



Tibet News

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The Newsletter of the **Tibet Information Office** for Australia, New Zealand & South East Asia

CTA Releases White Paper on Self-Immolations

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay releases the first publication of the Tibet Policy Institute on the fundamental reasons for the increasing number of self-immolations in Tibet.

WHY TIBET IS BURNING

2 February 2013

DHARAMSALA, 28 January, 2013:

THIS WHITE PAPER EXAMINES the underlying causes of the increasing number of self-immolations that are currently engulfing Tibet. The Central Tibetan Administration has made many appeals to the Tibetans in Tibet to desist from self-immolation. Despite the Central Tibetan Administration's repeated appeals to stop the self-immolations, unfortunately the numbers of Tibetans setting themselves ablaze are adding up at an alarming rate and frequency. All Tibetans who have set themselves ablaze have called for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his homeland and freedom for Tibet. What are the causes which drive Tibetans to such acts of extreme desperation?

The reason lies in China's massive policy failure in Tibet over the course of more than 60 years of its rule. The revolution that is brewing in Tibet is driven by political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination, economic marginalisation

and environmental destruction. 98 Tibetans so far, most of them in their teens and early twenties, have set themselves ablaze. According to Chinese communist propaganda, this is the generation that was supposed to have benefitted most from Chinese rule in Tibet. Clearly, though, China's spectacular policy failure in Tibet has totally alienated the new generations of Tibetans and they express this alienation by asserting their loyalty to His Holiness the Dalai Lama whom they have not seen in their entire their lives and who has not set foot in Tibet for more than 50 years.

China's failure to solve the fundamental problem of its rule in Tibet was foreseen in the early days of Chinese rule in Tibet by eminent Tibetan leaders working within the Chinese communist establishment. As far back as the early 1960's, these Tibetan leaders strongly decried Chinese communist rule. In an act of unprecedented courage and boldness, the late 10th Panchen Lama presented a 70,000-character petition addressed to the top Chinese leaders, which, though diplomatically worded, amounted to

an accusation of China committing cultural genocide in Tibet. This blistering critique of the nature of Chinese rule in Tibet cost the Panchen Lama dearly. Mao Zedong called the Tibetan leader "our class enemy" and denounced his 70,000-character petition as a "poisoned arrow." He was "struggled", sometimes violently, and subjected to imprisonment and solitary confinement for many years. When he was released from confinement in the aftermath of the death of Mao Zedong, the Panchen Lama rebounded, and in 1989, stated that Tibet had lost more than it gained under Chinese communist rule. He made these comments only a few days before his mysterious and untimely death.

Arjia Rinpoche, the abbot of Kumbum Monastery in Tibet, held many important posts in the Chinese Buddhist Association. In 1998, when increasing pressure was exerted on him to recognise the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama, he fled to America. "Modern Chinese history," he says, "can be characterised as a 'Tale of Three Fish.'

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Tibet Motion Passed in Australian Senate

21 March 2013

CANBERRA: SENATOR SARAH HANSON-YOUNG from the Greens party moved a motion on Tibet in the upper house of the Australian Parliament.

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

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

(a) address the underlying causes of

tension in Tibetan regions;

(b) end the use of harsh policies, such as increased surveillance and violent crack downs, which have only exacerbated the security situation in Tibetan areas;

(c) lift restrictions on access to Tibetan regions, including for international media and diplomats; and

(d) resume substantive talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives to prevent the situation deteriorating further. ■



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Photo: Senator Sarah Hanson-Young speaking at a Tibet rally outside Parliament House in Canberra, Australia, on 18 March 2013/Photo/Senator Sarah Hanson-Young facebook page



Tibet News

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Taiwan is still swimming in the ocean. No one has caught that fish – at least not yet. Hong Kong is alive but on display in a Chinese aquarium. Tibet, the third fish, is broiled and on the table, already half devoured: its language, its religion, its culture and its native people are disappearing faster than its glacial ice.”

