the 19th of November this year, presented with the Gandhi Mandela Award by the Gandhi Mandela Foundation, New Delhi, in recognition of His enormous contributions in such fields as promoting peace, compassion, and kindness. The Governor, Mr. Rajendra Arlekar, of the state of Himachal Pradesh, as well as officials of the foundation especially travelled to the Tsuglakhang, the main Buddhist temple at McLeod Ganj in Dharamshala, to present the inaugural, 2019 Gandhi Mandela Award gold medal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. During the award presentation ceremony, His Holiness spoke about the importance and advantages of non-violence and compassion in a message to people across the world as well as to those who had gathered at the event. Apart from that, His Holiness preoccupied himself at all times with great concern for the wellbeing of all sentient beings and continuously devotes all his activities to them, for which the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to extend unqualified solemn gratitude to Him.

The aims of the Norwegian Nobel Committee's awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize are to promote fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies, the holding and promotion of peace congresses, and for this purpose, to award the prize to those who have made the most outstanding contributions towards achieving them so that it will serve to inspire and thereby influence other people. It was with this end in view that the Nobel Peace Prize for this year has been awarded jointly to the human rights advocate Mr. Ales Bialiatski from the European country of Belarus, the Russian human rights organization Memorial, and the Ukrainian human rights organisation Center for Civil Liberties. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile offers them congratulations as well as compliments.

Today is also observed internationally as Human Rights Day. It is therefore an occasion marked as such with joyousness and fondness by people in free countries across the world. Unfortunately, however, in Tibet, the government of China continues to exert such severe repression that even people from outside the country are prevented from visiting it freely. This is underlined by the fact that there is a total disregard for human rights there, with the result that the Tibetan people are subjected to grossly unfair judicial trials. They are arrested, jailed, or disappeared after being falsely accused as criminal offenders. They are also ill-treated and tortured. The Tibetan language, religious traditions, culture, and other aspects of Tibetan heritage are being sought to be destroyed, including with obliteration. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, therefore, wishes to appeal to the leaders of this world to take responsibility to bear upon the government of China to bring these practices to an end.

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile also sees it as incumbent to reiterate our concern that even in this twenty-first century, the totalitarian system of government continues to exist and flourish. Apart from that, it bears pointing out that as regards the communist Chinese government, it is also the most serious source of danger to order and stability not only in Tibet but also to the entire world. Additionally, for a period starting from some months ago, the government of China, by making use of the pretext of the spread of the Covid-19 global pandemic – which initially broke out from the central Chinese city of Wuhan – imposed an additional regime of immense hardship on the Tibetan people in their everyday activities, whether they are standing, sitting or walking, so to speak. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to call on the government of China to forthwith end the measures under which the Tibetan people continue to suffer enormous additional hardships.

Recently, after the conclusion of the 20th five-yearly National Congress

of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese public, and especially students, teachers, and others in universities in provinces and cities across the People's Republic of China came out to assemble and hold protests. It is noteworthy that one set of slogans they raised during those protest events included those such as “we do not need autocracy, we need democracy!” “Down with the Communist Party of China! Step down Xi Jinping!” “We want freedom of speech!” “We want uncensored news!” “We do not wish to be slaves!” and so forth. The large-scale peaceful protests which took place recently were therefore also expressions of dissent against the current policies of the government of China. With regard to these developments, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to call on the government of China to reflect on its past history and ensure that the situation does not end with a repetition of the horrors of the brutal crackdown on the 4th of June 1989 protests. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile also calls on the international community to refrain from adopting a short-sighted view of only seeking opportunities for economic gains and instead pay proper attention to the ongoing developments in China so as to strive to achieve a noteworthy improvement in the human rights situation there.

After the 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet held this year in the United States Capital Washington, DC, a Tibet Support Group called Friends of Tibet was launched in the Parliament of Mexico under the leadership of Mr. Salvador Caro Cabrera, a member of the Parliament's Chamber of Deputies, on the 8th of November. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to extend its greetings on the success of the launch of this group. In order to achieve even more such high level of support for the issue of Tibet, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile will continue its efforts towards even more success in establishing Tibet Support Groups in the parliaments of more countries across the world. Over the past several months, two delegations of members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile have toured parts of the countries

in Europe to lobby support for the issue of Tibet and they have achieved notably successful outcomes.

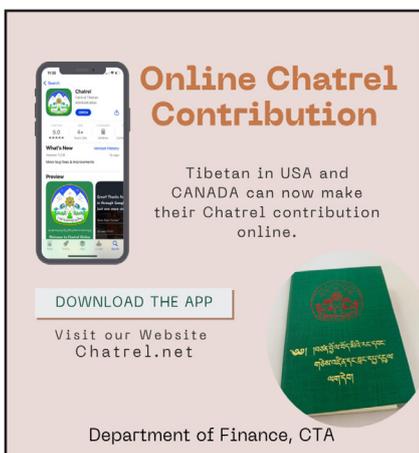
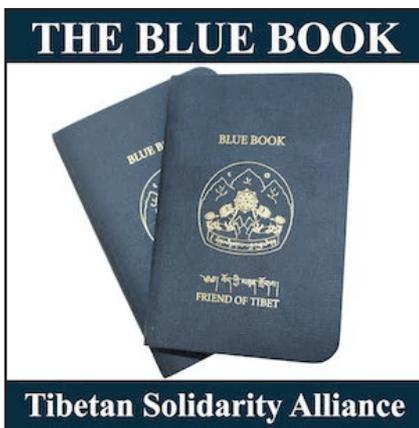
The communist Chinese government has used armed aggression to keep Tibet under its occupation rule since 1959. As regards the question of how serious the situation in Tibet has continued to remain ever since the facts are a matter of common knowledge. Even today, the situation of the Tibetan people in Tibet continues to remain severely grim under the egregious design and repression of the Chinese government, as a result of which they continue to suffer such ill-treatment and torture as to render it excruciating to them to get on with their daily lives through day as well as night. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to express its heartfelt fellow feeling and sense of empathy with them. We have nothing but wholehearted admiration and praise for the Tibetan men and women in Tibet, whether they are alive or deceased, for their utter selflessness, patriotism and determination, and for the peerless actions they have carried out thus far for the Tibetan cause. Accordingly, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to reiterate its appeal to the Tibetan people living in free countries of the world to prize the opportunity they thus have, to act with united solidarity towards publicizing and lobbying international support directed at ensuring a just resolution of the issue of Tibet.

Likewise, it bears emphasizing as of utmost importance that the Tibetan people should time and again bring to mind the purposes underlying the speech delivered by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in His acceptance at the Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony in Oslo, the capital of Norway, and, likewise, the illuminating addresses for the sake of the religious, political, and ethnic interests of the Tibetan people given by Him on successive occasions, and, in particular, the four sacred commitments to which His Holiness has dedicated his life.

On this joyous occasion when we are celebrating the conferment of the Noble Peace Prize on His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, we are elated to have

among us today three MPs from Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, also among us we have Shri Tashi Gyalsen, Chairman/ Chief Executive Council of LAHDC Leh, and distinguished delegates from the Union Territory of Ladakh. India and Tibet have always shared a deep and intimate relationship in the field of history, religion and culture from ancient times. Not only that, but Tibet also holds a tremendous significance for the security of India. Therefore, we appeal to India and the people of India to extend their support for the Tibetan Cause more than ever. We would also like to extend our gratitude to all our supporters including governments, organizations, individuals, and especially to India and the people of India.

