



TIBETAN BULLETIN

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Editor
Jamphel Shonu
Email: tibetpressofficer@tibet.net

Asst. Editor
Tenzin Phende
Tenzin Saldon

Layout & Design
Tenzin Phende

Circulation Manager
Norbu Wangdue
Email: circulation@tibet.net
Tibetan Bulletin is published by:
Department of Information and International Relations,
Central Tibetan Administration,
Dharamshala - 176 215 H.P. India
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FROM THE EDITOR



For long the Chinese authorities in Tibet have tried to push the notion that Tibetans are backward, barbaric and uncivilized. Hence, it needed the good liberating grace of China to release the country from the shackles of an atrocious history and civilize the inhabitants from the shadows of barbarism.

As a result, in its frantic efforts to occupy the country and consolidate their invasion since 1959, China has taken it upon itself to 'develop' and 'modernize' the country. So much so that China's self-serving efforts is reminiscent of the Kipling poem 'White Man's Burden'.

If we recall, the early imperialists roamed the world, backed by the persuasive power of gunboats, chanting the slogan of "civilization" to fulfill the so-called White Man's Burden. The imperialist then stayed on, constructing roads, building railway lines, setting up schools and taking over the native administration, all geared towards plundering native resources. And that is exactly what happened in the case of Tibet.

Since the occupation, China has used every trick in the book to maintain its hold and legitimize the occupation: from distorting history to masquerading opinions as facts to downright deception and lies. In order to continue their domination, they have also disregarded and downplayed the distinct cultural, linguistic, religious and social heritage of the Tibetan people.

The study of Tibetan language for instance is severely suppressed to such an extent that language advocates are jailed under dubious charges and schools are shut down under the garb of bringing development to the region. In its place, the official language Mandarin is imposed in the name of national unification and increased educational and professional prospects.

Language by definition is a cornerstone of a national identity. Undermining native languages and introducing compulsory study of Chinese in schools is an attempt by the Chinese government to completely assimilate the Tibetan people into Chinese, part of their effort

to Sinicize Tibet and to justify their false claim that Tibet is a part of China 'from antiquity' and that Tibetan and Chinese are 'one' people.

Moreover, the attempts of the Chinese government to paint the Chinese language as the superior language and the Chinese people, as the superior people, is itself self-defeating and at the same time, exposes their bluff that Chinese and Tibetans are one people.

This is also a profoundly totalitarian point of view, which seems to proclaim that: "China have the absolute medicine for every problem of humanity, and Tibetans and the rest of the ethnic minorities like Uighurs should follow China whether they like it or not."

In the past, all the empires, dictators and oppressive regimes that have resorted to such tactics to retain their domination of the people have collapsed as a result of the foolhardiness of such measures.

Therefore, if China wants to fulfill its aspirations for a harmonious society and achieve territorial integrity, it should respect the culture and traditions of the people it governs.

Tibet has existed as a nation with a written history of over 2000 years and a unique culture, tradition and way of life. Sinicization of Tibet in the name of development and modernization is not the solution but will rather thwart their attempts to fulfill their aspirations.

Jamphel Shonu

Editor

CTA President Calls for Independent Investigation into Jokhang Fire Aftermath

Since a fire broke out at Lhasa's Jokhang temple, holiest shrine in Tibetan Buddhism and also one of the most politically sensitive, China has imposed a strict suppression of information relating to the incident.

The fire reportedly broke out at 6:40 pm (Lhasa time) on February 17 this year, the second day of Tibetan New Year. As per our initial report published on February 18, the fire didn't start from the Jokhang chapel but from the chapel adjacent to it.

Now, even after a fortnight since the fire, there is still no official clarification about the cause of the fire and the damage that it has caused. The deafening silence from the Chinese government has left not only Tibetans but the international community worried and searching for answers.

Some sources have indicated that the blaze have caused extensive damage to the 1,300 year-old temple and many of its precious architectural features, murals and relics.

According to fresh sources that reached out to the Central Tibetan Administration, the damage caused by the fire is much more extensive than initially reported. Although the information about the Jowo statue is not clear, the back wall of the statue and murals in the chapel has to some extent suffered damage from the fire.

The fire has also caused extensive damage to four shrines within the Tsuglakhang premises including the Palden Lhamo Yum Drakmo chapel, Songtsen chapel, Mani Chapel (which houses numerous relics, scriptures and commentaries by many Tibetan Buddhist scholars) and the Namsey Chapel. These chapels have survived the onslaught of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960's but have suffered extensive

damage in the fire.

Moreover, sources have also reported that fourteen ancient statues got burnt but the severity of the damage caused cannot be ascertained. However, it is



Screen grab of fire at Jokhang Premises

confirmed that a canopy made of pure gold dating back to the fourteenth century was severely damaged. The golden canopy was reportedly offered to Je Tsongkhapa by devotees and was housed in the Tsuglakhang having survived the destruction of the Cultural Revolution.

The source further explained that the fire raged on for close to four hours and required 31 fire trucks to completely extinguish the fire. Twelve persons were reportedly injured in the fire including several firemen and staff of the Tsuglakhang.

After the fire was doused, a committee from the Chinese Central government's State Administration of Cultural Heritage, which looks after the protection of cultural relics of national importance, has visited the site to ascertain the damage.

The financial loss of the damage as estimated by the committee is reported to be somewhere around 30 – 50 Billion in Chinese Yuan.

Monks and staff working at the Tsuglakhang were also given strict instructions not to speak about the fire to anyone. They were specifically given a directive consisting of two must-upholds

and four unutterables, the details of which are not clear as of now.

Meanwhile, it is reported that the Jowo Chapel is still closed after it was briefly opened to the public and that has raised

further doubts among the public. It is speculated that extensive renovation of the temple is underway for 24 hours a day behind closed doors.

Following the update of information on the fire, CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay expressed his deep concern over the tragic incident. He called for a transparent verification of the fire and the damage caused to the Jokhang, a world heritage site recognised by UNESCO.

“The lack of clear information about the fire as a result of the blanket of censorship has left a gaping hole in the narrative of what actually happened. Therefore, I urge UNESCO to investigate into the matter and send journalists into Tibet for an independent investigation,” he said.

He also condemned China's adoption of a strict censorship of information following the fire and said he shares the concerns expressed by Tibet watchers and Tibetologists on the matter.

Tibet, which came under Chinese occupation in 1959, remains one of the most highly repressed regions in the world. Reporters Without Borders, a global free speech advocacy group, has ranked Tibet below North Korea in terms of access for journalists and reporters.

CTA President Expresses Concern at News of Self-Immolation in Ngaba



Tsekho

CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay expressed his deep concern at reports of yet another self-immolation protest in Ngaba county (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province) in northeastern Tibet on 7 March 2018.

Tsekho, popularly known as Tsekho Tugchak, a middle aged man in his 40s, died after setting himself on fire today in protest against China's repressive policies in Tibet. He reportedly hails from a nomadic village in Meuruma Township in Ngaba County.

"Despite repeated appeals from the Central Tibetan Administration not to resort to drastic measures such as self-immolation, at least 152 Tibetans including Tsekho have set themselves on fire since 2009 in Tibet," President Dr Lobsang Sangay said.

"Such sacrifices by Tibetans in Tibet evidences that repression in Tibet under the Chinese rule is making lives unlivable."

"Therefore it is time the Chinese Government heed to the calls of Tibetans in Tibet who long for freedom in Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama back to Tibet. China must address the legitimate grievances of people in Tibet. The issue of Tibet can be best resolved amicably through the middle way approach, by resuming dialogue with the Tibetan representatives," he said.

With Tsekho's self-immolation, 152 Tibetans have self-immolated in protest against Chinese repressive policies of which 130 have succumbed to their burns. Tsekho's self-immolation marks the first self-immolation protest in the year 2018.

Ama Jetsun Pema Conferred with the Highest Civilian Honour for Women 'Nari Shakti Puraskar 2017'

Ama Jetsun Pema was conferred with the highest civilian honour for women, the Nari Shakti Puraskar for her remarkable contribution to education of tens of thousand children, by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India on International Women's Day, 8 March.

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, presented the Nari Shakti Puraskar at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on the occasion of International Women's Day. Amala was unable to personally receive the award.



Ama Jetsun Pema, Nari Shakti Puraskar 2017 Awardee/Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI

In its announcement, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI said, "Jestun Pema has dedicated her life for Tibetan refugee children since 1964. With the assistance of the Government of India and other philanthropic organizations, Pema established a total of 10 residential schools, 17 day schools, 3 vocational training institutes, 3 hostels for college students and 1 college, spread across India.

"So far, 52,000 students have graduated from her institutions, of which 50 per cent are Tibetan refugees. Apart from Tibetan Children, her institutions also impart education to children from the Himalayan regions."

Ama Jetsun Pema, 77, is the revered sister of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, first female Minister of the Central Tibetan Administration, pioneer of the Tibetan Children's Village Schools and UNESCO medal winner.

This year, the Nari Shakti Puraskar was conferred on 30 eminent women and nine distinguished institutions in recognition of their efforts in rendering distinguished services for the cause of women and children. Established in 1991, the award is conferred annually by President on the occasion of International Women's Day every year.

Deputy Speaker Inaugurates Tibet Museum's Exhibition 'From Home to Exile: Remembering March 17'

Deputy Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok inaugurated the Tibet Museum's photo exhibition titled 'From Home to Exile: Remembering March 17' at the Tibet Museum.

The exhibition featured 33 photos showcasing the journey of His Holiness from Lhasa to India in March 1959.

"The events of March 1959, leading up the flight of His Holiness, were the darkest times in Tibetan history," said Deputy Speaker, Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok, chief guest of the event.

"When I was a school teacher, it always filled me with emotions when I would discuss His Holiness' autobiography 'My Land and My People, with my students'."

He added, "However, if we revisit



Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok inaugurates Tibet Museum's photo exhibition titled, 'From Home to Exile, Remembering March 17'. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

the life and legacy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, it is truly the most glorious moment in our history. His Holiness' immeasurable achievements and his lifelong contribution to Tibetan movement strengthens our hope and spirit to continue to serve our country".

Deputy Speaker further expressed Tibetan people's gratitude to India for hosting Tibetan people for six decades.

As told by Tashi Phuntsok, Director of Tibet Museum, the photo exhibition marks the onset of CTA's year-long Thank you India campaign.

"CTA is holding a series of Pan-India events to publicly express gratitude to the government and people of India, for ensuring the success of the efforts of Tibetan people. Today's exhibition on the journey of His Holiness from Lhasa to India marks the onset of the Thank You India 2018 program," said Director Tashi Phuntsok.

Tibetan Writer Shokjang Released After Three Years in Chinese Prison

High-profile Tibetan writer and blogger Shokjang, who was sentenced for "criticizing China's repressive policies" in his writings, has been released from Chinese prison after completing his sentence term. According to various news reports, Shokjang was released on 19 March 2018.

Druklo, who is popularly known by his penname Shokjang, was arrested and de-

tained on 19 March 2015 by Chinese police in Rebgong (Ch: Tongren) county, Malho prefecture. On 17 February 2016, the Malho People's Intermediate Court in Rebgong sentenced Shokjang to three years' imprisonment term that ended yesterday. Shokjang was charged for "inciting separatism" and "disturbing social stability" even though Shokjang maintained his innocence throughout.

A joint statement released by the Tibet Network Member Groups said, "Shokjang's arrest and false imprisonment expose a larger systemic issue of repression of all aspects of life in Tibet, including the freedom of expression. It also underlines the increasing insecurity of the occupying regime of China".



Shokjang

Confirming Shokjang's release, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy tweeted that human rights defender, Shokjang "should never have been imprisoned". According to information received by Radio Free Asia (RFA), Shokjang is "still being closely watched by the Chinese, though, and we don't know many details about his current condition".

Shokjang was first arrested in April 2010, along with another writer Theurang, for writing about the 2008 protests in Tibet and the Chinese government's violent suppression of the Tibetan protesters while he was studying Tibetan literature at the Northwest University for Nationalities. Theurang (real name: Tashi Rabten) was sentenced to four years and Shokjang was released after over a month of detention during which he was subjected to interrogations and torture.

Shokjang is from Gengya village in Labrang (Ch: Xiahe) county, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

Tibetan Parliament Approves Dr Pema Yangchen as Kalon of 15th Kashag

Dr Pema Yangchen Ed.D, a doctorate scholar from University of Northern Iowa, has been appointed as a Kalon of the 15th Kashag following nomination by CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay on the floor of the Tibetan Parliament on 21 March. She was approved as a Kalon by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile following a majority vote with 26 for, 15 against and 3 blank votes.

Dr Pema Yangchen EdD was born on 15 August 1969. An alumnus of the Tibetan scholarship program, she did her primary schooling from Thimpu, Bhutan before joining the Upper Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamshala where she studied from class 6 to 12. She pursued her B.A. (Honors) in English Literature from the University of Delhi, India, and completed her B.Ed. in English from University of Madras, Tamil Nadu, India.

From 1993 – 1995, she was the English Instructor at Tibetan Children's Village School, Suja, H. P. India. In 1996, she was appointed as the Head of Arts Department at Tibetan Children's Village School, Suja, H. P. India and served in that capacity till 2001. In 2003, she completed her M.A. in TESOL from the University of Northern Iowa, USA. She pursued her Ed. D. (Doctor of Education) in Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Northern Iowa in 2009. In between, she also served intermittently as a research assistant, teaching assistant and ESL instructor at the University of Northern Iowa. From 2009, she served as the English lecturer at The Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education in Bangalore, India.

From 2010- 2012, she was the Head of Department, School of Education & BA Department at The Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, Bangalore, India and from 2013 – 2016, she served as the Co-Chair, Board of Examinations,



Education Kalon Dr Pema Yangchen at the welcome reception.

Specialized Courses at the same institute. In 2013, she was appointed as the Chairperson: Examination Committee of the institute and in 2012, she was promoted to the post of Vice Principal of The Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, Bangalore. She served in that post till 2016.