The late Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, one of the most prominent Tibetans who had worked with the Chinese communist establishment and was considered one of the national leaders of the People’s Republic of China, said at a party congress many years ago that the dearest wish of all old Tibetans was to see the Dalai Lama before their death. This would fulfill all their fondest hopes.

This universal wish of the Tibetan people was reiterated by Baba Phuntsog Wangyal, the founder of the Tibetan Communist Party, in one of the several letters he addressed to the top Chinese leaders on the issue of Tibet. “Therefore, most people in Kham, in (Central Tibet) Tibet and Amdo miss their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, from the bottom of their hearts. They trust and rely on him and ask him to grant favour to them and pray for them.”

Many Tibetan intellectuals and cadres who work in the communist establishment in Tibet make their judgment of Chinese communist rule in these terms: “In the first 10 years (1950-60) we lost our land (i.e. communist China invaded Tibet). In the second 10 years (1960-70) we lost political power (the government of old Tibet was replaced by the communist establishment). In the third 10 years (1970-1980) we lost

our culture (the Cultural Revolution destroyed Tibet’s traditional beliefs). In the fourth 10 years (1980-90) we lost our economy (Chinese settlers took over the job market in Tibet).”

This stark judgment of Chinese rule in Tibet describes the reasons that drive so many young Tibetans in Tibet to self-immolation. Daily, they see and experience China’s constant assault on Tibetan Buddhist civilization, Tibetan language and their very identity. They strongly resent the Chinese communist party’s active interference in their spiritual life, including the attempt to appoint Tibetan spiritual leaders. They resent to the core of their being China’s demonization of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the policy of forcing monks to denounce him. They look on with alarm and fear as Chinese settlers stream into Tibet, taking away Tibetan jobs, land and their very future—and in the process, transforming Tibetan towns and cities into so many Chinatowns. They resent the forced removal of nomads from the grasslands, away from their animal herds and their source of livelihood, and settling them on permanent housing structures, which bring no income, and reduce formerly self-sufficient families to impoverishment.

At the same time the Tibetan people see massive development activities undertaken on their land that bring little or no benefit to them and aimed, instead, to cart away Tibetan natural resources to a resource-hungry China. In fact the policies of the Chinese communist party demonstrate to the Tibetan people that China wants Tibet but not the Tibetan people. ■

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates the New Pope

14 March 2013

DHARAMSHALA: APPRISED OF THE ELECTION OF A NEW POPE this morning, His Holiness the Dalai Lama lost no time in writing to him to express his congratulations.

“May I offer you my greetings and sense of joy on your historic election as the Pope.”

Acknowledging the new pontiff’s historic choice of name, he wrote:

“Although I am not very familiar with many Catholic saints, I do know about St Francis, having visited Assisi and attended inter-religious gatherings there. His discipline, the simplicity of his way of life and his love for all creatures are

qualities that I find deeply inspiring. I am moved to know that his is the name you have chosen for your papacy.”

Recalling his cordial meetings with Pope Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI and other Christian brothers and sisters, His Holiness looked forward to meeting the new leader of the Roman Catholic Church:

“I am very pleased to have met and enjoyed friendly conversations with your immediate predecessors and, for the last forty years or so, have participated in fruitful exchanges with my Christian brothers and sisters. I hope that I may have the honour of calling on you too sometime in the near future.” ■

Second Tibetan Youth Workshop at Maitripa Centre

23 January 2013

A TIBETAN YOUTH WORKSHOP on "Energetic Youth – Mindful Tibetans" was held at Maitripa Centre near Healesville, Victoria from 19 to 22 January, 2013. This is the second such workshop organized by Tibet Information Office (TIO) for the Tibetan youth with participants coming from different parts of Australia and New Zealand for this three-day workshop.