In conclusion, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to offer solemn prayers that His Holiness the Dalai Lama may continue to remain with us in perpetuity; that all His wishes may be seen fulfilled with spontaneity; and that the just cause of Tibet may be seen fulfilled with utmost certainty.



## CTA Welcomes Introduction of Bipartisan Tibet Bill Promoting a Resolution to Tibet-China Conflict

The CTA welcomes the introduction of the bipartisan Tibet bill called “Promoting a Resolution to Tibet–China Conflict” in the US Senate on 20 December 2022. Senator Jeff Merkley, Co–chair of the Congressional Executive Commission on China; Senator Todd Young, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; and Senator Patrick Leahy, a long–time supporter of Tibet and a dear friend of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, have introduced the bill.

The bill will make it a policy of the United States that the Tibetan People are a people entitled to the right to self–determination under the international law and that their ability to exercise this right is precluded by the current People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) policies; and that the conflict between Tibet and the PRC is unresolved, and that the legal status of Tibet remains to be determined in accordance with international law. The legislation makes it clear that the only path ahead is to embrace His Holiness’ Middle Way approach, which is based on negotiation in good faith and without pre–conditions, to establish genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the framework of the constitution of the People’s Republic of China.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration, welcoming the bill’s introduction in the Senate says:

“We Tibetans have always felt immense gratitude to the United States for its leadership in advancing a peaceful resolution to the Sino–Tibetan conflict emanating from China’s illegal occupation of Tibet and continued

implementation of its repressive policies against the Tibetans inside Tibet. With this bill, the US not only raises its commitment to promoting the Tibet cause to an even greater level, but it also serves as a beacon of hope for those striving for peace, democracy and freedom through dialogue and negotiation. The CTA remains firmly committed to the Middle Way Approach of seeking genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people as a way forward to resolve the long–standing Sino–Tibetan conflict. Therefore, I urge the members of US Congress to support and endorse the successful passage of the bill through both Houses of Congress and from the President’s desk. I sincerely thank Senator Leahy, Senator Merkley and Senator Young for introducing the bill, which builds on the incredible bipartisan support the United States has always shown for our just cause”.

Representative Namgyal Choedup of the Office of Tibet, Washington DC looks forward to the bill’s passage through both the Houses of Congress and says:

“China’s rule in Tibet clearly lacks historical legitimacy, popular opinion and diplomatic support. We have suffered enormous abuse from the PRC government over many decades, yet we have always sought to settle our differences through peaceful dialogue. This bill would allow the United States to back its consistent calls for dialogue with more force and urgency while giving a renewed sense of hope to Tibetan people inside Tibet who continue to suffer under the Chinese rule”.



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## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates SEE Learning Conference



*A view of the stage at the inaugural session of the SEE Learning Conference at the Dalai Lama Library & Archive in Dharamsala*

On 9 December 2022, more than 200 people gathered in the audience hall of the new Dalai Lama Library & Archive building for the inauguration of a conference on the theme “SEE Learning®: A Worldwide Initiative for Educating the Heart and Mind.” Many were associated with the Emory Compassion Center and the Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning project developed under the auspices of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Others are involved in the implementation of SEE Learning here in India at institutions such as Tong-Len.

When His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived, he greeted the guests on the podium warmly. Among them were the President and Provost of Emory University and the Director of the Emory Compassion Center.

Jamphel Lhundup, Secretary of the Dalai Lama Trust, offered some opening remarks. He welcomed everyone participating in the conference and all the guests. He thanked His Holiness for taking part in the gathering and acknowledged that the various programs the conference would explore originated in his efforts to promote compassion. He pointed out that this was the first

conference to be convened in the Dalai Lama Library & Archive, an institution that is intended to preserve His Holiness’s teachings and legacy and serve as a resource for future generations.

Dr Lobsang Tenzin Negi, Director of the Emory Compassion Center and moderator of the meeting, recited a formal verse in Tibetan and English by way of tribute to His Holiness. He thanked him for his presence today. He recalled that His Holiness has supported relations with Emory University since the establishment of the Emory-Tibet Partnership in 1998. The partnership’s work to develop an education of heart and mind reflects His Holiness’s commitment to the promotion of human values. This has culminated in the launch of the SEE Learning program in 2019. Meanwhile the Emory-Science Initiative has worked over the last 15 years to introduce the study of science in Tibetan monasteries and nunneries.

Emory University President Gregory L. Fennes expressed his gratitude that His Holiness was hosting this event and declared it was an honour to be able to attend. He mentioned that when he decided to come to Emory two years ago,

one of the factors that attracted him was the idea, promoted by the university, of being of service to others. Another was measuring the importance of an action in terms of the good it will do.

He spoke of ambition, the motivation to achieve, and heart, the wish to serve others. He suggested that His Holiness embodies both qualities in action. He added that Cognitively-Based Compassion Training and the Emory-Tibet Science programs are bringing about change and transforming the way we understand education. He noted that some people regard innovation as if anything new is good, but it must be examined through the lens of compassion.

President Fennes presented His Holiness with a citation in recognition of his fifteen years as Presidential Distinguished Professor at Emory University. He lauded the wisdom and clarity His Holiness has offered the people of the world. He asked if it was possible for a simple Buddhist monk, as His Holiness describes himself, to have achieved so much and inspired so many, and declared the answer was “Yes.”

Emory Provost Ravi V. Bellamkonda quoted the motto of Emory University, “The wise heart seeks knowledge”. He spoke of the work the university has done that has contributed to saving HIV and Covid patients and revealed that he is a brain cancer researcher.

Bellamkonda, who was born and raised in India, spoke of growing up in an atmosphere of ancient Indian knowledge and the need to create space for reflection. He asserted that the principles of SEE Learning and the work it is conducting to educate the heart and mind will surely advance global peace and human understanding.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressed the gathering in Tibetan and his words were translated into English. “Today, many old friends have gathered here.

It's with sadness that I've heard this morning that Kyabjé Rinzong Rinpoché, the former Ganden Throneholder, passed away last night. Although his passing away is a natural part of life, I'm sad because he was one of my teachers.

"I once visited him in Ladakh at a time when he was completing a long meditation retreat. He received me sitting on the very seat where he had been meditating so long and gave me the transmission of Nagarjuna's Six Collections of Reasoning. His death reminds me of the Four Seals:

"All conditioned phenomena are transient.  
All polluted phenomena are unsatisfactory or in the nature of suffering.  
All phenomena are empty and selfless.  
Nirvana is true peace.

"Unless we cut the chains of ignorance, we will be unable to stop the cycle of suffering. We have to understand that no matter how they appear, things have no independent or absolute existence."

His Holiness recited a verse from Jé Tsongkhapa's 'In Praise of Dependent Arising':

Becoming ordained in the way of the Buddha,  
by not being lax in study of his words,  
and by yoga practice of great resolve,  
this monk devotes himself to that great purveyor of truth.

He related what it says to his own experience, nothing that he had taken novice and fully-ordained monk's vows in Lhasa and studied the classic texts, even memorizing Chandrakirti's 'Entering into the Middle Way' (Madhyamakavatara), with his Tutors, especially Ling Rinpoché.