From 2016 -2017, she served as a consultant to the Vice Principal on a voluntary basis. Dr Pema Yangchen is also a recipient of numerous prestigious scholarships and awards including Fulbright Scholarship (USA) from the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration (2001- 2002).

In 2011, she was honoured with 'Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award' by University of Northern Iowa, Graduate College for her Dissertation titled 'Teacher Learning in a Tibetan School in Exile: A Community of Practice Perspective'.

Dr Pema Yangchen is married to Rebkong Kalsang Dorjee and lives in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Dr Pema Yangchen, the newly sworn-in Kalon of the 15th Kashag has taken charge as the Kalon of the Department of Education on 4 April 2018. The staff and officials of the department organised a brief welcome reception for the Kalon

Tibetan Scholarship Program Celebrates 30 Years of Academic Exchange Between Tibetans and the United States

The US state department-funded Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) celebrated 30 years of academic exchange between the Tibetan community and the United States at the Tibetan Children's Village school in upper Dharamshala on 21 April. The celebration was organised by executive members of Tibetan Scholarship Program Alumni Association (TSPAA).

The chief guest at the celebration was CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay and Education Kalon Dr Pema Yangchen (who were both alumni of TSP), along with officials from the US embassy in New Delhi including Jillian Turner, Program Officer from the US State Department, Bryce Isham, First Secretary at the US embassy, and J P Das, Country Exchange officer at the American Center.



Jillian Turner, Program Officer at US State department, presenting souvenirs to senior recipients of the TSP Program. Photo/Jayang Tsering/DIIR

The celebration was attended by around 70 beneficiaries of the program which included some of the most notable members of the Tibetan community such as Thubten Samphel, Director of Tibet Policy Institute, Sonam Norbu Dago, Secretary of Department of Information and International Relations, Thupten Dorjee, President of Tibetan Children's Village, Nangsa Choedon, former Secretary at CTA, Youdon Aukartsang and Dolma Tsering, Members of Tibetan Parliament, among others.

President Dr Lobsang Sangay spoke about the beneficial impact of the program on the Tibetan community and said that this program has provided numerous Tibetans with a once in a lifetime opportunity to study in the US and gain first hand knowledge and experience of top US academic institutions.

He thanked the US government for their generous support and urged for their continued assistance to the Tibetan community. Speaking about the issue of students not returning from the program following the completion of their courses, he said that this remains one of the thorny and embarrassing aspect of the program. He described the scholarship program as a privilege bestowed by the US government and not a divine right of the Tibetan people, and expressly urged future beneficiaries of the program to return and serve the Tibetan community.

Education Kalon Dr Pema Yangchen spoke about her experience as an alumnus of the scholarship program and narrated incidents from her time as a student at the University of Northern Iowa. She described TSP as a blessing to Tibetans which enabled many to pursue the highest dreams of academic excellence.

She also spoke about the importance of giving back to the community and urged all future recipients of the scholarship to return and serve the community.

Program Officer at the US State Department Jillian Turner explained the bipartisan support enjoyed by the Tibet issue within the US Congress. Noting the benefits of the Tibetan scholarship program on the Tibetan community, she said irrespective of which administration comes into power at the US government, funding for TSP will continue as it is a congressionally driven fund.

Ms Tenzin Lhakmon moderated the function while Ms Dukthen Kyi delivered the opening remarks. The vote of thanks was delivered by Tenzin Choephel, program coordinator at Tibet

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Fund.

Since its inception in 1988, the Tibetan Scholarship Program earlier known as Fulbright scholarship, has benefited about 443 Tibetans. Out of 443, 242 has pursued two-year master's degree while 201 has enrolled in one year non-degree programs. The alumnis are now serving in 91 different institutions. However, 99 beneficiaries from the total 443 have defaulted, leaving the entire program in crisis at one time.

US Congress Approves Increased Funding for Tibetans in Tibet and Exile



The United States Congress approved a spending bill that will fund the United States government for the rest of the fiscal year 2018 through September 30, 2018. The massive bill includes \$8 million for Tibetans inside Tibet and \$6 Million for Tibetan community in India and Nepal. The Congress also approved an additional and a new line of funding of \$3 million to strengthen the capacity of Tibetan institutions and governance in exile. In addition to the total \$17 million listed here, there are also other Tibetan programs from the US government.

The Tibet section is listed separately as section (f) on page 1434 of The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018. Section (f) subsection (2) (A) states:

“Not withstanding any other provision of law, of the 23 funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Economic Support Fund” not less than \$8,000,000 shall be made available to non-governmental organizations to support activities which preserve cultural traditions and promote sustainable development, education, and environmental conservation in Tibetan

communities in the Tibet Autonomous Region and in other Tibetan communities in China.”

Section (f) subsection (2) (B) states:

“Of the funds appropriated by this Act under the heading “Economic Support Fund”, not less than \$6,000,000 shall be made available for programs to promote and preserve Tibetan culture, development, and the resilience of Tibetan communities in India and Nepal, and to assist in the education and development of the next generation of Tibetan leaders from such communities.

Section (f) subsection (2) (C), which is a new line item under Tibetan Governance, states:

“Of the funds appropriated by the Act under the heading “Economic Support Fund”, not less than \$3,000,000 shall be made available for programs to strengthen the capacity of Tibetan institutions and governance.”

The continuation plus increase in Tibet funding by the Congress allays concerns that arose when President Trump presented his budget which included drastic cuts in foreign development assistance including some of the Tibetan programs.

Expressing his gratitude to the US government and congress for the funding, President Dr Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration said: “We remain thankful to the US government and congress for their generous financial assistance towards the Tibetan community.”



For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

In a First, US Senate Unanimously Passes Resolution on Tibetan Reincarnation

Marking the first time ever that a national legislature has supported the Tibetan Buddhist community's right to identify and install their religious leaders, the United States Senate unanimously passed S.Res.429, which calls any interference by the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the religious process “invalid”. The resolution also commemorated the 59th anniversary of Tibet's 1959 uprising as “Tibetan Rights Day”.

The resolution was introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy on behalf of Senator Feinstein, Senator Cruz, and Senator Rubio, and the Senate passed the resolution on the auspicious occasion of Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's 29th birthday.

The resolution reiterated His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's declaration in 2011 that the responsibility for identifying a future 15th Dalai Lama rests solely with the officials of his private office; anyone recognised through illegitimate methods or for political reasons should not be accepted.



President Dr Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration expressed deep gratitude for the support of the US Senate. He remarked, “This resolution stands up for the Tibetan people's inalienable rights and opposes any attempt by external actors, specifically the People's Republic of China, to interfere in the reincarnation selection process. The unanimous support from the US Senate sends a powerful message to the international

community and to China in particular. It sets a precedent for other nations to follow.”

In addition to affirming the US Senate’s support for the Tibetan people’s fundamental human rights and freedom, the resolution called on the US Ambassador to the PRC to meet with the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who was disappeared nearly 23 years ago along with his family.

This resolution in support of the Tibetan people and the Tibetan Buddhist faith community closely follows the decision of the US Congress to increase funding for Tibetans in Tibet and exile for the fiscal year 2018.

US State Department Calls for the Immediate Release of Tibet’s Panchen Lama

The US State Department issued a statement to commemorate the 29th birthday of the Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has been missing since the age of six. He was abducted by the Chinese government along with his family in 1995 after he was recognized as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. In addition to calling for his immediate release, the State Department expressed concern for the ongoing destruction of Tibetan Buddhist communities and implored China to uphold its international commitments to promote religious freedom.

The statement issued on April 26 by Heather Nauert, Department Spokesperson read:

“On April 25, we marked the birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has not appeared in public since he was reportedly abducted two decades ago by the Chinese government at age six. The United States remains concerned that Chinese authorities continue to take steps to eliminate the religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans, including their ongoing destruction of communities of worship, such as the Larung Gar

and Yachen Gar monasteries. We call on China to release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima immediately and to uphold its international commitments to promote religious freedom for all persons.”

President Dr. Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration welcomed the statement saying, “The Tibetan people and Buddhist faith community around the world have been celebrating the Panchen Lama’s birthday in absentia for the last 23 years. Despite the two long decades of campaigning for his freedom, we remain resolute in our commitment to working for his release.”

President Dr Lobsang Sangay launches CTA’s Tri-lingual News App

In an initiative to make Tibet related news and information accessible on smartphones, President of Central Tibetan Administration, Dr Lobsang Sangay launched CTA’s trilingual News App, Tibet.Net on 27 April .



“As per our Five-Fifty vision, we just launched a news App where you can access tibet.net news in Tibetan, English and Chinese so that Tibetans and our friends around the world who are interested in Tibet related issues will have ready-made App on their smartphones,” President Dr Lobsang Sangay said at the launch.

He hoped that the news app will improve reading experience and accessibility for the evergrowing readers, particularly urban-based Tibetan youth and diaspora in 40 different countries.

“With Tibetans diaspora spread across 40 countries and younger generation in urban areas in India, Nepal and Bhutan,

we are launching the App to make it convenient and accessible to all”.

In the sidelines, President Dr Sangay made an announcement that the Indian government has approved to issue new RC for the 955 Tibetans living in Nepal, Bhutan and India who were previously unregistered.

The App was developed by Dachompa Tech LLL, a Tibetan tech company based in Bangalore.

Secretary (Equivalent) Tenzin Dhardon Sharling said, “With the ever growing pool of readers relying on the convenience of smartphones to access information, news apps are increasingly playing a vital role in information dissemination, outreach and impact”.

“The format of information dissemination and gathering has transformed drastically in the last decade. We are witnessing a paradigm shift from traditional concept of 5Ws and 1H to ‘Reach, frequency and speed’. In light of the new and improved digital interactions, DIIR is launching trilingual news App to bring Tibet related news and information on an accessible digital platform,” she said.

Secretary Sonam Norbu Dagpo announced the Tibet TV’s Take-off Film Grant-2018, an initiative spearheaded by DIIR to encourage budding Tibetan filmmakers in the exile community to make short feature or documentary films for Tibet TV. As per the program, aspiring filmmakers from India, North America, Europe and Australia-asia can avail a total grant of INR 200,000/- for making a film on any one of the following themes pertaining to ‘Thank You Year – 2018’. Read further here.

Tenzin Chokden, Tibetan Computer Resource Centre made a presentation on content and features of the Tibet.Net App. The App is available for download on both IOS and Android.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Statement of the President of the Central Tibetan Administration on the 59th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day



Fifty-nine years ago, on this day in Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet, thousands of Tibetans formed a massive human chain around Norbulingka, the summer palace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to protect him and their country. Tibetans from across the social spectrum, united by the indomitable Tibetan spirit staged a defiant, yet peaceful and historic uprising against the forceful and illegal occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China. The Chinese military in the following days and weeks brutally suppressed the peaceful uprising resulting in the death of thousands of Tibetans.

We stand here today in the same spirit to commemorate the 59th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day and to remember and honor all the Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for our nation's struggle for freedom.

Despite the continued and increased repression, Tibetans in Tibet have with unwavering conviction voiced their resistance against the repressive policies of the Chinese government. We have witnessed a continued spate of peaceful protests in the last five decades, the highlights of which are the protests in 1987, 1988, 1989, and 2008.

This year also marks the 30th anniversary of the 1988 protest and the 10th anniversary of the 2008 pan-Tibet uprisings in which Tibetans made a clarion call for freedom, thus expressing their genuine and legitimate grievances against China's continued occupation of Tibet. Recent reports indicate massive military and security buildup in Tibet, particularly in the capital city of Lhasa.

Since the occupation of Tibet, the Chinese government has continually subjected Tibetans to extensive repressive policies. Freedom House report of 2016 and 2017 ranked Tibet as the second least free country after Syria and worse off than North Korea, South Sudan and Eritrea. Reporters Without Borders also stated that Tibet is harder to get access to than even North Korea.

Given the hardline policies of the Chinese government, 152 Tibetans, young and old, monks and nuns, nomads and farmers, from all three provinces of Tibet have self immolated since 2009 calling for freedom for Tibetans and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Just three days ago Tsekho Tugchak, a Tibetan in his 40s from Ngaba, Amdo self immolated in Tibet. His voice echoed the aspirations of the Tibetans in Tibet. The unrelenting

protests in Tibet are the result of the violation of political, religious, cultural and environmental rights of the Tibetan people.

Last month, the Chinese government implemented the so-called revised 'Regulations on Religious Affairs' that sought to control the overall religious freedom in Tibet.

Human Rights Watch recently reported the appointment of some 200 Communist Party cadres and atheist lay officials to control the management of Larung Gar. Since 2016, Larung Gar, the largest Buddhist academy in Tibet, has been demolished and the size of monks and nuns were reduced by half. Yachen Gar, the biggest nunnery in Tibet, is demolished and nuns are being evicted as we speak.

The recent tragic news of the fire breakout on 17th February at the Jokhang, Tsuklagkhang, the holiest shrine in the Tibetan Buddhist world and a UNESCO world heritage site is of great sadness to Tibetans and Buddhists around the world. There are reports of extensive damage and loss owing to the burning of dozens of precious statues, hundreds of artifacts and thangkhas, and murals. Jokhang is still closed to the public. Clearly this is an irreplaceable loss of a sacred treasure of an ancient Tibetan civilization. Now, even after a fortnight, the Chinese government's refusal to clarify the cause of the fire and the damage that it has caused is disturbing and raises more questions. I, therefore, urge UNESCO to send a mission to investigate into the matter and to send journalists to Tibet for an independent investigation.

The recent circular on "Reporting Leads on Crimes and Violations by Underworld Forces" released by TAR's Public Security Bureau indicates the continuation and further restrictions in Tibet. The circular has listed 22 illegal activities that Beijing wants the Tibetan people to report, three of which directly

mentioned His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The detailed guideline has particularly stated that the Tibetan public should provide information on the activities of what they labeled as “criminal gangs connected to the separatist forces of the Dalai Lama.”