The topics of the workshop were Buddhism as an Art of Living presented by Samdup Tsering, President of Tibetan Community of Victoria, Essence of Tibetan Culture by Kasur Choepal Tsering, Overview of the Tibetan History by Dr. Sonam Thakchoe, Tasmania University, Introduction on Tibetan Traditional Festival by Ngawang Topchen, former TCV School Tibetan teacher, Introduction to Central Tibetan Administration by Sonam Dagpo, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai

Lama, Democratisation in Tibetan Society by Kasur Choepal Tsering, Introduction on Tibetan Settlements in Exile by Ngodup Gyaltzen, Secretary, TIO, Knowing About the Situation in Tibet by Ms. Dadon, Chinese Liaison Officer, TIO, Impact of Tibet's Environment by Gabriel Lafitte, Sustainable Futures for the Tibetan Plateau. The discussions concluded with interactive question and answer session.

Group discussions on How to Maintain Tibetaness Among the Youth, How to Build Strong Network of Tibetan Youth in Australia and New Zealand, Political Lobbying on Tibet Lobby Day, Effective Strategy to Engage in Dialogue with Chinese were held. These engaging group discussions were moderated by Kasur Paljor Tsering, Tenpa Dugdak, Ms. Tsering Kyinzom, Australia Tibet Council and Dr. Sonam Thakchoe. The discussions within the participants were constructive and it was an



Group photo of the participants and resource persons at Maitripa Buddhist Centre

educational experience. Tenzin Yeshe, former Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts taught the participants lively Tibetan folk dances and documentary films on Tibet were shown in the evening. ■

Report by Kunga Chodar Dagpo



Tenzin Yeshe singing traditional Tibetan song at the festival

23 January 2013, BRISBANE: SITUATED ON THE BANKS of the Brisbane River, the Powerhouse Museum showcased a celebration of all things Tibetan as host to the fifth annual Festival of Tibet. Tibet's rich culture was presented through film, song, dance and art over five days, opening on 30 January with the film *Olo, The boy from Tibet*. The Japanese production was a fitting way to open the festival, recounting the touching story of a young boy who having fled Tibet longs for his homeland. This story is one shared by many students of the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) in India whose good works will be supported by the proceeds raised during the festival.

In previous years notable Tibetans have been invited to headline the Festival, including TCV founder Jetsun Pema and writer activist Tenzin Tsundue. This year saw Tibet's State Oracle, the Venerable Thubten Ngodrup, enthralled a sold out Powerhouse Theatre on the Festival's second night. The Oracles have for centuries been advisors to the

Festival of Tibet at Brisbane

Tibetan Government and the Dalai Lamas, acting as a medium between the human and spiritual realms. During each day the Powerhouse was visited by hundreds who attended meditation workshops, Thangka painting classes, photography exhibitions and Tibetan folk singing and dancing lessons. Tenzin Yeshe singing traditional Tibetan song at the festival

Some of the most well attended events were the free talks held on the Saturday. The morning panel discussion was an engaging exploration of the relevance of Gandhi's non-violent strategy and philosophies in the modern world. The panelists were His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Representative Sonam Dagpo, Greens Senator Larissa Waters, the ATC's Kyinzom Dhongdue and Tibetan activist and film maker Tenpa Dugdak. The talk concluded with the several hundred audience members engaging in an enthusiastic Q&A session. The stage was then vacated for an equally well received talk on Buddhism by Geshe Lobsang Jamyang from the Chenrezig Institute.

Festival organizer and TCV alumnus, Tenzin Choegyal, is a traditional Tibetan musician whose collaborations with Japanese, Indian and western artists have garnered him a global following. Choegyal called on these partnerships for the concert line ups, bringing together artists as diverse as the Camerata of St John's Chamber Orchestra and Japanese Indian Classical musician Taro Terahara.