Having become a renunciant, he studied the teaching of the Buddha, but was unable to integrate what he learned within while he was in Tibet. He stated that he has tried to do so since coming into exile. The essence of this is to cultivate the awakening mind of bodhichitta

and an understanding of emptiness. He declared that, like Tsongkhapa, 'by yoga practice of great resolve, this monk devotes himself to that great purveyor of truth—the Buddha.'

"I yearn to combine concentration and special insight and so reach the Path of Seeing. As Chandrakirti says in his 'Entering into the Middle Way':

Thus, illuminated by the rays of wisdom's light, the bodhisattva sees as clearly as a gooseberry on his open palm that the three realms in their entirety are unborn from their very start, and through the force of conventional truth, he journeys to cessation. 6.224

And like a king of swans soaring ahead of other accomplished swans, with white wings of conventional and ultimate truths spread wide, propelled by the powerful winds of virtue, the bodhisattva would cruise to the excellent far shore, the oceanic qualities of the conquerors. 6.226

"Bodhisattvas are always dedicated to the welfare of others. Thus, the purpose of study is to help other sentient beings. In our case that mostly implies the human beings of this world.

"None of us are likely to live beyond 100 years of age. I believe that while we are alive, we should study and practise, trying to transform ourselves; this I have done. The purpose is to integrate what we learn in our daily lives. Since I have found the altruistic awakening mind and an understanding of dependent arising useful to me, I try to share what I have learned with others.

"Nearly all of us have been nurtured by our mothers. Basking in her love and affection we received our first lessons in compassion. What we need to do is nurture and develop these feelings, and then share them with others. This is something we can do. If we live compassionate lives, when we come to die, we'll be able to do so at ease with ourselves.

"In my lifetime there has been so much

bloodshed. I've witnessed the effects of the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and so on. Now, we have to create a peaceful world. Instead of putting our trust in external weapons, we need the defence of compassion within. The very basis of world peace is compassion and warm-heartedness.

"World peace won't simply fall from the sky; it involves developing compassion for others. Warm-heartedness isn't necessarily confined to religious practice; it can undoubtedly be developed in the context of secular ethics. I really hope that over the next couple of decades I'll be able to continue sharing compassion with others.

"I practise compassion day and night. My friends, I request and encourage you to do the same."

Dr Lobsang Tenzin Negi reiterated that compassion is essential to our own well-being and expressed the hope that the conference will be able over the next two days to explore how it can be implemented.

A number of books were presented to His Holiness, including the fourth volume of the SEE Learning High School curriculum and a translation of the previous three volumes into Hindi. He responded:

"I very much appreciate what you're doing.

"And something else I want to mention is global warming. As it becomes more and more serious its effects seem to be beyond our control. As it gets hotter and hotter, it seems that ultimately our world may be consumed by fire."

In answering questions put to him by students who have taken part in the SEE Learning Curriculum His Holiness recommended coming to understand how our minds work. It helps us, he said, to appreciate that selfishness, fear and anger do us no good, whereas considering others in a warm-hearted, open-minded way brings us inner

strength. He pointed out that we become aware of things around us through our sense consciousnesses, but we can only analyse and judge what to do by employing our mental consciousness. And if we ask ourselves how or where consciousness originates, it seems that it is a beginningless continuity.

A teenage girl studying under the care of the local Tong-len foundation told His Holiness that she tries to keep her emotions in balance, but finds it difficult to live apart from her parents.

“Think of your studies as not being only in your interest,” His Holiness told her. “You will be able to share what you learn with the rest of your family and your community. Don’t feel lonely or dismayed, when you feel troubled it’s time to show courage. Think of what you can do to help others.”

With regard to forgiving those who have hurt you or harmed your community he recommended taking a broad view and developing a realistic sense of patience. His Holiness told another girl who wanted to know how to share what she has learned that as human beings we have sharp brains that can analyse the situations in which we find ourselves and can make up our minds what we need to do.

Dr Lobsang Tenzin Negi brought the session to a close. He thanked His Holiness for being so generous with his time. Then, he prayed that whatever merit has been created through the SEE Learning program will contribute to His Holiness’s good health and long life and to the prospect that SEE Learning will become part of education everywhere.

His Holiness replied:

“Only compassion and doing no harm bring real peace. Problems will always occur, but if we have peace of mind, we’ll be able to withstand and overcome them.”

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

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Addresses Salwan Public School About Secular Ethics

On the morning of 21 December 2022, the weather was chilly and a little misty as His Holiness the Dalai Lama drove to the Salwan Public School in Gurugram. He was greeted on arrival by the Chairman of the Salwan Education Trust, Sushil Dutt Salwan, who escorted him into the school lobby. Principals and staff of 58 schools from across Gurugram took the opportunity to greet His Holiness while he enjoyed tea and biscuits.

His Holiness walked to the stage set up under a grand ‘shamiana’ and took his seat looking out over an estimated 6000 students, teachers and parents who had come to listen to him. Mr Salwan welcomed him on behalf of everyone present. He recalled that the Salwan Education Trust’s association with His Holiness began when he first visited their Rajendranagar Campus 24 years ago. He noted the great respect the Trust has for His Holiness’s message about our general need for love and compassion. He also mentioned that on that occasion His Holiness had blessed a sapling that has now grown into a Bodhi tree that is a significant landmark on the campus.

“Life is about learning,” Mr Salwan

remarked, “and it’s an honour for us to learn from His Holiness.”

“Brothers and sisters,” His Holiness began. “All eight billion of us human beings actually are brothers and sisters. We’re born the same way and nearly all of us have been nurtured by our mothers in the same way. Ultimately everyone in this world depends on warm-heartedness.

“As children we play with each other with no regard for what our religion or nationality may be. If our companions smile and play, we’re happy to play with them. This is because, essentially, we are all the same as human beings. However, education tends to teach us to focus on superficial differences between us, which can lead to friction and discrimination. “India has long-standing traditions of ‘karuna’ and ‘ahimsa’—compassion and doing no harm. We must try to follow these basic human values. Tigers and lions have sharp teeth and claws that indicate their need to prey on and eat other animals, but the human form suggests that we are much more inclined to being compassionate and not doing harm. From a biological point of view, we should be peaceful creatures.



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama greeting students on his arrival at Salwan Public School in Gurugram, India on 21 December 2022.*

“Since we survive in dependence on the kindness of others, we need to maintain a sense of ‘karuna’ and ‘ahimsa’ towards them. In the past, there has been too much violence because we have used our intelligence to develop weapons and make plans to destroy our neighbours.

“When we meet, we recognize another human being by their human face. If we met someone with a third eye it would be a real surprise. We are all physically similar in having one face, two hands and two legs. We should live according to our basic human nature, which is to be compassionate. Did the violence of the past build a better and safer world? —it did not. Therefore, we should make an effort to create a happier, more peaceful world. This means living happily together as brothers and sisters.

“I’ve had the opportunity to visit different countries on different continents and I found the same kind of human faces everywhere. Wherever I go, I smile and by and large people respond in a friendly way.

“Peace will not fall from the sky. It depends on us developing a genuine sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. On a superficial level there are differences between us, but they are no grounds for fighting with others. We need to make a peaceful world free of weapons our goal. If disagreements arise, we must solve them by talking them through. Weapons are of no use. “This is what I want to share with my young brothers and sisters here.”