This circular is a pattern of misguided practice, which clearly is based on the lack of understanding of the Tibetan mindset and culture. Tibetans inside Tibet revere His Holiness the Dalai Lama with their hearts and minds. Instead of acknowledging the faith and devotion of the Tibetan people, Chinese government have instead resorted to the criminalization of expressions of faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This is the fundamental reason for the lack of ‘harmony of nationalities’ which the PRC relentlessly propagates to achieve.

Also de-linking His Holiness the Dalai Lama from Buddhism in Tibet is another root cause of resistance among Tibetans. To artificially say that you can practice Buddhism but not follow His Holiness the Dalai Lama is akin to saying you can be a Catholic but not follow the Pope. This is a fundamental misreading of the very foundation of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibet as a nation. Tibet and Chenrezig (Avalokiteshvara: Buddha of Compassion) are one and the same, and the Dalai Lamas and the Tibetan people are inseparable. Trying to separate the two deeply hurts the sentiments of the Tibetan people and violates the core of the Tibetan spirit.

We strongly condemn the circular for criminalization of advocacy and protection of the Tibetan language and culture, and also for terming the Middle Way Approach “ a reactionary and narrow nationalistic idea.” In reality, Tibetan language is protected and encouraged under Article 4 of the Chinese constitution. Similarly, the Middle Way Approach is a win-win proposition for both the people of Tibet and China.

We stand firm in our commitment to peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet through the Middle Way Approach. As President Xi Jinping sets out to

begin his second term, I urge him to peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet through dialogue between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the representatives of the Chinese government.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always advised us to hope for the best but prepare for the worst, the Kashag has developed the Five-Fifty Vision that seeks to realize genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people based on the Middle Way policy. This vision also sets out to strengthen and sustain the Tibetan freedom struggle and the Tibetan community for another fifty years if needed.

In order to assert firm control of Tibetan people and regions, the Chinese government has subjected Tibetans to discrimination. A case in point is, despite having the same educational qualification and experience as the Chinese counterparts, the highest posts of the Party Secretary and other branches with real power of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) are held by Chinese officials. Similarly even at the prefecture and county level, qualified Tibetans are mostly denied the post of Party Secretary, whereas even lesser qualified Chinese is able to hold this leadership post.

The rising tide of China’s economic growth and prosperity has not lifted the Tibetans as Tibet remains one of the poorest region and ethnic Chinese who have flooded into Tibet in recent years have been the prime beneficiaries.

A letter received recently from inside Tibet mentions the case of the expansion of the Gongkar Airport in Lhasa under the TAR’s 12th Five-Year Plan:

“In less than five years there has been an influx of 25,000 ethnic Chinese migrants into Gongkar district alone in Lhoka and have taken over most of the local business and employment opportunities. If such is the case in a small district like Gongkar, it is unimaginable to think of the situation in cities such as Lhasa, Tsethang, Shigatse, and Chamdo. Chinese government often

speaks of development and investment in Tibet, but has never revealed the data of Chinese migration and settlement in the 74 districts in TAR and other parts of Tibet.” Such demographic dominance is the root cause of resistance and instability in Tibet.

Furthermore, to make Tibet into a Chinese region and Tibetan people into Chinese, for more than fifty years, the Chinese government has deliberately renamed the ancient Tibetan mountains, rivers, and places in Chinese language. Signboards are mandated in Chinese and even Tibetan people are incentivized to marry Chinese and take Chinese names.

I would like to say unequivocally that such sinister designs will not succeed and the cause of Tibet will prevail. Even after decades of Chinese occupation and rule, Tibetans have persisted and the Tibet cause has gained support and recognition from around the world mainly due to the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the indomitable spirit and resilience of the Tibetans inside Tibet and the unfaltering efforts of the exile Tibetans.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has propagated an educational pursuit based on the analogy of a “bird with two wings” whereby Tibetans can pursue modern education while preserving Tibetan identity. As Tibetan millennials inside and outside Tibet strengthen their footing in the modern world, we encourage them to do so with a firm commitment to the cause of Tibet, and also to take pride in their identity and connection to their traditional Tibetan values. Their courage and conviction is and should remain as strong as that of the elder generation.

The sense of unity and courage shown by the Tibetan people have always been a source of great strength and pride, however, some elements of regionalism in exile is not only a hurdle in the course of the Tibetan freedom struggle, but it also disappoints and dampens the hopes of Tibetans who have strived towards realizing the common cause. We cannot allow regionalism and sectarianism to divide us. I, therefore, humbly and

strongly urge Tibetans in exile to bridge our differences and strengthen unity, which has and will always be our ultimate strength.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the global and high level support and solidarity for Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan language advocate currently in prison. The European Parliament recently passed an urgent resolution. The Latvian parliament issued a joint statement calling for his release. German parliamentarians and French senators also issued similar statements calling on the Chinese government to implement fair legal process in his trial. I thank the European Union Special Representative for Human Rights for voicing concern on Tashi Wangchuk at the 37th UN Human Rights Council session that opened last week.

I also thank the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs for calling on China to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and its Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion to visit Tibet's missing Panchen Lama, a UN recognized case of enforced disappearance for more than two decades.

The Tibetan non-violent struggle for freedom and peace spearheaded by His Holiness the Dalai Lama has gained support and solidarity from all over the world. I pay my respect and thank all the world leaders, governments, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and individuals who have and continue to empathize and tirelessly support the Tibet cause. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Tibet Support Groups and Parliamentary groups for Tibet, such as the 90-member

Japan's All Party Parliamentary Tibet Support Group, the largest parliamentary support group for Tibet, for their continued effort in shouldering the Tibet cause.

Today, as we commemorate 60 years in exile, I would like to especially thank India and the countries around the world that generously continue to host and support Tibetans. To acknowledge their solidarity, the Central Tibetan Administration will mark this year as a Thank You Year and accordingly CTA will be organizing a series of special events around the globe.

Lastly, I pray for the long life of His Holiness the great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, and for the well being of Tibetans inside Tibet. I pray and hope that the reunion of Tibetans inside and outside Tibet will be realized soon.

Tibet TV Take-Off Film Grant-2018

Tibet TV's Take-off Film Grant to Produce Seven Films Themed Around 'Thank You Year-2018'

Tibet TV of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR), Central Tibetan Administration is announcing a Take-Off film grant to encourage budding Tibetan filmmakers in the exile community to make short feature or documentary films for Tibet TV. TTV will produce a total of 7 films themed around the 'Thank You Year-2018,' observed by Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetan people across the globe.

Aspiring filmmakers from India, North America, Europe and Australia-asia can avail a total grant of INR 200,000/- for making a film on any one of the following themes pertaining to 'Thank You Year – 2018'. The filmmaker should be a legal resident of the host country.

1. Thank You India- Two entries from India-based filmmakers will be selected
2. Thank You America- Two entries

from America-based filmmakers will be selected.

3. Thank You Europe – Two entries from Europe-based filmmakers will be selected.

4. Thank You Australia-asia- One entry from Australia / New Zealand / Taiwan / Japan will be selected.

The length of the film should not exceed 15 minutes.

The Take-Off grant aims to facilitate and encourage filmmaking activities of Tibetans and to produce content for wider dissemination and posterity. Since the year 2018 is being marked as 'Thank You Year,' the Take-off Film Grant aims to capture through the visual, creative medium, expressions of gratitude by Tibetans toward their respective host countries.

The film can be in either Tibetan or English and should be accompanied by subtitles.

Selection Procedure:

1. Interested applicants can make a film on any of the themes and submit a copy of the film, either in person or through Google drive, to the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) on or before November 15, 2018 along with a completed form given below.

2. A selection committee will review and shortlist the selected entries and a cash prize of INR 200,000 will be given to the filmmakers.

3. The Films will be screened to the public (date-TBA) and later published on TTV platforms and possibly on other mainstream media.

Application form

- Name
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Copy of GB payment update
- Address
- E-mail & Phone Number
- Theme chosen

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the 59th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day

Today marks the completion of 59 years of Communist-ruled China's armed occupation and annexation of the great nation of Tibet. Adopting a policy of forced occupation of Tibetan territory, China under the rule of its communist party not only launched an armed invasion of Tibet and carried out an unimaginable scale of repression on its people; it also plotted devious scheme that directly threatened the life of irreplaceable spiritual leader and temporal head of the Tibetan nation and people, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. This created a situation of utmost urgency leading the Tibetan people from all the three traditional provinces of Tibet to revolt in unison in a spontaneous uprising movement against the Chinese invaders on 10th of March in 1959. The Chinese army launched an armed repression of the Tibetan uprising, by bombarding the Potala palace and the Norbulingka with artillery shells. It was the most tragic development without any parallel in the history of Tibet. It is impossible for the people of the Snowland (Tibet), through generation after generation, to ever forget that tragic moment in their nation's history. This day is also being observed, at the same time, as the Martyr's Day in commemoration of all the heroic men and women of Tibet for their patriotism and sacrifices. And so, on this occasion, we offer our gratitude and solemn remembrance to the martyred men and women of Tibet for their valor and sacrifices for the sake of the religious, political and ethnic causes of the Tibetan nation. To those in Tibet today, who, continue to suffer persecutions in prisons and in under other circumstances too, we offer our solidarity.

Over the period it has exercised its rule over both the land and inhabitants of Tibet, the government of China has, among numerous other things, trampled on the human rights of the Tibetan people; deprived them of their freedom of religious belief; actively neglected their linguistic heritage, both in their



spoken and written aspects; wreaked havoc on the natural environment of the land and implemented a policy of colonial rule. With numerous policies encouraging Chinese immigration into Tibet, Tibetans are gradually being sinicized with more and more sinicizing policies and measures that continue to roll out since from the great Cultural revolution even today. The Tibetan people have made known their rejection of these policy campaigns through successive peaceful protests but rather than being attentive to the wishes of the Tibetan people, the government of China has responded to their expressions of opposition with nothing but inhuman violence and repression. It was under such repressions that more than 1.2 million Tibetan people have been deprived of their lives. More than six thousand places of religious study and worship have been annihilated. In the year 2008, the entire region of Tibet was hit by the great Earth-Mouse Year peaceful protest movement. In particular, since the 23rd of February 2009, when Tabey, a monk from Kirti Monastery in Ngaba Prefecture of Sichuan Province set himself on fire till the 7th of March, 2018 when Tsekho, a 44 year old man from a nomadic village in Meruma township in Amdo Ngaba torched himself, a total of 152 Tibetan people – including monks and nuns as well as lay men and women, both old and

young – have been learnt and verified to have carried out self-immolations in protest against the Chinese rule. And they carried out their peaceful protests demanding His Holiness the Dalai Lama to be allowed to return to Tibet and that the freedom of the Tibetan people in Tibet should be respected. It is abundantly clear and has become self-evident that the reason why these developments took place was because the government of China has, under its continuing harsh hardline policies, subjected the Tibetan people in Tibet to highly tightened scrutiny and repression, with their wishes and aspirations totally ignored, as though being incarcerated in a prison.

From the 1st of February this year, the so-called State Religious Affairs Bureau of China's State Council stated that the Chinese government was going to implement a new policy on matters concerned with religion. Under it, the Chinese government took direct control of the funds and all aspects of religious activities of every monastery in Tibet. Incorporating the stability and prosperity of both the religious and political matters together, it continues to abuse the Tibetan's freedom of religious belief and hurt their sentiments. Tibetan pilgrims to sacred places in India and Nepal are put under tight scrutiny when issuing visa and if visas are issued at

all, provision of a guarantor is made compulsory with conditions that enable the pilgrims to be recalled back to Tibet forthwith at any time. These and other kinds of restrictions from the government of China have caused severe harassments to the Tibetan people. A Chinese government document obtained by the United States-based Human Rights Watch on the 24th of January 2018 revealed that having carried out its expulsion of the planned numbers of monks and nuns at the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Academy and Monastery in Serta County, the government of China had appointed a total of nearly 200 Communist Party cadres to take charge of the administration, finance, security, teaching, admission as well as the curriculum of the monastic teaching, thereby, effecting their complete takeover. This matter was raised in the United States Congress by Congressman Jim McGovern, Co-Chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the United States House of Representatives. The fact that the government of China has appointed nearly 200 communist party cadres at the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Academy and Monastery to carry out restrictions and exercise controls in an even more severe manner than before clearly reveal that it is adhering to a policy of only worsening the situation in Tibet. Through numerous other non-conspicuous activities that is being carried out currently, expelling Tibetan monks and nuns from various monasteries and nunneries including in Serta Larung Gar Academy, it has become abundantly clear that the restrictions imposed on the religious freedom of the general Tibetan populace has been becoming ever more critical.

Through extraction of mineral ores and clearing of virgin forests for their timber, China continues to wreak havoc on Tibet's natural environment without any sort of restraint, affecting the grassland to turn to desert. The rivers of Tibet are turning murky due to pollution. The glaciers of the Tibetan Plateau are melting at an even more rapid pace than before that the situation has become critical. Also, the rivers of Tibet are being dammed; they are also being sought to be diverted under a project called South-

North Water Transfer Project. Actions and projects such as these, which are still being continuously carried out, greatly affect the natural environment globally in general, especially in the continent of Asia. The fact that such avaricious ecological exploitation will have an unimaginable effect on billions of people whose livelihood depends on natural resources cannot be disputed. This is surely a matter of utmost concern to everyone. Late last year, China's Ministry of Environmental Protection dispatched a national investigation team to eight provinces, including in the Tibet Autonomous Region, for a duration of one month to find out about the state of environmental protection. And the fact that their investigation report as declared on January 3rd of this year at the capital city, Lhasa, revealed a severe shortfall in the environmental protection that failed to meet the requirements of the Central Government and punishments accorded accordingly, is but a concrete proof of the ongoing incessant exploitations of Tibet's natural environment and its resources.

Likewise, in order to radically change the Tibetan people's time-tested, centuries-old traditional way of life, the government of China recently issued a decree to a substantial number of semi-pastoralists in Chamdo Prefecture of Tibet Autonomous Region, requiring them to evict their ancestral land. And it turned out, and has now become clear, that the Chinese government wanted to take over their land for the purpose of extracting mineral ores. This has become clear from the fact, for example, that copper has begun to be extracted from a place called Lungri, located near Dege Jomda and the area has been fenced in with restrictions imposed in the accessibility of its surrounding.

According to a Shanghai online news report in January this year, the expansion of tourism infrastructure carried earlier in the southern Tibetan city of Shigatse will be repeated in Tibet's capital Lhasa this year with the expectation of attracting of around 20 million tourists between the year 2018 and 2020. This year, in the name of winter tourism preferential plans in the Tibet Autonomous Region,

it was announced in January that for a period of three months, tourists visiting the Potala Palace, while being usually required to buy tickets, would be allowed free entry. Also, discounts have been offered for travels, stays in hotels and so on. In essence, this is a plan meant to be used to encourage more Chinese people to immigrate into the Tibetan territory in an ongoing development whose intensity is rising on a daily basis.

Tashi Wangchuk-la, a Tibetan man who reveres the linguistic heritage of his people and campaigns for their right to learn their own language, was arrested by the government of China on the 27th of January in 2016 and has remained in detention ever since. Although he was put on a so-called trial recently after being kept in detention for two years, no verdict has been announced so far. He had petitioned the government of China on the need for it to pay due attention to the right of the Tibetan people to preserve their language so as to be in compliance with the guarantees provided to them under the relevant provisions of the Chinese laws. However, the Chinese government simply criminalized his activism and continues to hold him in detention. Nevertheless, his case has attracted wide international attention, with governments, parliaments, and human rights organizations supporting him, calling for his demands to be met while strongly criticizing the government of China and demanding that it release him forthwith. It has, therefore, become important for us Tibetans at all levels – whether as an individual, groups or as part of the Central Tibetan Administration – living in free countries to not remain immersed solely in our own narrow, immediate personal interests. Rather, we all should pay greater attention to studying, using and promoting the Tibetan language. The question of whether the Tibetan people as an ethnic group and their culture will survive or not on this globe in the future depends on the sustenance of the Tibetan linguistic heritage.

Within Tibet as well as in China, it is difficult to know from the online social media platforms the real situation within the country and the desires of the people,

as well as about the developments in the outside world because of the government censorships in the country that keep increasing day by day. On the 2nd of February this year, the Cyberspace Administration of China issued an order, requiring that microblog operators must set up a mechanism to monitor internet accounts for false information and delete it, while raising the level of supervision to ensure compliance. It said regulators will “strengthen strict supervision” of operators of online platforms. And it became clear that information not in keeping with the position of the government would be subjected to the strictest of censorship. On the second day of the Tibetan Earth-Dog New Year which corresponded to the 17th of February 2018, a devastating fire engulfed the Jokhang Temple complex, a World Heritage Site situated in the Tibetan capital Lhasa, in a sudden development. Nevertheless, the government of China has, thus far, concealed all information about how the fire started and whether the temple’s principal content of the Jowo Rinpoche statue had in any way been damaged by the fire. There has simply been no clarity of information or explanation on any of these matters. From this development, it emerges as extremely clear the extent to which the government of China really gives importance and provides protection to the objects of the Tibetan people’s worship and their sacred cultural heritage items. It has constantly sought to deceive the people in the outside world with incongruous

information that defy credibility. Hence, we wish to appeal to all the concerned and relevant entities in the international community to probe further into the actual situation concerning the damage likely to have been caused by the fire to the Jokhang Temple and its sacred religious contents.

It has been a habit of the government of China to refer to and criticize the activities of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and to the Central Tibetan Administration as separatist. It has not made any change to its hardline policy underlying this claim. However, it is ultimately unavoidable for the government of China to adopt a policy of liberalism and to take into consideration the aspirations of the Tibetan people, thereby making efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibetan dispute. Likewise, there has been no change whatsoever in the desire of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the determination of the Central Tibetan Administration to strive to alleviate the current tragic situation in Tibet by making efforts to reach a settlement through dialogue with the government of China on the basis of the mutually beneficial Middle Way Approach. This being the case, we reiterate our call on the leaders of the People’s Republic of China too to seize the opportunity that still exists, to eschew the blame game and make urgent efforts to arrive at a Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

All the people of Snowland (Tibet) have an unavoidable duty of great importance, devoid of any subterfuge,

to ensure that their conducts accomplish results that gladden His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s heart on the basis of following his guiding light, especially by adhering to firm commitment to the unity of all the traditional provinces of Tibet and all the religious traditions of the land. Accordingly, we appeal everyone to strive to achieve meaningful results by pooling together their energy and by lending their cooperation towards achieving the common goal that subserve both our immediate and long term interests. This requires that there be fraternity amongst the Tibetan people, that there be efforts to enhance the collective merits of the Tibetan people, and that there be cherishing of the Tibetan religious traditions, culture, language, and so on.

And on the basis of expressing remembrance of gratitude we owe to the governments and people of India, both at the centre and in the states, besides international governments, parliaments and people, we take this opportunity to say ‘Thank You Very Much’ to all.

Finally, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the incomparable leader of all Tibetans, live for a hundred aeons and may the just cause of the Tibetan people prevail.

By the Tibetan Parliament in Exile

10 March 2018

Third Pre-Service Training for Individuals Aspiring to Work in CTA

The Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration announced the third pre-service training for individuals aspiring to join the civil services of the Central Tibetan Administration.

The first part of the third pre-service training will be held for a period of five months beginning 1 July 2018 at the College for Higher Tibetan Studies based in Sarah. The training will provide a comprehensive course on Tibetan and English languages.

The second five-month of the training (beginning from 1 December 2018) will be focused on CTA related topics including Tibetan charter, CTA rules and regulations, etc. A separate announcement regarding the same will be issued in September 2018.

A total of 30 candidates will be selected based on a preliminary test. Interested candidates meeting the following eligibility criteria can apply for the pre-service training before 05:00 pm – 20 June 2018.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Applicant should not be above 35 years of age as on 1 July 2018
2. A bachelor’s degree or equivalent from a recognised university is required.
3. Updated Green book till 31 March 2018 and RC Copies of First, Second and Last page required. Those from Nepal and Bhutan should bring a NOC letter from the respective settlement office.
4. Birth certificate

For details visit: www.tibet.net

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Leaders from Indian Government Grace CTA's Thank You India Event

His Holiness the Dalai Lama graced the 'Thank You India' event organised by the Central Tibetan Administration to mark 60 years since His Holiness' arrival in exile India. Over 4000 people attended the event on 31 March.



CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay, Kalon Karma Yeshi presenting the ashok chakra to Dr Mahesh Sharma. The Ashok chakra is presented as a symbol of Tibetan people's gratitude to India and its people. Photo / Tenzin Jigme Taydeh / DIIR

The event was attended by a host of Indian leaders from the ruling BJP as well as the opposition Congress including cabinet minister Dr Mahesh Sharma who is the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Culture and Tourism and Civil Aviation.

Other dignitaries at the function include Shri Shanta Kumar, former chief minister of Himachal Pradesh and a serving member of Indian Parliament; Shri Satyavarath Chaturvedi, a member of Parliament from Congress; Shri Ram Madhav, General Secretary of BJP; Shri Kishen Kapoor, minister of Himachal Pradesh, Shri R K Khirimey, Convenor of Bharat Tibbat Sahyog Manch and Ms Tsering Dolma, wife of Shri Pema Khandu, chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh.

A special guest at the event was Shri Naren Chandra Das, the lone surviving soldier of the Indian army battalion who first received His Holiness the Dalai Lama when he stepped into Indian territory. He was felicitated at the function by His Holiness the Dalai Lama with an ashoka chakra.

Addressing the Thank You India event, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, while looking at the photos of his escape from

Tibet, said that he is overcome with mixed emotions of sadness and happiness.

"Under difficult circumstance, I have fled Tibet. It's been a time of mixed feelings of both sadness and happiness. At the time, we had no idea what would happen in next 40 to 50 years. But today, we are commemorating 60 years in exile so now we could see to certain extent what would happen in the near future," His Holiness said.

"India and Tibet share a bond of teacher and disciple. We the Tibetans call India the land of Noble ones. No other country is referred by such name by the Tibetans. So India is looked upon as land of reverence, respect and admiration so there is a very strong bond between Tibet and India."

"As a result of the support and kindness of our host, the Government and People of India, now what we can see is that we can make some contribution from the Tibetan literature that has been passed to Tibet by the Indian scholars who visited Tibet and translated by numerous Tibetan scholars."

"As Tibetan refugees in exile, we should not only focus on preserving our own culture and make our own living. In the last 60 years, we have seen a blessing in disguise that now we can contribute to the world at large from our own cultural tradition. So as refugees, we have to be practical and realistic. We cannot live like we use to in the past. Even from a Dharmic point of view, unfortunate circumstance can be turned into path of enlightenment," His Holiness said.

"Although we have been in exile for the last 60 years, the Tibetans inside Tibet have kept up with a very strong spirit. Wherever we live around the world, Tibetans have really paid attention to our own culture and language in the 60 years. But we should not be complacent. So this is our responsibility. Let others notice the good things that we do and let

them praise. But we need to see where we are making mistakes. I would like to urge to further carry on the good work and spirit," His Holiness said.

His Holiness thanked all the Indian dignitaries for speaking from their hearts.

Dr Mahesh Sharma, a Union minister from the government of India, spoke about His Holiness the Dalai Lama's contribution to India and thanked him for spreading India's message of peace and non violence throughout the world.

"If we talk about relationships, or brotherhood, or teacher and disciple, then terms like 'thank you' are not needed. The Indo-Tibetan bond is thousands of years old, it cannot be quantified, nor is terms like 'thank you' needed in the current context," he said.

"On the other hand, we should thank His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the harmonious blend of Indo-Tibetan religion and culture. Tibetans and Indians can now be described as a flower and its fragrance, which cannot be separated," he said.

"I was just a child when Tibetans started coming into India. The Indian people welcomed them like family, sending a message of peace and love to the entire world. Since then, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been promoting the same message of peace representing the values of India and Buddhism," he added.

"We accept you as an integral part of India and at the same time, pray for your successful return to your homeland. The Indian people are committed to serve the Tibet cause led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Even our Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains concerned about the Tibetan people," he said.

Shr Ram Madhav, general secretary of BJP, said that India has always welcomed different communities with open hands and an open heart.

“We as a country have hosted many different people in history such as the Parsis, Jews, who came to India and found love, peace and shelter,” he said.

“However (in the case of the Tibetan people) the real thanks should go to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His efforts and the efforts of the older generation have ensured that the Tibetan people who came to India as refugees do not suffer the plight of other refugee communities,” he explained.

“From Jawaharlal Nehru to Prime Minister Modi, politically, we have followed the one China policy. Nevertheless, the relationship between India and Tibet is less political but more of spiritual, cultural and friendship.”

“We met 1300 years ago at Nalanda and Vikramshila. After these universities were destroyed, Tibet has preserved this ancient Indian knowledge for thousands of years and now you are returning it to us. We should be thankful to you for preserving our knowledge system,” he said.

“We are bound by religion, culture, spirituality, knowledge. Therefore, you don’t need to thank India. Brothers don’t thank each other. In India we say we become each other in 6 months. You have been here for sixty years. We have become one people culturally,” he said.

“We understand your deep desire to go back to your motherland. We wish you all the luck. It took 2000 years for some people to get their homeland. I am certain it won’t take that long for Tibet. But that flame should always remain for that to happen.”

“Until you return to Tibet, India is not your second home, but your home. We can live together in perfect harmony like sugar in milk,” he declared.

“India is the land of the Buddha, India is the land of the Mahatma Gandhi and today for the last six decades, India is the land of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the most knowledgeable living spiritual guru in the world,” he said.

He also called for the resolution of the

Tibet issue through a peaceful, democratic means based on dialogue to facilitate the honourable return of the Tibetan people to Tibet.

Shri Satyavarath Chaturvedi, a member of Parliament from the Congress party, said this thank you event is both amazing and curious. Amazing because His Holiness the Dalai Lama himself is present here today to thank India and curious because I cannot imagine the reason for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to thank India.

“India and Tibet are linked not just through borders but through the rich culture and spirituality of Nalanda. Such relations support each other in times of need. Under the circumstance when His Holiness and the Tibetan people came to India, it was India’s sacred duty. So we just fulfilled our duty by welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Therefore, everyone of you is our special guests and a part of our family.”

Former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Shri Shanta Kumar who is the convenor of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet, said that Tibet and India are two countries but one in spirit and soul.

He thanked His Holiness the Dalai Lama for making Dharamshala world renowned for peace and compassion. He further called on China to allow



Naren Chandra Das being felicitated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

the dignified return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. He said this will not only fulfill the aspiration of the Tibetan people but will also earn new respect for China as a country.

Shri R K Khrimy, Convener of the Bharat Tibbat Sahyog Manch, spoke

about the Padyatra organised by Tibet supporters to mark the 60th year of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s arrival in India. The padyatra began from Chuthangmo in Arunachal Pradesh and concluded at Tezpur, Assam.

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the Tibetan Parliament delivered the statement of the Tibetan parliament.

CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay paid rich tributes to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and expressed the Tibetan people’s gratitude for his lifelong contribution for the Tibetan movement. Dr Sangay also thanked India for its consistent support on the issue of Tibet.

“Today is not about how big the event is or who is here or who is not here. Today is a day of celebration and gratitude from the hearts and mind of the six million Tibetans,” he said.

“Today is the day to say thank you to this great country, incredible India. No other country has done more for Tibet than India. No people of a country has been so kind, generous as the Indian people is to Tibetans,” he said.