His Holiness remarked that western values tend to focus on material goals while in ancient India people explored the workings of the mind. They recognised that we have sense consciousnesses, but also appreciated the importance of mental consciousness. They learned that when we die our coarser minds dissolve into our subtler minds. This can be observed when we fall asleep too. His Holiness acknowledged that Indian yogis, like Tibetan monks, have deep experience of working with the mind.

When we go through the process of dying the elements of the body dissolve

and coarser levels of mind dissolve into subtler levels. This gives rise to what are known as the three visions—whitish appearance and the cessation of 33 conceptions, reddish increase during which 40 conceptions cease and black near-attainment during which the final seven conceptions cease.

His Holiness recalled that in the seventh century of the common era the Tibetan king commissioned the creation of a Tibetan form of writing based on the Indian Devanagari alphabet. A century later another king invited the great Nalanda master Shantarakshita to Tibet he encouraged the translation of Buddhist literature into Tibetan. A consequence is that today Tibetan remains the best and most accurate language for explaining Buddhist psychology and science of the mind. His Holiness suggested that Indian students need to learn more about training and controlling their minds on the basis of ancient Indian tradition, which has been kept alive in Tibet.

In answering questions from students His Holiness observed that everyone has some interest in peace of mind. To maintain such inner peace, we have to learn that it is destructive emotions like anger and suspicion that disturb our minds, while ‘karuna’ brings peace and self-confidence. He remarked that if, as he does himself, you think about ‘karuna’ the moment you wake up and again as you’re going to sleep, it brings peace of mind.

When asked who he regards as a source of inspiration, His Holiness was unhesitating in mentioning Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti, two Indian masters whose thought and intelligence were brilliant.

Another student wanted to know how to control anger and remain peaceful. His Holiness advised her to familiarize herself with ‘karuna’— compassion. Then, he said, when anger arises it will not run away with you. Anger and attachment are associated with coarse states of mind, which have no sound basis, whereas compassion is well-

founded in reason. He noted that this is why constructive emotions are stronger than their destructive counterparts in the long run.

In our materialistic world, His Holiness commented, we pay too much attention to material things. What we ought to do is pay more attention to the state of our minds.

Asked how to become warm-hearted in a world where most other people are self-centred, His Holiness reflected that we have a strong sense of community and our dependence on it when we are very young and we need to preserve and nurture such an understanding. He reiterated that compassion brings happiness and self-confidence.

“I want to encourage these young Indian boys and girls to keep ‘karuna’ and ‘ahimsa’ in mind. If you do so your lives will follow a positive direction. When you’re compassionate it automatically makes you smile.

“When you get married, genuine love is very much connected with being able to smile. When money’s involved, marriage tends to be only temporary. And if you marry a politician, that also won’t last. But when two people marry because they both love each other, their marriage is long-lasting. Human beings tend to marry for life, especially if their relationship is rooted in a deep sense of loving kindness.

Smt Rashmi Malik, the Principal of Salwan Public School, Gurugram, offered thanks to His Holiness and everyone who had contributed to the school’s opportunity to host him.

In his final remarks His Holiness noted that China and India are the two most populous nations on earth. But, while China has had its ups and downs, India cherishes democracy and religious freedom.

“This custom of regard for democracy and respect for all religious traditions,” His Holiness affirmed, “based on secular values, is both good and wise.

## From Bodh Gaya, His Holiness the Dalai Lama Bestows Blessings Upon Tibetans Inside Tibet

The Thousands swarmed the streets of Mahabodhi Mahavihara Temple on 22 December to welcome the arrival of Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who was visiting the holy place after a gap of nearly two years since his last visit in January 2020.

On 23 December, His Holiness made a pilgrimage to the World Heritage Mahabodhi Mahavihara Temple, revered as Lord Buddha’s enlightenment seat, to offer prayers. Following that, His Holiness briefly addressed the media and bestowed blessings upon those who could not attend the teaching, particularly the Tibetans inside Tibet. His Holiness said, “physically, we are separated from our Tibetan brothers and sisters inside Tibet. However, spiritually, we are very much connected. Similarly, all those from the Himalayan region have tremendous devotion and dedication. All of them are in my prayers. I believe that, eventually, the truth will prevail”.

“In today’s fast-paced world, we have seen enormous development in material things while there is a setback in the progress of basic human nature which must be paid more attention”, His Holiness further added before leaving for his residence.

His Holiness is scheduled to begin teaching from 29-31 December. On 27th December, His Holiness is scheduled to visit Wat Pa temple, Thailand’s Buddhist temple in Bodhgaya.

Fifth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will be held from 15th March 2023 (Wednesday) to 25th March 2023 (Saturday) for ten days in the Parliamentary Hall, Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat.

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Conferred with Sivananda Peace Award for Promoting Peace and Non-Violence

The Sivananda World Peace Foundation, under the leadership of its President, Prince Ishwar Ramlutchman Mabheka Zulu honoured this year’s Sivananda Peace Award to His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh on 1 November 2022.

The award was honoured to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his generous contribution to promoting Peace, Non-Violence and oneness among humanity in the world. This award was previously presented to great leaders like the Former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, Winnie Madikizela Mandela, General V K Singh, His Majesty King Zwelithini Goodwill Ka-BhekhuZulu and Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Prince Ishwar Ramlutchman Mabheka Zulu says it was an honour and privilege to present this award to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a beacon of Peace, Love and Compassion.

The Sivananda World Peace Foundation has erected Peace Pillars across Africa to foster good relations amongst various rural ethnic races. Promoting Unity in Diversity across humanity.

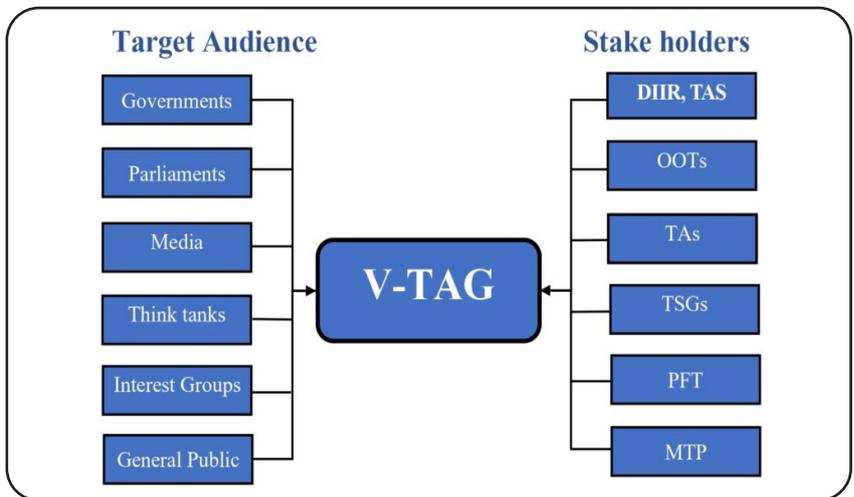
“Times are changing and truth will prevail. There are indications that things will change for the better in China before long. Therefore, please remain strong and preserve your sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. Be cheerful and remain at ease.”