“India was and has remained the greatest supporter of Tibet. And I hope that India retain its unparalleled support for Tibet until our aspirations are realised,” Dr Sangay added.

The introductory remarks of the event was delivered by Secretary Sonam Norbu Dagpo, Chair of the organising committee and the vote of thanks was delivered by Secretary Dhardon Sharling, Vice chair of the organising committee.

The event also saw the screening of ‘Thank you India’ song, screening of ‘Chela’s Gift to its Guru’, release of a book on Kushok Bakula Rinpoche and cultural performances by artistes from the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts.

The Thank You event is organised by the Central Tibetan Administration to mark His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s sixty years in exile and thank India for its kindness and assistance in these 60 years.

Indo-Tibetan Relations have grown into brotherhood over 60 years: Former Delhi CM Sheila Dixit

Former Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt Sheila Dixit graced the inaugural ceremony of the three-day Cultural Festival of Tibet, a part of the year-long Thank You India campaign organised by the Central Tibetan Administration.

The ceremony was also presided by President Dr Lobsang Sangay, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Harmendar Singh, Frontier Office received His Holiness the Dalai Lama, T N Chaturvedi, Former Governor, Mr Mathur, Advisor to Home Minister, and Naresh Verma, Director, India International Centre (IIC).

Chief Guest of the event, Smt Sheila Dixit said, "I am very happy to be part of this attractive and beautiful occasion, it is an opportunity for all of us to be present here amongst these great artists. I am deeply honored to be part of this. India and Tibet have a 60-years-old relationship which was started by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru ji. Now, this relationship has grown into brotherhood, we all are brothers and sisters and all of us feel the same. India is happy to have you and Thank you for what you are".

"There have been difficult times that you have gone through but India has always endeavored to make you feel at home and to think that India is yours as much as it is anybody else's... You are saying thank you India, India thanks you for being what you are".

She concluded by suggesting that the artistes should request for "a large room" from the Indian Government to showcase their "outstanding handicrafts" and make them accessible to all people.

The event started with an opening ceremony by Sheila Dixit, Former Delhi Chief Minister and Thank You India song sung by the artists of Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts.

On the occasion, President Dr Lobsang Sangay said, "We are happy and

overwhelmed by the presence of Sheila Dixit at our culture festival. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude towards the people of India for accepting us with an open heart. The relationship between India and Tibet is of a teacher and a student. India has given us a chance to showcase our culture and tradition and who we are".



Smt Sheila Dixit, former Delhi CM inaugurating the three-day Cultural Festival of Tibet at India International Centre, Delhi, 2 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

He further added, "We want Prime Ministers Modi's Make in India to succeed as we are made in India. Your success will be our success and our success will be yours".

Speaking on why Tibetans are marking their 60th year of exile as Gratitude year, Dr Sangay said, "On the one hand, 60 years has been long since the invasion and occupation of Tibet. 60 years of suffering, pain and destruction of Tibet's environment, natural resources, water and glaciers. 60 years of destruction in the sense, 98 percent of monasteries and nunneries were destroyed in Tibet. 99.9 percent monks and nuns were disrobed. From that tragic situation, in the last 60 years of being an exile in India has been also the story of resilience and revival of the Tibetan people".

"Right here in India, we rebuilt major monasteries that were destroyed in Tibet. We trained and taught thousands of Tibetan monks and nuns. Not just Tibetan Buddhism was revived in India but flourished in all Himalayan belt and all over the world where-ever His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited. Also

in the last 60 years, Buddhism has come back to Tibet even though the policy of repression continues in Tibet. All these were made possible because of India; because we were given shelter here by this great country; an unparalleled support extended by all the prime ministers, governments and political parties in India," he said, honoring the unconditional support of India.

Based on the theme 'Expert Talk' a panel discussion on 'India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and current bond' was organised which was moderated by Rajiv Mehrotra, Filmmaker, Television Director-Producer.

The three-day festival will feature exhibits and events to present a thematic showcase of Tibetan art and cultural lifestyle.

The festival aims to celebrate Tibetan Culture and showcase all sides of Tibetan art, religion, lifestyle, medicine, history, literature, films and education activities. The day two of the festival will showcase documentary screening of various films.

The event will be open to the public on April 2-4, 2018 and will showcase a special documentary; A place in the Sun; Stories from Tibet. The different artist performing along with Tibetan art, literature, medicine, apparel, Thangka painting, woodcraft, metal craft, calligraphy, culinary, sand mandala, butter sculpture, photo exhibition, carpet, Yata and apron weaving and nomadic lifestyle.

Union Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma, BJP leader Ram Madhav and members of Indian Parliament – Shanta Kumar of BJP and Satyavrat Chaturvedi of Congress – and Tibetan spiritual leader were present at the inaugural 'Thank You India' campaign along with thousands of Tibetans and supporters in Dharamshala on 31 March.

Tai Situ Rinpoche's Guide to Mindfulness and Lasting Happiness: A Buddhist Discourse at Tibet Cultural Fest



Discourse on Mindfulness and Cultivating Ultimate Happiness by Tai Situ Rinpoche, 2 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

The 12th Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche gave a discourse on 'Mindfulness and Cultivating Lasting Happiness' at the India International Centre, Delhi on Monday. The talk is part of the series of initiatives launched by CTA to thank the Government and People of India.

The talk on 'Guide to Mindfulness and Cultivating Lasting Happiness' was attended by over 300 Indian senior diplomats, scholars and Tibetan dignitaries including CTA President Dr Lobsang Sangay and respected monastics.

H E Situ Rinpoche started with a brief background of Tibetan Buddhism, guiding the Indian audience through the source texts of Tibetan Buddhism and the derivation of Tibetan wisdom of Mindfulness from the Sanskrit texts.

"According to the Lhasa edition of Kagyur (བཀའ་མཛོད་ comments of Buddha, འགྲུབ་ translation from Sanskrit, Pali) woodblock print, (there are) 17 volumes of the first wheel of dharma, 21 volumes of the 2nd wheel of dharma, 12 volumes of 3rd wheel of dharma, 32 volume of Sutra which can be part of any one of the three wheels of dharma, and 21 volumes of Tantra. These are the direct words of Buddha".

"This is the source of all the teachings of Buddha; that is life and soul of all of us. They are translated by Indian great Mahapandits and Tibetan great translators. All these texts that are the core of teaching of Buddha, are

internationally known as Tibetan Buddhism, Vajrayana Buddhism," Rinpoche said.

Delving into Mindfulness and its techniques, Rinpoche explained the four types of Mindfulness: Mindfulness of all phenomena – ཚོས་དྲན་པ་ཉེར་བཞག་, Mindfulness of Body – ལས་དྲན་པ་ཉེར་བཞག་, Mindfulness of Sensation Feelings ཚོར་བ་དྲན་པ་ཉེར་བཞག་ and Mindfulness of Mental State – སེམས་དྲན་པ་ཉེར་བཞག་

"All the problems that humanity is facing are because of the lack of mindfulness of body, feeling and mental state," he lamented. "Everyone in this world, including me, are all same. This way, all of us in this world are functioning half blind, some of us are totally blind, some double visioned, some of us are schizophrenic, paranoia, agoraphobic, claustrophobic and this way the world is in mess".

He added, "As you all know, His Holiness the Dalai Lama always teach the world about being responsible, kind, compassionate person. This is in my understanding that he is reminding us of the importance of these three mindfulness: Remembering, knowingly and conscientiousness".

According to Rinpoche, the key to understand and practice mindfulness lies in understanding and reigning over the workings of one's mind.

"If you just relax, then that your perfectness of you from within will manifest, it will shine from within you. that's why first meditation buddha taught is Shamatha, be at peace, relax at physical, mental, orally. Mind manifest as everything. When you relax, then from your crown to your soul, you feel everything. That is what you physically are and now that sensation from crown to soul is feeling and who feels it, it is your mind. Your body can feel hot cold and everything because your mind is living in your body. It is the mind feeling

through your body," he added.

Rinpoche revealed that the idea of ultimate happiness is both illusional and relative. What's more important, he said, is the intent and action of a person that will bring happiness. "Put one's intention and action to make yourself and everybody as happy as possible, and remedy the problems that we have created by righting the wrongs that we have done in the past, and also be aware of the future actions by learning the mistake of the past".

Sharing his take on the impact of social media and news media in our lives, Rinpoche said that it serves to show us the reality of world we live in and "the benefit is so much so that any harm it has done is almost negligible."



Discourse on Mindfulness and Cultivating Ultimate Happiness by Tai Situ Rinpoche, 2 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

"It is wonderful that the news and the social media helps us to see that. Because in old days, we don't have what's happening on the other side of mountain, or desert. But now we know everything that's happening in one small village, across the ocean, in the middle of desert, we know. Although there are lot of shortcomings, we have to get wet if we wanted to swim. So we have no choice but get little bit affected by negative aspects of the social media and media. But If we really balance the benefit, good and bad aspect, it is really really overweighed on the good side," Rinpoche noted.

The hour-long discourse was followed by an interactive Q&A.

Tibetan Resilience Highlighted at Tibet Film Festival in Delhi

The second day of the Cultural Festival of Tibet at IIC, Delhi unveiled the first edition of Tibet Film Festival hosted by the Central Tibetan Administration.

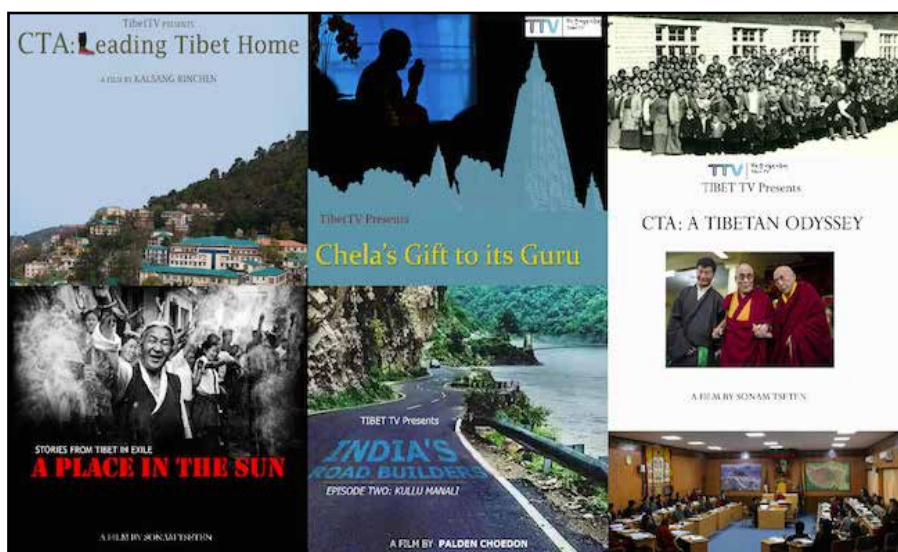
The daylong film carnival celebrated the spirit, resilience and the success story of the Tibetan people and its leadership.

A total of five documentaries including – CTA: Leading Tibet Home, directed by Kalsang Rinchen, A Place in the Sun, directed by Sonam Tseten, Chela's Gift to its Guru, directed by Tenzin Wangchuk, India's Road Builders – Series II: Kullu-Manali directed by Palden Choedon and A Tibetan Odyssey, were premiered for the first time at the national capital.

The documentaries are produced by Tibet TV and directed by professionals of Tibet TV and individual filmmakers.

'CTA, A Tibetan Odyssey' is a documentary film narrating the success of the Tibetans in exile and their unending resolve to return home to Tibet. The Tibetan Diaspora led by the CTA personifies the legitimate institution heading the Tibetan freedom movement under the framework of its 'Five-Fifty Vision'. The documentary, through a series of valuable and important footages and interviews with the most significant personalities of the Diaspora, showcases the exemplary achievements of the CTA for the past six decades: running of an administration in exile, an indomitable culture, religious vibrancy, education and health systems within a robust democratic system of a persistent community.

India's Road Builders- Series II: Kullu-Manali The film features two first generation Tibetans in exile, Mentok (75) and Palzom (73), revisiting their past struggles and recounting the hardship faced during early years in exile, when all they knew was the sky and the earth. The two protagonists share their experiences making roads in the Kullu – Manali region in northern India for a decade, from the early 1960's and early 1970's. Today, with the grace



A total of five documentaries were screened at the Tibet Film Festival on the Day 2 of Cultural Festival of Tibet, IIC, Delhi, 3 April 2018.

of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the two road makers believe it's the sunshine after the storm.

'Chela's Gift to its Guru' narrates the fresh addition of a new text to the three principal commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama; promotion of human values, promotion of inter-religious harmony and preservation of Tibet's language, culture and environment. The fresh addition refers to the revival of ancient Indian knowledge among His Holiness the Dalai Lama's principal commitments in life. His Holiness refers to India as 'guru' and Tibet as 'Chela', and refers to himself as 'son of India' and a messenger of 'India's ancient knowledge and wisdom' or in other words, the Nalanda Tradition. The film explores how this commitment of His Holiness is in a way 'chela giving back to its 'guru'.

'A place in the Sun' is an evocative, poignant documentary on Tibet's quest for freedom and rights, on the experiences, aspirations and achievements of the Tibetans in exile narrated through the daily life stories of four protagonists: Thubten Samphel, Director of the Tibet Policy Institute in Dharamshala, Tenzin Nangwa, Settlement Officer for Tibetans in the Kullu & Manali region, Samten Dhondup, a Tibetan Opera Master at

Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts and Bawa Kelsang Gyaltzen, the Chinese Liaison Officer at Office of Tibet in Canberra, Australia.

The four characters, in different capacities and experiences, define the common ground of the Tibetan issue, serving their national interests, representing the Central Tibetan Administration, the institution that spearheads the Tibetan movement in exile. Each character, with their unique responsibilities, shares the same core, 'Of an Unassailable Tibet'.

'CTA: Leading Tibet Home' highlights the journey of the Tibetan exiles, from a displaced people after the Chinese invasion of their homeland to a strong Diaspora with their own administrative setup based in Dharamshala. The Tibetan Diaspora led by the CTA, personifies the legitimate institution heading the Tibetan freedom movement under the framework of its 'Five-Fifty Vision'. Under this vision, the documentary, through archival footages and interviews with Tibetans from various backgrounds showcase the exemplary achievements of the CTA and its aspirations for future—that is freedom for Tibetan people and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama back to Tibet.

Expert Panel Celebrates Centuries-old Ancient Ties and Current Bonds Between India and Tibet

An illustrious panel of experts comprising Kalon Trisur Professor Samdong Rinpoche, Dr Madhuri S Sondhi, Founder member of Tibet Swaraj Committee, Director of the ML Sondhi Institute for Asia Pacific Affairs, Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, senior Bureaucrat, former Member of Indian parliament and President Dr Lobsang Sangay, Central Tibetan Administration addressed a panel discussion on 'India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and Current Bonds' on Monday at IIC, Delhi.

The event is part of a series of initiatives launched by Central Tibetan Administration to thank the People and Government of India.

Moderator for the panel, Rajiv Mehrotra, Indian writer, television producer-director and Founder of Foundation of Universal Responsibility opened the panel discussion.

"Tibetans are a very very small community in exile but the impact of their presence on our lives is a celebration. Thank you Tibet, Tibetans, thank you above all, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Thank you above all to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, for who he is, who embodies the highest human aspiration that any human being can have and that he has been in our midst. I often think of what it must feel like to have been around when Jesus and Gandhi were alive. To share the same physical space and impact of who they were. So it has been a privilege to be alive in India at this time".

"As two representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Professor Samdong Rinpoche and Dr Lobsang Sangay, please accept our deep gratitude and appreciation," Rajiv Mehrotra said.

Setting the tone for discussion, Kalon Trisur Professor Samdong Rinpoche

relation is not an obligation. This relation is one of deep embedded friendship, love and brotherhood. Speaking in terms of current bilateral relations such as of politics, economy, trade and welfare and so on, it can be said that there existed no such relation between India and Tibet. Because any agreement of such would exist between equals."

"Since the beginning, India has been a guru (master) and Tibet its chela (disciple). His Holiness the Dalai Lama has often described our relationship to India as that of a guru and chela, and of refugee and refuge. Ever since the advent of Buddhism in Tibet during the lifetime of Shantarakshita and Kamalashila, the entire land of Tibet became the land of disciples of the great Indian masters," Rinpoche said.

To underline the deep-rooted, centuries-old relation of Guru and Chela between India and Tibet, Professor Rinpoche said, "In true service to the Indian masters, erudite Tibetan scholars have spent over 250 years in oral transmission and translation of the ancient Buddhist literature in the Tibetan language. They have written enormous commentaries on the Indian literature. This sharing of our civilizational culture and knowledge has continued until the end of the 12th century".

He stressed that the Buddhism preserved in Tibetan is most authentic and benefits from the unbroken lineage of transmission.

"Tibetan scholars have set a precedent with its highly immaculate translation of the vast ancient literature. Because of the blessings of the Indian masters and Tibetan scholars, we have 108 volumes of Buddha's words and 120 volumes of commentary on Buddha's teachings in the Tibetan language. Buddhists around the world are following and studying these texts today.

He drew attention to the noble vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to revive ancient Indian knowledge in modern



Kalon Trisur Professor Samdong Rinpoche opening the panel discussion on 'India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and Current Bonds' at IIC, Delhi on 2 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

He looked at the current India and Tibet bond built on ancient tradition and said "this should really have been a Thank you Tibet and Thank you Tibetans initiative. Because at another conference, they celebrated the Tibetans as honoured guests. But I think they are much more than that, they are extended family to us in India".

in his opening remarks stated that relationship between India and Tibet was not restricted to ties or bonds, but that it prevailed in the nature of civilisation, culture and religion for thousands of years.

"Ties and Bonds are translated in Hindi as Bandhan, implying bondage and obligation. In my opinion, India-Tibet

India and how His Holiness considers India, not just a guru but also a reliable, trustworthy guru to the Tibetans.

Rinpoche observed that the Tibet is an extension of the Indian cultural heritage and therefore, Tibetans are in the position to revive the ancient tradition of such value to the world, in its home country, India.

Underlining the dangers of conflict and distrust in a world where nuclear weapons exist, Professor Samdhong Rinpoche reiterated His Holiness' message that revival of ancient Indian tradition would point the younger generation in the direction of world peace. "In case that the Tibet is able to revive the ancient Indian tradition in modern India, it will further eternalise the unique 1000 years old relation between the two countries. It will not just benefit the people of India but the entire humanity.

"On the basis of your ancient heritage I am confident you Indians have the potential to make a great contribution to the welfare of humanity," he concluded.

Founder member of Tibet Swaraj Committee, Director of the ML Sondhi Institute for Asia Pacific Affairs, former Editor of Shakti, Dr Madhuri S Sondhi drew on the prominent writings of Professor ML Sondhi on the scopes of joint commitment between India and Tibet.

"We see now that three generations of Tibetans have grown up in India, so that, to quote the late ML Sondhi, 'the Indian joint commitment with the Tibetans is on a broader range of subjects than when they first took shelter on Indian soil: and these include Human Rights, International Peace, Buddhist Culture, Himalayan Ecology, River Waters, Disarmament and Confidence Building in Sino-Tibetan Relations. These are not always expressed in formal institutions and may have ups and downs depending on current developments but they are very much issues of common concern".

She further weighed heavily on China's new expansionism clout in the international platform particular through means of soft and sharp power.



President of Central Tibetan Administration and expert in International human rights law, democratic constitutionalism and conflict resolution, Dr Lobsang Sangay addressing the panel discussion on India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and Current Bonds, 2 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

Quoting from well-known American political scientist, she said, "Washington has been wrestling with a new term that describes an old threat. "Sharp power," as coined by Christopher Walker and Jessica Ludwig of the National Endowment for Democracy, refers to the information warfare being waged by today's authoritarian powers, particularly China and Russia."

"Post-Tiananmen the CCP has indoctrinated successive generations in a fierce, xenophobic and at times revanchist nationalism coupled with a successful mobilization of Chinese overseas. Several aspects of China's narrative and actions are outside the rationale of the international system as we know it and initially gave rise to confusion and surprise. But now a discernible process of challenging the content and terminology of this Chinese self-presentation is emerging.

"In their report, Walker and Ludwig argue that the expansion and refinement of Chinese and Russian sharp power should prompt policymakers in the United States and other democracies to rethink the tools they use to respond. They contrast 'sharp power', which "pierces, penetrates, or perforates the political and information environments in the targeted countries," with "soft power," which harnesses the allure of culture and values to enhance a country's strength. And democracies,

they argue, must not just "inoculate themselves against malign authoritarian influence" but also "take a far more assertive posture on behalf of their own principles."

She added, "Incidentally without using the term 'sharp power' Prof. Clive Hamilton of Australia's Charles Sturt University in his book: *Silent Invasion: China's influence in Australia* vividly describes the penetration of the Chinese worldview into Australian universities, media etc, aided by generous donations from the Chinese embassy and support from Chinese Australians constituting 5.6% of Australia's citizens who quite openly display dual loyalties to Canberra and Beijing. Hamilton became a victim of China's sharp power himself when his regular publisher Allen & Unwin pulled out after initially backing his book project, citing threatened retaliation from Beijing and from Chinese lobbies within Australia.

"So from Korea to Doklam to Australia (though not yet so far as America or Greenland), China is directly or indirectly claiming territories as within its sphere of influence by employing singular versions of history, or inventing facts or what might be called 'fake history'," she cautioned.

As the most recent example of China's fabrication of its past relations with countries, she quoted the late Elliott

Sperling to contest the Chinese version of their past relations with Tibet. “For example: when the Chinese claim that Tibet was under their rule during the Qing dynasty, Sperling points out that at that time China herself was merely a part of the Great Manchu Qing Empire. Given the logic behind China’s reasoning, tomorrow India could as well lay claim to Myanmar on the grounds that Burma was once ruled by the British – from India!”

She concluded by suggesting that “it is important for Indian and Tibetan scholars along with their international counterparts to collaborate in understanding Chinese historiography and in reaffirming the international system.. Whichever way, the democratic world and China are clearly engaged in a contest of ideas as well as in a contest over territory and power. India and the Tibetan exiles have chosen multi-party democracy and pluralism as against one-party and one-man rule in China, and this common bond is going to be important in facing the ongoing and perhaps more bitter contests in the future. And the challenge not only to strategists and politicians but also to academics”.

Also speaking on the subject was Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, senior Bureaucrat, former Member of Indian parliament, President of India International Centre and who is referred fondly by His Holiness as Mata ji.

Dr Vatsyayan spoke very movingly about her decades-long association with the Tibetan community in exile.

She recounted how blessed she felt for her new service in the Tibetan community. “This is where I met His Holiness. Ever since, I can’t put in words the gift I have received, the gift that this country has received from the presence of a soul like His Holiness”.

Dr Vatsyayan went on to say, “Yes, India gave His Holiness and Tibetan refugees some land, a small gesture. But in return, His Holiness gave us immeasurable gifts, of wisdom and compassion, all the good that India has ever stood for, and so, it is India and Indians who should be thanking His Holiness on this

momentous anniversary and occasion. A different India, one which remained more true to its real heritage, would have done so. And so, she thanked His Holiness and all the Tibetans from the bottom of her heart.

“It is a sad reflection of the present state of our country that instead of thanking His Holiness, over and over again, we are today gathered to accept thanks from him and the Tibetan community.

“His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, resurrected and is the living embodiment of the Nalanda ancient Indian wisdom and philosophy in the Arya Bhumi he came to inhabit in 1959. He has become a beacon and a shining, guiding light of all the best values and culture espoused by our nation over the centuries, a true representative of all the potential of this great land and its rich and sophisticated traditions. A true son of the soil, so to speak”.

President of Central Tibetan Administration, an expert in International human rights law, democratic constitutionalism and conflict resolution, Dr Lobsang Sangay succinctly described how Tibet and Tibet’s issue is Made in India—an allusion to Modi’s government’s Make in India campaign.

“Tibet and Tibet freedom struggle is the original ‘made in India’. If it succeeds, India is guru and Tibetans chela. We took the philosophy of Bharat and we practiced the philosophies and values of Bharat. Now if you want, Modi ji’s Made in India to succeed, you better support us,” he said.

The geographical landscape of Tibet to its rivers, civilisation, religion, culture and the resilience of the Tibetan spirit are all inspired by India, he argued, adding that Tibetan democracy is modeled on Indian democracy and hence, the success of Tibetan freedom struggle will be India’s success story.

“Now the challenge we are facing is also common. Xi Jinping in its Party Congress said ‘Socialism with Chinese characteristics in new era and One

Belt One Road is our road’. The rise of China is a fundamental challenge to the civilisation, values, principles and philosophy of India and Tibet”.

Reinforcing Tibet’s strategic importance to India’s security, he alerted that Tibet is India’s great wall against China and that it should strengthen its wall. “Tibet was India’s great wall against China’s expansionism and once the great wall was lost, it opened road for further incursions. Mao Zedong has said if you occupy Tibet, you occupy ‘the palm with all its five fingers’ which are Sikkim, Ladakh, Nepal, Bhutan and Arunachal. Not only that, China has encircled India from Pakistan to Sri Lanka to Bangladesh to Burma and it all started with Tibet”.

“We need to bolster this great wall; we need to protect the roof of the world and march together. If we succeed, you succeed and if you succeed, we succeed,” he added.

Expressing gratitude towards India, CTA President said, “No country has done more for the Tibetan people and country than the great country of India. Ancient civilisation, culture and philosophy almost destroyed, has been revived in India. We are celebrating this. Jai Bharat, Jai Tibet, Jai Jagat”.

The event was well attended, including by senior Indian diplomats, officials, scholars, long time Tibet supporters, representatives from Tibetan institutes, members of media, and students of Delhi colleges.

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates 92nd Annual General Meet of Association of Indian Universities

Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama graced the inauguration of the 92nd Annual Meet of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan studies in Sarnath, Varanasi.

The three-day Annual General Meet of the Association of Indian Universities is being hosted by the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies. It is the first in Varanasi. The 92nd meet will delve on the topic: 'Higher education in the era of innovation, entrepreneurship and disruptive technology with the focus on human values in the age of disruption'.

Dignitaries at the inaugural event were President of Association of Indian Universities, Mr Pritam B Sharma, Vice Chancellor of Amity University, Balvinder Shukla, General Secretary of AIU, Professor Furqan Qamar, Global Coordinator of Higher Education, World Bank Group, Mr Francisco Marmolejo, Vice Chancellor of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Professor Geshe Ngawang Samten, foreign delegates, representatives of apex body, officers and members of AIU and CIHTS.

Professor Geshe Ngawang Samten, Padmashri awardee and Vice Chancellor of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies delivered the welcome address.

"As one of the cherished area, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has taken the initiative of promoting human values based on philosophy of universal responsibility and common sense. Thus it is secular and universal in nature," he said, referring to His Holiness' longstanding commitment and leadership in secular ethics initiatives.

"The receptivity of His Holiness' initiative is extremely encouraging. Top scientists of Neuroscience, Psychology and educationists have been working for more than a decade on the nature and impact of destructive and positive emotions in our lives... The impact



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with members of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Association of Indian Universities and dignitaries at the 92nd Annual Meet of Association of Indian Universities at Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath in Varanasi, 19 March 2018. Photo/CIHTS

to the work is being seen in so many countries, particularly in North America and European countries, reaching to millions of teachers and students".

The Vice Chancellor further noted India's rich history of providing holistic education and therefore, its unique potential in creating a compassionate person equipped with professional skills.

Chief guest of the event, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in his remarks that time had come for India to share with the world the pragmatic wisdom of the country's thousand year old tradition and take leadership in creating an education of both heart and mind.