-His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to Tibeans inside Tibet



*“With regards to the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness’s repeated statements since 1969, the official pronouncement of September 24, 2011, or any guidance in future is inherently discretionary. No government nor any individual has the right to interfere in this matter.”*

*- In Kashag’s stand on the issue of reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama*



## His Holiness the Dalai Lama Presides Over Inauguration of Pali & Sanskrit International Bhikkhu Exchange Program



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama along with the other chief guests joining in prayer at the inauguration of the Pali & Sanskrit International Bhikkhu Exchange Program at Wat-pa Thai Temple in Bodhgaya.*

On 27 December 2022, as the sun hung in the misty sky over the Mahabodhi Temple, His Holiness the Dalai Lama rode in a golfcart from Gaden Phelgyeling Tibetan Monastery to Wat-pa Thai Temple. He smiled and waved to people, who lined the way several rows deep, holding silk scarves, or flowers in their folded hands.

His Holiness was warmly welcomed by the monks at the temple and escorted inside. He was invited to consecrate a statue of the Buddha before taking his seat on the platform among other guests who included Ven Dr Warakagoda Dhammasiddhi, Sakya Gongma Trichen Rinpoché and the Gaden Tri Rinpoché.

Buddhist refuge prayers were chanted in Pali, followed by a recitation of the 'Heart Sutra' in Tibetan.

In his welcome address Ven Khensur Lobsang Gyaltsen first paid his respects and expressed his appreciation to His Holiness and the principal guests for their presence. He explained that the five-year Pali and Sanskrit International Bhikkhu Exchange Program being inaugurated that day has been organized in partial fulfilment of His Holiness's commitment to promote human values, to encourage harmony among the

world's religious traditions, to ensure the preservation of Tibetan culture and to prompt a revival of awareness of the value of ancient Indian knowledge.

"We are all followers of Buddha Shakyamuni," he declared, "and bringing about world peace is our common goal. The program is intended to strengthen relationships between followers of the Pali and Sanskrit traditions, allowing them to learn about each other."

Ven Dr Phra Bodhinandhamunee, Abbot of the Wat-pa Temple, expressed his appreciation that this was the third occasion on which His Holiness had blessed the community. He noted that the five-year exchange program was to begin today from these very premises.

Ven Dr Dhammapiya, Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation, remarked that the Buddha spoke of one path, one dhamma, therefore we have to keep our hearts and minds open and appreciate how Buddhism has evolved in the array of Buddhist countries.

"Let us connect with one another," he urged and noted a slogan he saw in the airport yesterday— 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. "On such a basis

we can create a peaceful, harmonious world."

The Chief Guest Most Ven Dr Warakagoda Dhammasiddhi, who was sitting next to His Holiness, praised the intention to create mutual understanding among different Buddhist cultures with closer interaction among their monks. He expressed a wish to convey the heartfelt gratitude of the Sri Lankan Maha Sangha for this precious opportunity.

The formal launch of the exchange program took place with the unfurling of banners by the principal guests and signing of a declaration of intent.

His Holiness was then invited to address the gathering:

"All of us gathered here at this sacred site of Bodhgaya are followers of the Buddha. We all try to implement his teaching on the basis of an understanding of the four seals.

"All conditioned phenomena are transient.

All polluted phenomena are unsatisfactory or in the nature of suffering.

All phenomena are empty and selfless. Nirvana is true peace.

"We all want to be happy, therefore we should seek friendship and harmony between us. Since religious practice is about cultivating goodwill and affection it's very sad when we witness quarrelling among members of this or that tradition. As far as we are concerned, we must do our best to follow the teaching of the Buddha sincerely. If the Buddha were to observe us arguing or criticising each other, I think he might ask us not to do that.

"We follow the same teacher and essentially the same teaching, therefore there's every reason why there should be

harmony between us whether we belong to the Pali or Sanskrit tradition.

“When I look at the image of the Buddha on the wall over there and see the position of his hands, I’m reminded that they indicate not that he would stroke our heads, nor that he would clench a fist to hit us. It was teaching he gave us and encouraged us to put it into effect. This means practising steadily day by day. That’s how we too can eventually become like the Buddha.

“The Buddha taught us that the whole of the cycle of existence is empty of any essential core. Consequently, it’s possible to thoroughly purify the mind. I’ve tried to be a sincere practitioner and follow the Buddha’s teaching in my own life. As the mantra in the ‘Heart Sutra’ indicates, by applying what the Buddha taught we can proceed towards enlightenment ourselves. This is a goal

I wish to fulfil and I seek the Buddha’s blessings to be successful in doing so.

“There may be some differences between our various traditions, but the important point is that we are all followers of the same teacher. Therefore, it’s essential that we are friendly and respectful towards one another.

“I try to cultivate the awakening mind of bodhichitta and an understanding of emptiness every day and I urge you too to try to cultivate an altruistic state of mind. I am motivated by the following prayer: “Wherever the Buddha’s teaching has not spread

And wherever it has spread but has declined

May I, moved by great compassion, clearly elucidate

This treasury of excellent benefit and happiness for all.

“Whatever the circumstances, it’s always important to generate a kind heart.”

The Ven Dr Ratneswar Chakma, General Secretary of the Buddhist Thai-Bharat Society announced in conclusion:

“It gives me great pleasure to offer a vote of thanks to everyone who has taken part in the inauguration of this exchange program. I thank the guests, and especially His Holiness, for joining us today. I also thank the organizers and the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for their support.

“May all beings be happy and well.”

After commemorative photographs had been taken, everyone present was invited to a delicious lunch.

## Factbox: A Chronology of Dissent in China in Recent Decades

- by James Pomfret for Reuters

Over the past week, thousands of Chinese in numerous cities have protested against China’s COVID-19 lockdown policies, in one of the biggest acts of public defiance seen since President Xi Jinping came to power in 2012.

The following is a timeline of some other notable protests, and public dissent against China’s ruling Communist Party.

1978 - Democracy Wall movement - In the late 1970s, after China’s tumultuous Cultural Revolution, individuals pasted “big character” posters on a brick wall on Xidan street in Beijing, in what became known as the Democracy Wall. Thousands marched in late November calling for greater democracy.

1989 - Beijing’s Tiananmen Square - Crowds of up to 100,000 gathered over several months, led by students demanding Western-style freedoms and democratic reforms. Protests spread to Xian, Changsha, Chengdu and Shanghai. On June 4, troops fired on

unarmed civilians, with rights groups saying hundreds, perhaps thousands were killed. A lone protester dubbed “tank man” blocks a line of tanks along Changan Avenue.

1999 - Over 10,000 members of the Falun Gong spiritual group gather outside ‘Zhongnanhai’ - China’s top leadership compound in a silent protest. Authorities later dub the group a “cult” and arrest thousands.

2008 - Tibet - Hundreds of monks march in Tibet’s capital, Lhasa, triggering protests and clashes. Tibetan crowds burn shops, with a reported 18 deaths. Protests spread to over 130 locations in western China. Security is ramped up and access restricted. Tibet’s exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, later said the region had become “a hell on earth”.

2009 - Xinjiang - In the region’s worst ethnic unrest in decades, ethnic Uighurs attacked majority Han Chinese in

the capital Urumqi, after an incident involving Uighur workers in a factory in southern China. The bloody clashes, fuelled by what some Uighur leaders called “years of repression” by Beijing, claimed 197 lives, according to official figures. China later builds massive “facilities” to turn Xinjiang into what a United Nations panel described as a “massive internment camp shrouded in secrecy”.

2011 - “Jasmine” protests - Following pro-democracy movements in the Middle East including the “Jasmine revolution” in Tunisia, Chinese netizens issue calls for small-scale public demonstrations in a number of cities including Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, to demand political reforms. Many are nipped in the bud, but several go ahead including one in Beijing where several journalists are roughed up by police.

2011 - Parts of Inner Mongolia are rocked by protests by ethnic Mongols following the hit-and-run death of a

herder protesting against pollution caused by a coal mine. In 2020, ethnic Mongols stage rare protests over changes to school curriculums that remove the Mongolian language from core subjects.

2011 - Wukan - Protests break out in the southern Chinese fishing village of Wukan over land grabs by corrupt officials. The revolt draws an international media spotlight and ends with rare democratic concessions from authorities, including a village election. In later years, many rebel leaders are arrested and jailed. Fresh protests break out in 2016 but are quelled with further arrests.

Jan 2013 - Southern Weekly protests - Small-scale public demonstrations demanding greater media freedoms are staged over several days outside one of China's most liberal newspapers. The Guangzhou-based Southern Weekly is later brought under tighter government

control and censorship, and many liberal-minded journalists forced out, or quit.

July 2015 - Responding in part to the founding of the 'New Citizens' Movement' - formed loosely of rights groups and individuals striving to end authoritarian rule in China -- authorities launched a nationwide crackdown on July 9. The so-called "709" crackdown resulted in the arrests of over 300 human rights lawyers and activists, including Li Heping, Xu Zhiyong, Ding Jiayi. Some are kept incommunicado under "residential" detention for months on end and tortured.

2019 - Millions in Hong Kong stage anti-China and pro-democracy protests over many months in the boldest, most protracted populist challenge to Beijing's leaders since 1989. China later imposes a powerful national security law, arresting scores of democrats and

shutting down civil society groups and liberal media outlets, including the Apple Daily newspaper.

2022 - Henan bank protests - Public protests simmer as thousands lose access to their savings in a banking fraud scandal centred on rural lenders in Henan and Anhui provinces.

Oct 2022 - A lone man drapes white banners from an overpass at Beijing's Sitong bridge before a landmark party congress when Xi secured a third term as China's leader. Some of the slogans include: "We don't want a supreme leader, we want a vote" and "Don't be a slave, be a citizen".

Dubbed "bridge man" or "the new tank man", the protester has inspired some protesters now calling for broader freedoms and an end to COVID lockdown measures.

## Senate Bill Advances Tibet-China Conflict Resolution

- by *International Campaign for Tibet*

The Senate introduction of the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act is a step forward in advancing the US' interest in peacefully resolving China's occupation of Tibet and pressures the Chinese government to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama's envoys. Sens. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., Todd Young, R-Ind., and Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., introduced the bill. The legislation is a companion to the House version introduced in July by Reps. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., and Michael McCaul, R-Texas.

The dialogue process between Chinese and Tibetan leaders has been stalled since 2010 while the situation in Tibet continues to deteriorate. This bipartisan legislation represents Congress' intent in making it official US policy that a resumption of dialogue is needed as the conflict between Tibet and China is unresolved and Tibet's legal status remains to be determined

under international law. The bill also recognizes Tibetans' right to self-determination and faults the Chinese government for violating that right.

The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act adds to a recent surge in US support for Tibet, including several new laws passed in the last few years, sanctions on Chinese officials who have violated Tibetan human rights, and statements by President Biden and his administration calling on China to resume direct dialogue toward guaranteeing meaningful autonomy for the Tibetan people.

China has illegally occupied Tibet for over 60 years, forcing the Dalai Lama into exile in 1959. As a result of China's extreme human rights abuses, Tibet is now the least-free country on Earth alongside South Sudan and Syria, according to the watchdog group Freedom House.

**Quotes:** Sen. Jeff Merkley said: "America's values supporting freedom and self-determination for all people must be at the center of all of our actions and relationships around the world—especially as the Chinese government pushes an alternative vision. This legislation makes clear that the United States views the Tibet-China conflict as unresolved and that the people of Tibet deserve a say in how they are governed. It sends a clear message to the People's Republic of China: we expect meaningful negotiations over Tibet's status and do not view current Chinese government actions as meeting those expectations."

Sen. Todd Young said: "The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) aggression towards Tibet is self-serving, with negotiations on the CCP's terms. We must refresh U.S. policy towards Tibet, and push for negotiations that advance freedoms for the Tibetan people and

peaceful resolution to the CCP's conflict with the Dalai Lama. This bill demonstrates America's resolve that the CCP's status quo – both in Tibet and elsewhere – is not acceptable." Sen. Patrick Leahy said: "The Tibetan people, who have sought nothing more than good faith negotiations to resolve Tibet's political status, have long been subjected to brutal persecution and their culture relentlessly attacked by the Chinese Government. This bill reaffirms that Tibet has never been part of China, and that U.S. support for the right of the Tibetan people to self-determination is unwavering."

Penpa Tsering, the Sikyong (President) of the Central Tibetan Administration, which provides democratic governance for Tibetans in exile, said: "China's rule in Tibet lacks historical support, it lacks popular support, and it lacks diplomatic support. Why is China asking nations to say that Tibet is part of the PRC [People's Republic of China]? It is because China lacks legitimacy over Tibet. Tibetans simply want the same right to self-determination that all people deserve. We have suffered enormous abuse from the Chinese government over many decades, yet we have always sought to settle our differences through peaceful dialogue. This bill would allow the United States to back its consistent calls for dialogue with more force and urgency while helping give Tibetans a voice in their own country. We thank Senators Leahy, Merkley, and Young for introducing the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act, which builds on the incredible bipartisan support the United States has always shown for our just cause."

The International Campaign for Tibet, an advocacy group based in Washington, DC and Europe that promotes human rights and democratic freedoms for the Tibetan people, said: "The fact that this bill has now been introduced on a bipartisan, bicameral basis demonstrates the American people's broad support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan cause. The people of the United States want justice and human rights in Tibet, and the Promoting a Resolution

to the Tibet-China Conflict Act is a vital step toward achieving that goal through peaceful dialogue between the two sides. ICT thanks Sens. Merkley, Young and Leahy for their leadership in introducing the bill today, and we look forward to working with them to make this bill law."

**What the bill does:** Known as the Resolve Tibet Act, the new legislation will:

Make it official US policy that the conflict between Tibet and China is unresolved and Tibet's legal status remains to be determined under international law

Recognize that Tibetans have a right to self-determination—and that China's policies preclude them from exercising that right

Fault China for failing to meet expectations of participating in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives

Reject as "historically false" China's claim that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times

Empower the Office of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues to counter Communist Party propaganda about the history of Tibet, the Tibetan people and Tibetan institutions, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Make clear that Tibet includes not only the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" of China but also Tibetan areas of Gansu, Sichuan, Qinghai and Yunnan provinces

Read the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act.

**US support for Tibet:** For decades, Congress and administrations of both parties have offered consistent, bipartisan US support for the Tibetan people.

The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act builds on recent momentum in US action on Tibet.

During the 2020 presidential campaign, then-candidate Joe Biden promised to "work with our allies in pressing Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the representatives of the Tibetan people to

achieve meaningful autonomy, respect for human rights, and the preservation of Tibet's environment as well as its unique cultural, linguistic and religious traditions."

In December 2021, Uzra Zeya, the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, was appointed to the role of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues in the State Department.

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said in a May 2022 speech on the Biden administration's approach to China that the rules-based international order's "founding documents include the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrined concepts like self-determination, sovereignty, the peaceful settlement of disputes. These are not Western constructs. They are reflections of the world's shared aspirations."