"Out of 200 countries in the world, only this country has the ability to combine modern education and ancient Indian thought. While modern education brings physical comfort, ancient Indian knowledge brings inner peace," he said.

"I think that Buddha is product of ancient Indian culture. This country has over 3000 years, sophisticated cultural heritage there. Indus valley civilisation produced many thinkers, preacher of Ahimsa," he remarked, adding that Indians should feel proud and start to revive this wisdom for good of entire humanity.

He argued that the modern education, although highly developed, was

insufficient. "Modern education is highly developed, but it is not sufficient by itself to reduce violence and bring about peace. Violence comes from anger and fear, and that's what we have to tackle. Material goals are not enough".

Talking about futility of eloquent statements and resolutions for peace, His Holiness said, "Just beautiful statements and resolution will not bring change; We must build genuine peace through action and courage".

"In this 21st century, India must contribute to creating an era of peace, not just through prayer but by taking action. This century should be the century of dialogue".

Professor Furqan Qamar, Secretary General of AIU said, "I am in dilemma that who should I thank first. Let me thank CIHTS and Professor Samten for coming forward to host the 92nd annual meet of Association of Indian Universities, and who also worked hard and provided us the privilege of being in the august presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I, on behalf of each one of you, express my deepest sense of gratitude for your holiness, not only for inaugurating it today but to have an interactive session on human values and universal ethics tomorrow morning".

Registrar of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Dr RK Upadhyay delivered the vote of thanks.

About 150 Vice Chancellors of Indian Universities, academicians and scholars across the globe are taking part in the annual forum. The second day session will include interaction with His Holiness the Dalai Lama on topic, 'Higher Education in era of Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Disruptive Technology with Focus on Human Values in Age of Disruption'.

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama Discusses Secular Ethics with over 150 Vice Chancellors of Indian Universities

The pioneer of secular ethics for the 21st century and Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama steered a two-hour seminar on the need for secular ethics in modern education with vice chancellors from more than 150 Indian universities in Sarnath.

His Holiness was taking part in second day the 92nd Annual General Meet of Association of Indian Universities at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath.

“Through an education system which is motivated by compassion, we can expand the sense of well being of all people, not just for your own circle and eventually bring peace to entire human being on this planet,” he said, opening the first of a kind meeting.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama discusses Secular Ethics with the Vice Chancellors attending the 92nd Annual Meet of Association of Indian Universities after the conclusion of the inaugural session at CIHTS in Sarnath, UP, India on March 19, 2018. Photo/Lobsang Tsering/OHHDL

“At young age, our basic human nature is most alive. But once children are enrolled in modern education, they gradually develop the sense of ‘we and they’. So the kind of education instead of helping human beings rather breeds too much discrimination of ‘we and they,’” His Holiness said as he pointed the failure of modern education.

“Without relying only on sensorial consciousness, just focus on mind and try to train that level. Sensorial experiences are just a way to bring information, real joyfulness is not with sensorial but in mental experience,” he noted.

“The ancient Indian knowledge of samatha and vipassana are training of

not sensorial but mental experiences.. this science of training destructive mind and emotions are far more advanced than modern science”.

Referring to scientific evidence of basic human nature being compassionate, His Holiness said that there is a ground of hope for a better and peaceful world.

His Holiness cut his talk short and precise and asked for the main discussion to begin.

Lobsang Tenzin Negi, Professor and Director, Emory-Tibet Partnership gave a presentation on ‘Values and Necessity of Secular Ethics in Education’.

“This is really humbling to be in presence of His Holiness to present the very essence that His Holiness has devoted to bring in education. As His Holiness mentioned our modern education has in many ways prioritised the external development and in the process neglected inner development. We are seeing the impact of such neglect,” he said.

“They analysed based on 4 different countries: in the US, UK, AUS, Indonesia with thousands participating in the survey to see what constituents the quality of life. What they found is that number one factor for our happiness or quality of life is the mental health. When the mental health is suffering despite education, financial and even physical health, they don’t contribute towards health.

He informed that panel that the spiritual revolution—the revival of basic human values—initiated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama sits at the heart of the solution and are fundamental to human flourishing.

“When you bring this kind of education, there is a whole host of benefits of personal happiness interpersonal relations, social well-being, emotional well being and these are very

encouraging. They are fundamental to the continued survival of our species,” he concluded.

Professor PB Sharma, President of Association of Indian Universities, talked about the relevance of His Holiness’ message and called upon the Vice Chancellors to heed his message.

“Yesterday His Holiness has made it clear that we, occupying the highest chair of university authorities have to understand the value and worth of compassion, karuna. This is beyond religions and this is not akin to a particular cultural group, geographical boundary. We have the responsibility to create a peaceful world, where harmony, peaceful coexistence spread to all religions and those who don’t believe in any religion, we have to consider that all of them are our sisters and brothers. It is with this kind of mindset the world will be thousand times more peaceful and beautiful than it is today,” he said.

Professor Girishwar Mishra, Vice Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishvavidyala said, “In a very precise sense, His Holiness has made it very clear that vast gap has taken place between real human nature and education. I would like to submit that education itself shiksha is a value, the direction of shiksha should be towards enlightenment, vidya, it should be for making us free from various kinds of problems.

What has happened is that we have forgotten our true nature and we have considered all the attachments as indicators of true natures. So we need to have more and more possession... The direction of education is increasing individuation and decreasing connectedness in society”.

The discussion was followed by interactive Q&A session with His Holiness.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Addresses Convocation of Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management

Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama graced and addressed the 2018 Convocation of the Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management in Dwarka, New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, His Holiness said that he had a very special connection with Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and that the late PM would have inspired great change had he lived longer.

Shri Anil Shastri, son of late Lal Bahadur Shastri, former Union Minister and Chairman of the Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute flanked His Holiness on the dais, along with the board of governors of the Institute.

His Holiness expressed admiration at the greatness of India's ancient tradition which he said was reflected in its profound scholarship on the workings of human mind and emotions and its very secular approach.

"India is the world's most populous democracy, with vibrant religious co-existence and harmony. It is wonderful and an example to the rest of the world. Ancient India paid great emphasis on inner well being. For over 3000 years, the great masters have studied and produced fuller knowledge of mind, emotion and how to tackle the emotions," he said.

His Holiness averred that Buddha is a product of the Indian tradition. "One of the unique discovery of Buddha is Anatman. In ancient India, there were study and investigation of what is self and where is self. Such thoughts show the greatness of ancient India".

"The crisis we are facing today is an emotional one. The real troublemaker is our destructive emotions; we are facing this problem at the global level, national, community and individual level. And this is where India can play a huge role," he stressed.

He alerted the students to pay attention to their own ancient knowledge and

not be content with existing education. "Modern Indian students, you should not be content with existing education. Even if you become a doctor or attain a Ph.D., you are still a being with emotions so you have to know how to deal with it".

He further argued that modern education is not adequate to bring inner peace.

"Modern knowledge of science and technology combined with ancient Indian knowledge on workings of mind and emotions can guarantee a happier and more peaceful world".



His Holiness the Dalai Lama addresses the 2018 Convocation of Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, Dwarka, New Delhi, 23 April 2018. Photo/Tenzin Phende/DIIR

"You, the younger generation of India, have the responsibility to combine modern education including science, technology with ancient India's own knowledge about mind, emotion and most importantly, how to tackle these emotions strictly the secular way," he told the crowd of graduates.

"Ancient Indian knowledge is not only ancient but relevant to today's world. The time has come to think of how to utilise your education more effectively for happier India, and a happier world".

In between, His Holiness asked the students, "What do you like better, angry face or smiling face?" The students replied in unison that they liked smiling faces.

He explained to them how scientists had proved that the basic human nature was more compassionate.

"Young children, six months, four months old, smile at each other. Compassion comes to a child from his mother. Our very life starts with mother's love and care. Warmheartedness has a positive influence on our physical health. Constant anger is eating our immune system," he continued.

"If its possible, we should put anger in trash-bin. But realistically, through training of the mind, we can really get control of our emotions and create loving kind human beings".

"Our own experience shows that we appreciate love and kindness. Constant anger and fear are eating our immune system. It is the duty of our educational system to further that basic nature of compassion so that the world has hope," he concluded.

In his address, Anil Shastri, son of late Lal Bahadur Shastri, former Union Minister and Chairman of the Institute recalled the numerous occasions where he received His Holiness' blessings.

"His Holiness talks about compassion as he believes it is through compassion that the world can be transformed into a better place. The whole world is talking about peace today, but there doesn't seem to be peace anywhere. But, it is through compassion, as His Holiness puts it that there could be everlasting peace only through compassion," he said.

Tomorrow, His Holiness will give a public talk on Need to Revive and Regain the Lost Spiritual and Cultural Heritage that Originated in This Nation in the morning organised by Velocity 48 at the IIT Delhi Auditorium.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama Talks Happiness and Stress-free Life at IIT Delhi

His Holiness the Dalai Lama delivered the keynote address titled 'Happiness and Stress-free Life' at Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi on Tuesday. The talk, organised by Velocity 48.

Students of Indian Institute of Technology, faculty, invited guests numbering over 1500 filled the IIT auditorium.

Prof V Ramgopal Rao, Director of IIT, Ms Parul, Velocity 48, Ms Tisca Chopra, Indian actress and author of 'Acting Smart' were among the dignitaries presiding the event.

Speaking on how to achieve happiness and stress-free life, His Holiness said self-centered attitude is the key factor influencing destructive emotions and causing chain of anxiety in our daily experiences.

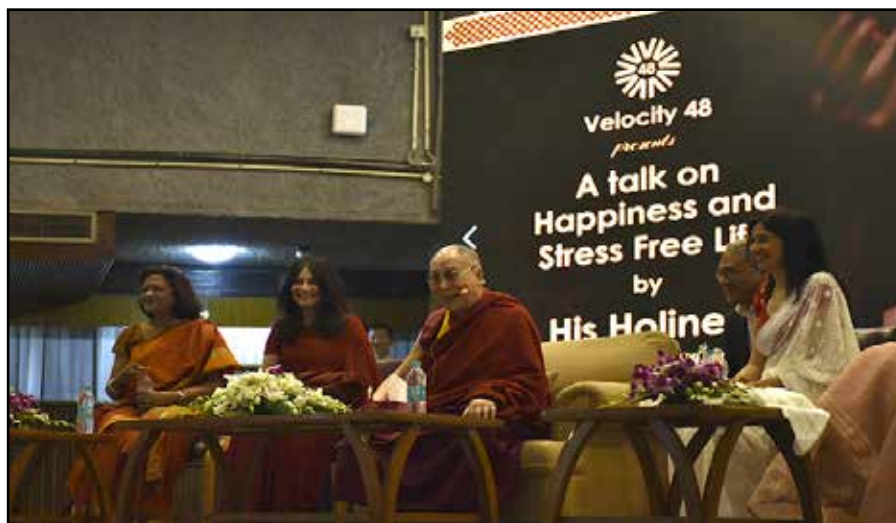
"Just explore and utilise basic human nature and that is compassion. Entire 7 billion humanity have same nature for compassion. The antidote is altruism. Utilise your intelligence and with that, explore your warmheartedness. That's the key," the peace icon said.

"With the spirit of oneness of all 7 billion humanity, recognise other's wellbeing more important than your own. Animals survive only on the sensorial level of experiences but as human beings, we have unique brain, language, and intellect. Biologically this human brain is marvellous, and combined with warmheartedness, we can realise true happiness and wellbeing".

He said a person who lacks warmheartedness and sense of concern for others can never be a happy human being.

"Individual future depend on 7 billion humanity. The others are source of your own survival and also a source of happiness," he told the students.

His Holiness further remarked that



women have a special role in promoting and further strengthening the spirit of love, kindness and compassion.

"Now the time has come to promote human compassion and love in our world, in that respect, women have a special role. It is very important. Biologically, females have more potential and sensitivity towards other's wellbeing," he said, adding that the former Irish President Mary Robinson referred to him as the feminist Dalai Lama.

His Holiness observed that the world is facing an array of crisis, mainly due to a deficit of moral principles and failure of modern education.

He added that India must take leadership in promoting holistic education that nourishes both human intellect and inner wellbeing. "Modern education needs to incorporate non-violence and compassion, as well as a broad understanding of the workings of the mind and emotions. Just as we have learned to maintain physical hygiene, we also need to cultivate a similar hygiene of the emotions to ensure a healthy mind and body. I believe that only India can combine ancient India's knowledge of the mind and emotions with materialistic modern education".

Iterating his lifelong commitment

to revive ancient Indian wisdom in contemporary India, His Holiness said, "I feel India can make a certain contribution to world peace, dealing with emotions. World peace can never come through war but through peace of mind. In that respect, India's knowledge of dealing with emotions is the ultimate source".

In his response to a student's question on how to cope with the loss of dear ones, His Holiness shared his experience of losing his main tutor Kyabje Ling Rinpoche. "When my tutor Kyabje Ling Rinpoche passed away, I felt that I had lost someone who was like a solid rock, my main teacher. At that moment, I tried to translate my feeling of sadness into my strength by thinking that now I had the responsibility to fulfill his wish. With such motivation, one's sadness transforms into determination and strength.

"Of course you will experience sadness, but that should be translated into determination to fulfill the wish of the person."

In his hour-long interaction with the students, His Holiness time and again reminded them to use human intellect fully and analyse situations with the right attitude and to strengthen our basic quality of love and compassion.

After 100 hours in Tibet, I knew it was Time to Leave

By Pico Iyer, BBC



In time, like space, a curious mathematics often takes hold. The fewer things you have in your memory, the more space each one has to reverberate inside you. A brief trip can be like an empty room in a Japanese tea house: if there's nothing there but a single scroll, that scroll becomes the universe. Sometimes, I've found, it's only by keeping an outer journey short that you can make the inner journey that follows echo across a lifetime.