Just this month, the Biden administration announced Treasury Department sanctions on two Chinese officials for committing "serious human rights abuse" against the Tibetan people.

**Recent US laws on Tibet:** In recent years, the US has also passed several laws on Tibet.

The Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 led the State Department to ban Chinese officials from entering the United States over their role in keeping American citizens, including journalists and diplomats, out of Tibet.

The Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020 dramatically upgraded US support for the Tibetan people and made it official American policy that only the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Buddhist community can decide on his succession, with the US committing to sanction any Chinese officials who try to interfere in that process.

**Need for dialogue:** Under pressure from the international community, China has held dialogue in the past with the representatives of the Dalai Lama. Ten

rounds of dialogue took place from 2002-10.

But the dialogue process has been dormant ever since, with China making absurd demands that the Dalai Lama declare that Tibet has always been part of China, despite abundant historical evidence disproving China's lies.

China has also successfully pressured other countries to accept its claims over Tibet. But with the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act, the US will make it clear that Tibet's status is not resolved and put pressure on the Chinese government to return to the negotiating table to reach a lasting agreement on Tibet's future.

against this fight is paramount. In reality, these positive messages are often mixed with others that are neutral, hateful, and negative.

COVID-19 continues to be intensely monitored and vigorously discussed by China's active social media users. Digital media have provided pockets of spaces beyond state control for the voicing of the people's concerns and criticism.

## China's Zero-COVID Policy and the Rise of Citizen Journalism: A Tibetan View

- by *Tenzin Boepa for Bitter Winter*

During the initial reports on the spread of COVID-19, which emerged in China in 2019, the nation's government attempted to place a blanket cover on the flow of the relevant information, which delayed the international response. Chinese health officials declared the outbreak as "preventable and under control." As a consequence, we have lost 6.55 million lives from 2019 to 2021 worldwide.

The outbreak in Wuhan undermined the social contract that underpins the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy. It carried out extensive restrictions in the form of lockdown and home quarantines, and established chaotic mass testing centers in public spaces, conducting mandatory COVID-19 tests on people once a day and within a couple of days from each other. Chinese netizens boldly expressed concerns over the lack of accountability and severe internet restrictions, and appealed to all overseas netizens for help to create public pressure on Beijing. Netizens showed their discontent publicly, with major protests in Chinese cities including Shanghai and Chengdu expressing genuine grievances.

The underlying rationale for Xi's stubborn adherence to his "Zero-COVID" policy is that he was afraid the spread of COVID-19 may become a challenge to his attempt to consolidate his power beyond the established two-term tenure for the post of Party's General Secretary and to be elected for

a third term.

Under the guise of Zero-COVID policy, major cities in China including Shenzhen and Chengdu announced lockdowns after 35 and 156 new cases were reported there respectively. But this led to strict lockdowns in a city of 17.5 million and one of 21 million. Beijing's attempt to control the spread of COVID-19 will remain an overriding priority, but at a great cost.

The outbreak and subsequent restriction came on the eve of the 20th National Congress of the CCP. "Zero-COVID" refers to the Chinese government's approach of imposing harsh blanket lockdowns in entire villages and even large cities when infections are found. This approach has come at great economic cost to China. The economic activity in regions under lockdown has come to a standstill. China's policy has kept deaths and infection numbers low but it has led to a wave of indiscriminate human right violations.

State media went into overdrive to portray China as leading the fight against COVID-19 internationally. Beijing's propaganda has used a spectrum of narrative approaches to craft news coverage, commentary, and descriptions of China's response to eliminate COVID-19. Ensuring that the CCP and PRC government are seen to be responsive, in control, and winning

The Shoton, or Yogurt Festival was scheduled this year in Lhasa from mid-August, and should have featured the unveiling of a large, embroidered thangka portrait of the Buddha on a hillside outside Lhasa's Drepung monastery. Tibetan devotees were excited to see the precious thangka and celebrate the festival. However the tourists and locals got unpleasant news when Chinese authorities abruptly announced a lockdown of the entire city over an outbreak of the highly infectious BA.5 Omicron virus sub-variant. It has affected tens of thousands tourists and residents. This is an example of China's clumsily executed Zero-COVID policy, which has taken a heavy toll on the population.

The influx of Chinese tourists to Tibet had sparked the flame of COVID outbreaks there. All the individuals infected are reported to have been travelers, including on the train route between Shigatse and Lhasa, as well as between Lhasa and Nyingtri. Han Chinese are not especially immune from contagion, all precautions notwithstanding.

Although China's control over the internet and its surveillance network is formidable, the outbreak of the COVID-19 saw an emergence of content, narratives, and expressions of online criticism against the government at a level that had not been seen for decades. Tibetan citizen journalists forthrightly shared their genuine grievances and pleas to end the hard COVID measures. While Lhasa continues to stay at home under strict lockdown in Tibet, videos are appearing showing their desperation and frustration that have gone viral.

Tibet Autonomous Region battling the record COVID wave surge and Beijing's harsh countermeasures to tackle it have imposed immense hardships on the lifestyle and livelihoods of Tibetans, making the curbs unpopular. Public sentiment has triggered a wave of anger and confusion online among residents of Tibet. Social media are flooded with unprecedented criticism against the authorities mishandling the epidemic situation in Lhasa. Angry criticisms posted on these platforms is censored by the internet police, including complaints about feeding unhygienic and rotten food and woeful conditions in quarantine camps.

Imposing a severe crackdown on Tibetans for "spreading COVID rumors" and their grievances online has led to the arrest of a few Tibetans. This has created or reignited outrage over the Communist Party's lack of transparency and accountability.

What makes these arrests notable and disturbing is that they were preceded by emphatic official announcements by China's top leadership that the Party would tighten its ideological control, which were followed by a strong endorsement from Chinese authorities on the validity of prosecuting individuals for online "rumor-mongering" and "spreading misinformation." Yet the censoring of information as well as the suppression of voices critical of the government's policies continues to this day.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) called on "Beijing to adequately acknowledge the public criticisms made by Tibetans, who have genuinely expressed their frustration at the lack of sufficient facilities, and protect them from reprisals for expressing their honest opinions about the government's mismanagement."

Netizens in an outburst of open despair have gone viral on Weibo and DouYin. A Tibetan woman is seen there making an open appeal to local authorities, "complaining about shortages of food supply, lack of proper medical care, and

impoverished quarantine centers."

The outcry of another Tibetan woman in social media constructively criticized the substandard management of COVID in Lhasa's quarantine center. She presented a general overview of the reality. Her outcry speaks volume about old people being treated like criminals instead of patients. If the authorities are incapable of "proper management" and exhibit a "lack of coordination," she pleaded, then they should allow those who test positive to isolate themselves in their homes. "Even if they die, they can at least die in their homes more peacefully."

After a string of complaints went viral online, on September 17, 2022, in a rare show of regret, during a media briefing Dradul, executive Deputy Mayor of Lhasa, publicly apologized for not tackling the COVID situation well in regards to prevention and control. Acknowledging the government's failure, and that they had not been given sufficient supplies, vindicated the public outcry about serious mismanagement and the gravity of the COVID situation.

Tenzin Choezin, the youngest member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, showed her genuine concerns and said: "In stark contrast to the Chinese government's narrative of winning its war against the pandemic through the 'Zero-COVID Policy,' the reality on the ground tells a very different story, one that indicates a massive failure of the Chinese Communist Party. The mismanagement and deliberate mistreatment of the Tibetan people inside Tibet is apparent through the many personal accounts shared on social media platforms like Weibo and DouYin by persons who risk persecution by expressing their grief and frustration against the multiform oppression and inhumane treatments under the garb of 'Zero-COVID Policy.' As an elected representative, I stand with the Central Tibetan Administration's move to express solidarity toward the Tibetan people currently affected by the policy, and ask to extend medical assistance and supplies to our people inside Tibet that are severely affected by the pandemic and the failed policies."

Faced with the extreme hardships endured under China's Zero-COVID policy management, despite the fact that the authorities issued a public apology, some Tibetans were arrested. In a span of two days, five people took their lives by jumping to their deaths in various parts of Lhasa and its suburbs according to sources of International Campaign for Tibet.

Today, in the age of social media with a global network of online supporters at disposal, protests are no longer "local." This fast and unpredictable reach of activists certainly has Beijing worried. Consequently, China has been cracking down hard on internet users who demonstrate sympathy and support for the Tibetan cause, blocking avenues for the spread of all relevant information. The sharing of crucial information through these communication channels allowed people to get a clearer view of reality in Tibet. The connectivity that internet and social media has throughout the globalised world has assisted Tibetans in Tibet to break the psychological barrier of fear by helping many to connect and share information.

From media posts about the government's mismanagement of the pandemic to the lack of spaces for freedom of expression, along with the state-led suppression of the same, Tibetan citizen journalists have come forward to vent their desires and frustrations. The Chinese Government is using the guise of COVID protocol to further repress the Tibetans and curtail their fundamental freedom. Beijing prioritizes censorship and social control over the wellbeing of Tibetans. This demonstrates their failed policy and deliberate attempt to wipe out resistance before, during, and immediately after the 20th Congress.

<https://www.bod.asia>

[xizang-zhiye.org](http://xizang-zhiye.org)

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

## CTA Holds Prayer Service to Mourn Demise of Gaden Trisur Rizong Rinpoche



The Central Tibetan Administration organised a prayer service to mourn the demise of Gaden Trisur Rizong Sras Rinpoche Thubten Nyima Lungtok Tenzin Norbu, who passed away around 9:15 pm on 8 December at Drepung monastery in Mundgod, Karnataka.

The prayer service was attended by acting Chief Justice Commissioner Pema Damdul, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Education Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra, Security Kalon Dolma Gyari, DIIR Kalon Norzin Dolma, Election and Public Service Commissioner Wangdue Tsering Pesur, Auditor General Pema Dadul Arya, standing committee members of the 17th TPiE, Secretaries and staff of Central Tibetan Administration.

Tashi Gyalton, the Chief Executive Councillor and Chairman of the 6th Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, and Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, a Member of Parliament from Ladakh (India) also attended the prayer service to pay their respect to the late Rinpoche.

### **Brief Bio of Kyabje Rizong Rinpoche:**

Born in Ladakh in the late 1920s, Kyabje Rizong Rinpoche: a nephew of the 19th Bakula Rinpoche, was recognised and enthroned as the reincarnation of the founder of the illustrious Rizong Hermitage by His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama in early 1930s. In the mid-1940s Rinpoche joined

Drepung Loseling Monastery in Lhasa for his higher training and later joined His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile community in India following China's takeover of Tibet. He was appointed by His Holiness as Abbot of both Gyumed Tantric Monastery and Drepung Loseling, two of the greatest

seats of Tibetan spiritual knowledge. Rinpoche also carried the title Jangtse Choje (Dharma Master of the Northern Peak), one of the three highest spiritual positions in the Gelug Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.

Rinpoche have made the practice of meditation his principal focus in life, and has conducted numerous extensive retreats, including a three-year tantric retreat on the Yamantaka mandala in a remote hermitage in Ladakh. Through his achievements in practice and scholarship, he represents the pinnacle of the Sutra and Tantra traditions.

Rinpoche was renowned for his Tantric powers, and is frequently called upon by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to lead ceremonies for healing and other similar purposes.

## CTA Holds Prayer Service to Mourn the Demise of Former Secretary Ven. Yeshe Choedak

The leaderships and staff of the Central Tibetan Administration held a prayer service on 11 November 2022 to mourn the demise of Ven. Yeshe Choedak Shungkhong, a former Secretary of the Department of Security who passed away earlier that morning on 1 am in Bylakuppe.

The prayer service was attended by acting Chief Justice Commissioner Karma Dadul, officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra, Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok, Kalon Dolma Gyari, Kalon Norzin Dolma, Election and Public Service Commissioner Wangdue Tsering Pesur, Audit General Pema Dadul Arya, standing committees of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in exile, Secretaries and staff of the CTA offices.

Addressing the gathering at the prayer service, officiating Sikyong Tharlam Dolma Changra (Education Kalon) said the late former Secretary lived a meaningful life after the presentation of

brief biodata from Kashag Secretary.

Secretary Mondrok Shungkhong Yeshe Choedak was born on 1 July 1952 in Tsona. After completing Shastri's degree, he joined CTA (then Gaden Phodrang) on 1 October 1980 and was appointed as a permanent civil servant a year later to the post of Senior Clerk. He was promoted as Deputy Secretary and subsequently to Joint Secretary on 1 August 1992 and 21 April 1997, respectively. On 2 June 1997, he was transferred to the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Before his appointment as the Additional Secretary of the Security Department, Ven. Yeshe Choedak was transferred to the Office of Tibet in Nepal. Later on, he was appointed as acting Secretary of the Security Department on 14 August 2008 and acting Secretary at His Holiness' personal security office on 4 February 2009. Eventually, he was promoted to the post of Secretary on 3 September 2009, where he served until his premature retirement on 1 November 2010.

## TIBETAN MEDIA

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

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

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

Tibet Bulletin (Official Chinese bi-monthly)  
Department of Information & International  
Relations, Dharamshala-176 215, HP, India  
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### POSTAL ADDRESS:

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

## Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

### INDIA

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

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

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

### NEPAL

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

### UNITED STATES

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

### BRAZIL

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

### SWITZERLAND

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

### JAPAN

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

### UNITED KINGDOM

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

### FRANCE

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

### BELGIUM

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

### AUSTRALIA

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

### RUSSIA

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

### SOUTH AFRICA

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

### TAIWAN

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

*“physically, we are separated from our Tibetan brothers and sisters inside Tibet. However, spiritually, we are very much connected. Similarly, all those from the Himalayan region have tremendous devotion and dedication. All of them are in my prayers. I believe that, eventually, the truth will prevail.” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama during teaching at Bodhgaya*

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*“Only compassion and doing no harm bring real peace. Problems will always occur, but if we have peace of mind, we’ll be able to withstand and overcome them.” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama when addressing the SEE Learning conference*

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*“If every individual takes the initiative in putting into practice the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the well-being of humanity, it can greatly contribute to the elimination of war, exploitation, aggression and repression, which are obstacles to peace in the family, society and the world at large.” - Sikyong Penpa Tsering during the 33rd Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

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*“The large-scale peaceful protests which took place recently were therefore also expressions of dissent against the current policies of the government of China. With regard to these developments, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile wishes to call on the government of China to reflect on its past history and ensure that the situation does not end with a repetition of the horrors of the brutal crackdown on the 4th of June 1989 protests.” - Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel during the 33rd Anniversary of Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

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