I wasn't thinking any of this consciously when my plane from the Chinese city of Chengdu touched down on a deserted airstrip miles from Lhasa, the longtime capital of Tibet, in September 1985. The opposite: I was a kid in his 20s playing hooky from my 25th-floor office in Midtown Manhattan, where I was writing articles on world affairs for Time magazine. I'd managed to escape from my office on a six-month leave of absence, and soon after arriving in China, I'd become aware that Tibet was now open to foreigners, really for the first time ever.

I'd first gone to see the Dalai Lama in his Indian home in Dharamsala as a teenager – thanks to my philosopher father, who'd met the Tibetan leader months after he came into exile in 1959 – and I'd been following the situation there from afar. But now the government in Beijing had

opened Tibet up to foreign tourists, and I couldn't resist the prospect of being part of the first wave of visitors.

As I stepped out into the thin air, however – the air so shockingly blue – I wondered if I'd succumbed to one Shangri-La myth too many. The few other foreigners on the unsteady Chinese commercial carrier looked like renegades: scarf-swathed adventurers; pantalooned ne'er-do-wells; scientists in cowboy hats on missions they refused to disclose. Our congregation of the curious was herded towards a battered bus, and very soon we were jolting across roads and over streams on a journey to Lhasa that never seemed to end.

There were few signs of what I thought of as civilisation along the road: only some small statues outside of caves and Buddhas painted in dazzling colours on the rocks. Occasionally we passed a pilgrim, grimy with hundreds of days of travel, joining his palms before him and then falling into the dust, again and again, in a devotional three-part prostration of prayer. When at last we pulled into a ragged courtyard, the 'City of the Sun' disclosed itself as a little town of whitewashed houses gathered around the ancient Barkhor market area, with flower boxes golden under deep blue skies, worn prayer flags flapping under white open rooftops.

I knew a bit about Tibet, I thought. I'd devoured such classic works as *In Exile from the Land of Snows* and *Seven Years in Tibet*. I'd once even dragged 16 colleagues from Time's World Affairs section down to the dingy basement of the now-defunct Tibetan Kitchen restaurant on New York's Third Avenue to school them in Himalayan realities. But what I saw now was nothing like what I'd read about in Alexandra David-Néel's mystical account, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*.

Men were circling around the main square in front of the Jokhang Temple, muttering under their breath, 'Dalai Lama. Dalai Lama', in the hope that a foreigner might slip them a contraband photo of their exiled leader. Undercover policemen roamed here and there across the plaza. Everywhere, nomadic Golok women in green bowler hats, huge Khampa warriors with red thread in their long hair and purple-cheeked kids by their side were circumambulating the temple, spinning prayer-wheels as they walked, while workers sang folk songs as they laboured to restore crumbling buildings.

I'd read, back in Midtown, about a new hotel on the far side of town, so I trudged along to it, hoisting a suitcase almost bigger than I was. When I arrived, it was to find what might have been a spectre's hospital of empty rooms, an oxygen tank beside every bed. I turned around and started padding back – no-one had told me about altitude sickness. Brilliantly smiling yak herders shouted things at me I couldn't understand. Scratchy country-and-Eastern music – nomad songs delivered by a single bare voice against a single plucked string – crackled out of cassettes in roadside stalls. Tibet was so undiscovered then that it offered scant footing for a foreigner.

At last I saw what looked like some Europeans marching along the main drag, and I slipped into the dark entrance that they'd emerged from. 'Banak Shol

Hotel, Happiness Road', read the sign. A young Tibetan with a smattering of English told me I could have a room for \$2 a night. A room was all it was: a large bare mattress with a straw pillow, and no space even to move. A filthy shared toilet lay at the end of the outdoor corridor; a rusty tap in the courtyard below offered water.

I teetered my way up a steep wooden ladder, dropped my suitcase off in my dark, airless chamber, then went out again and slipped through a labyrinth of muddy alleyways to the Jokhang (which only a few weeks ago erupted in flames). In front of it, monks and nomad women, tiny toddlers and their grandmothers, were performing three-part prostrations as, I'd see, they did from dawn to midnight. When I entered the temple, I could catch little by the dim light of flickering candles. But soon I could register tears streaming down the roughest Tibetan cheeks as petitioners shuffled forwards, past one god of compassion and wisdom after another, stunned to have attained at last the holiest place in their holy city.

Next morning I travelled out to Ganden, once one of the largest monasteries in the world. Now it was just a jumble of broken stones. Three red-robed monks enjoying a picnic in the dirt waved me down to join them in salted yak-butter tea and rough bread. On the bus back, a fist fight broke out as a group of Tibetans gathered around a lone Chinese, a reminder of how even the occupiers were at times a victim of their circumstances. After night fell, I noticed that the whole small town sat under the protective gaze of the 13-storey Potala Palace up above, only a few lights gleaming from its more than 1,000 rooms.

In the pre-dawn dark the next day, I walked for an hour away from the buildings, past the yak-hair tents of nomads, solitary candles outside them, until I arrived at a faraway crag where sturdy Tibetans were engaging in a grisly ritual practice: chopping up a fresh human corpse, in the traditional way, to feed to birds of prey. It felt somehow like an invasion – a holy rite being devoured by us uncomprehending tourists – and

yet not to see a 'Sky Burial' seemed a kind of sacrilege.

In the afternoon, I went out to Sera and Drepung monasteries, recalling the stories my professor father had told me of their skull-filled murals and ritual debating with 20,000 in attendance. At this moment, there were mostly dogs seated patiently in courtyards and a handful of young novice monks asking to play with my camera.

Finally, on my third morning in the city, I made the long climb along a zigzagging path to the Potala. Following a group of Tibetans to a dark booth in the first courtyard, I parted with a few pennies to purchase two religious scrolls swarming with deities and visions of the universe. I went up into rooms through which shafts of high sunlight were streaming, as monks sat in corners between red and golden curtains, reading from the sutras. There were statues and treasure halls at every turn; women were bowing to receive blessed water from monks amid relics of the nine Dalai Lamas who had lived there.

Pilgrims to Lhasa pray from dawn to midnight, often while spinning prayer-wheels Pilgrims to Lhasa pray from dawn to midnight, often while spinning prayer-wheels (Credit: Keith Levit/Getty Images)

At one point I stepped out onto a whitewashed terrace to look across the valley to the mountains, which were dusted with fresh snow. The sky was cobalt, and everything came to me with a sharp, zoom-lens immediacy. I couldn't say why, I couldn't say how, but somehow, as I stood there, I felt not just on the 'rooftop of the world' mentioned in all the brochures, but on the rooftop of my being – some clearer, stronger state of mind I didn't recognise.

These were days of heaven I would never know again

Maybe it was the thin air. Maybe culture shock or the accumulated weariness of the succession of flights and the bumpy bus ride. Certainly, I wasn't eager to feel anything special in the land that so many associate with otherworldly transports. I

recalled how Sir Francis Younghusband, the British soldier who led a murderous expedition on the city in the winter of 1904, had gone for a long ride on his last afternoon in Lhasa. Whatever he experienced there was so strong that he doffed his soldier's uniform, returned to Europe and became one of the century's most fervent peace campaigners.

In my 20s, I was foolish enough to believe that you fashioned yourself by not thinking what other people thought, and defined yourself by everything you thought you could see through. As a hard-headed journalist for Time, I considered myself averse to clichés. But as I stood in that high, clear light, transported almost in spite of my best efforts, I made a promise to myself as never before or since. I would leave two days later, after only 100 hours in Tibet, so that my stay in Lhasa would always make a clear whole in my head. These were days of heaven I would never know again, so I'd depart as soon as possible and keep the interlude forever distinct in my head.

I'm embarrassed at who I was in my 20s now, so quick to pass judgment, so hemmed in by schoolboy scepticisms. But in that one moment my instincts were true. I left Lhasa after only four days, and, 33 years on, every hour of that stay feels as picked out as a solitary canvas in an enormous banquet hall. I've returned to the Tibetan capital more than once, I've spent years travelling across Bhutan and Ladakh and Nepal, as well as at similarly displacing altitudes in Bolivia and Peru. But I was right: what I felt that moment, I've never felt again.

Now, as I sit at my desk and take the trip once again, I'm reminded how it's always in an empty room that I feel fullest. Part of the challenge of any outer journey, especially when exalted, is having the courage to know when to cut it short, if only so that the inner journey can – and will – remain alive, distinctive and whole, forever.

Pico Iyer is the author of many books on travel, most recently *The Art of Stillness* and *The Man Within My Head*.

Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen willing to meet Xi Jinping 'for peace and stability'

Agence France-Presse

Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen said on Friday she would be willing to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping "for peace and stability" in the wake of a landmark summit between the leaders of the two Koreas.

Relations between Taiwan and the mainland have deteriorated since Tsai came to power in May 2016. Beijing still sees the self-ruling island as part of its territory awaiting reunification, by force if necessary.

Beijing is deeply suspicious of Tsai's traditionally pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party, and has cut off official communications with Taipei as the Taiwanese president refuses to accept that the island is part of "one China".



When asked on Friday if she would consider meeting Xi given the way the inter-Korean summit unfolded, Tsai appeared to offer an olive branch to China and said her government "would be willing to do anything that is helpful for ... peace and stability".

A meeting with the mainland leader could take place "without any political precondition and on an equal footing", she added.

Under those principles, "I believe no Taiwanese leader would refuse," she told reporters.

Tsai said she hoped the summit between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and the North's leader Kim Jong-un

would be a step towards greater regional stability.

Commenting on the Korea summit, the foreign ministry in Taipei said Taiwan "is willing to actively contribute to and work with the international community to promote the realisation of peace, stability and prosperity in the region".

Tsai's Beijing-friendly predecessor Ma Ying-jeou oversaw an unprecedented thaw in Beijing-Taiwan relations during his 2008-16 presidency, which culminated with a historic 2015 meeting with Xi in Singapore.

Ma's government acknowledged the so-called "1992 consensus" that there is only "one China" without specifying whether Beijing or Taipei is its rightful representative. The mainland has repeatedly urged Tsai to adopt the same position.

Beijing has recently stepped up pressure on her government with a string of air and naval exercises around the island, including live-fire drills in the Taiwan Strait last week.

It has also used its clout to isolate the island, luring away its diplomatic allies and blocking it from attending major international events.

Mainland officials said the drills were conducted to safeguard China's territorial sovereignty and warned that they would take further action if Taiwan's "(pro) independence forces continue to wantonly take rash actions".

This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as: Tsai prepared to meet Xi 'for peace and stability' in wake of Korea

For detailed news visit:
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Dalai Lama writes to Telangana priest appreciating his gesture



Buddhist spiritual leader Dalai Lama has on Friday written to the Chilkur Balaji Temple Archaka CS Rangarajan appreciating his gesture of carrying a dalit devout — Aditya — on his shoulder into the temple in Jiyaguda, last week.

In his letter to Rangarajan, Dalai Lama applauded his actions saying: "I was moved by your statement that you wanted to show people that everyone is equal in the eyes of god".

The Dalai Lama in the letter that saluted CS Rangarajan's gestures, which exhibited equality. He also said that the action is encouraging for many and hoped that the example set by the priest would contribute to strengthening the society and inspiring many.

The spiritual leader who has been residing in India for nearly six decades now, said that he felt proud of India's secularism and its unity in diversity.

CS Rangarajan, the Chilkur Balaji Temple priest on April 17 broke several long-standing taboos by carrying an SC devout on his shoulder into the temple amid chants by several other priests. By doing so the priest sent out a strong message opposing oppression of dalits.

Rangarajan said "This is the re-enactment of a 2,700-year old incident. It is being done to re-establish the greatness of Sanatana Dharma and to propagate equality among all sections of the society".

The gesture has been drawing praise from all around the county.

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Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India
Email: sheja_editor@tibet.net
Web: www.bod.asia

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

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241 E. 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016
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Department of Information & International
Relations, Dharamshala-176 215, HP, India
Email: chinadesk@tibet.net
Web: www.xizang-zhiye.org
www.tibetonline.tv



TIBETAN BULLETIN

Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

INDIA

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

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

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

NEPAL

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

UNITED STATES

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

BRAZIL

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

SWITZERLAND

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

JAPAN

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

UNITED KINGDOM

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

FRANCE

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

BELGIUM

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

AUSTRALIA

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

RUSSIA

Tibet Culture & Information Centre,
Korn # 110, POB # 7, St. Bolshaya 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
Email: rep.tw@tibet.net/www.tibet.org.tw

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



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QUOTES

“The crisis we are facing today is an emotional one. The real troublemaker is our destructive emotions; we are facing this problem at the global level, national, community and individual level. And this is where India can play a huge role,” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during an addresses at Convocation of Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management on 1 January 2018

“Now the time has come to promote human compassion and love in our world, in that respect, women have a special role. It is very important. Biologically, females have more potential and sensitivity towards other’s wellbeing,” His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh during audience at his residence on 1 February 2018

“In less than five years there has been an influx of 25,000 ethnic Chinese migrants into Gongkar district alone in Lhoka and have taken over most of the local business and employment opportunities. If such is the case in a small district like Gongkar, it is unimaginable to think of the situation in cities such as Lhasa, Tsethang, Shigatse, and Chamdo. Chinese government often speaks of development and investment in Tibet, but has never revealed the data of Chinese migration and settlement in the 74 districts in TAR and other parts of Tibet.” Such demographic dominance is the root cause of resistance and instability in Tibet.” President Dr Lobsang Sangay in the official statement of Kashag on 10 March 2018

“It is impossible for the people of the Snowland (Tibet), through generation after generation, to ever forget that tragic moment in their nation’s history. This day is also being observed, at the same time, as the Martyr’s Day in commemoration of all the heroic men and women of Tibet for their patriotism and sacrifices. And so, on this occasion, we offer our gratitude and solemn remembrance to the martyred men and women of Tibet for their valor and sacrifices for the sake of the religious, political and ethnic causes of the Tibetan nation.” Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel in the official statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 10 March 2018