The final night's concert opened with a

rousing speech by one of the Festivals major sponsors, Salvatore Bataglia. Sal emphasized the vital role education and particularly TCV, has played in empowering the Tibetan people and praised the Festival attendees for continuing to support and grow the Festival in its fifth year. The night ended with the audience on its feet as the Orchestra played a specially composed classical version of the Tibetan national anthem. The anthem is banned in Tibet. The following morning the festival concluded with the dissolution of the Sand Mandala that had been constructed in the public area of the museum by Lama Khedup of the Gyuto Monks. ■

Report by Tsewang Thupten

THE 14th DALAI LAMA OF TIBET IN AUSTRALIA
BEYOND RELIGION
13th -23rd June 2013

tickets at dalailamaaustralia.org

Tibetans, Supporters and Chinese friends held rallies on the Tibet Advocacy Day in Australia

18 March 2013

CANBERRA: ON 18 MARCH, TIBETANS, Tibet supporters and Chinese friends from across Australia gathered on the lawns of the Parliament House in Canberra, to appeal to the elected politicians to listen to the voices of the 108 self-immolators and the millions of helpless Tibetans inside Tibet who continue to suffer under the Chinese Communist regime.

The event coordinated by Thupten Dhondup, President of the Australian Tibetan Community Association and hosted by Tsering Deki from Canberra started at the Chinese Embassy where the Tibetan Community and supporters demanded the Chinese government respect the basic rights of the Tibetan people. Nigan Gotsang, President of the Sydney Tibetan Community read a letter to the Chinese Ambassador - Mr Chen Yuming. The letter requested that the Chinese government enter into meaningful dialogue with the exiled Tibetan Leadership in India and to consider the Middle Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for Tibetans.

The protest at the Chinese Embassy was followed by a march to the Parliament House where a mass rally was held. Many Australians and Chinese friends of Tibet joined in the

protest and rally.

On the lawns of the Parliament House, the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Sonam Dagpo spoke on the current situation in Tibet and the need for the Australian Government's support for the Tibet cause.

Senator Sarah Hanson-Young addressed the gathering of Tibetans, Tibet supporters and large number of Chinese friends to call for human rights and urgent help to resolve the escalating crisis in Tibet.

Professor Hong Bing Yuan, an exiled Chinese Professor referred to the Tibetan people's self-immolation as a movement of freedom protesting against the Chinese Communist policy of cultural genocide.

Lhamo Tenzin, the President of the Canberra Tibetan Community appealed to the Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard to: make a strong public statement of concern over the situation in Tibet; renew efforts to send the Ambassador in Beijing and a parliamentary delegation to the Tibetan areas affected by the protests and urge China to allow foreign journalists unfettered access to all Tibetan areas; and join other concerned countries in intergovernmental forums dedicated to building



stronger international pressure on China to address the crisis in Tibet.

While the rally was being held outside the Australian Parliament House, a group of 12 young Tibetans from across Australia, led by the Australia Tibet Council met more than 40 parliamentarians and urged Australia to adopt a new policy on Tibet by joining forces with other governments. Australia Tibet Council petition signed by over 2500 Australians was tabled in the House of Representatives by Warren Entsch.

This rally was organised by the Australian Tibetan Community Association in partnership with the Canberra Tibetan Community. ■ *Report by Lhamo Tenzin*

Meetings with Remarkable Women



SYDNEY: I FIRST MET JOAN WILSON OA, in 2004, two years after I arrived in Australia. I still remember that day. We met in the supermarket, where I had been working in customer service and she greeted me with a heartfelt, 'Tashi Deleg' having seen the *Save Tibet* tattoo on my right forearm. We have kept in touch ever since that connection. Over the years, Joan introduced me to the tradition of Christmas and we shared an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama together with TFG members in India, 2005 and with Joan's late husband, Don—who had also been a true friend of Tibet.

Joan's voluntary work since the late 1960s for

Tibet in the form of humanitarian work has been a lifetime commitment which has generated and benefited hundreds, if not thousands of Tibetan children with their education and development. In the process, Joan's commitment has inspired many Tibetans and Australians alike to care for others. I have to say, I have a somewhat biased soft-spot for Joan, as she has supported the school where I grew up, Tibetan Homes School, Mussoorie, in Happy Valley India -- the first Tibetan boarding school established by His Holiness, when he arrived in exile in India.

Tibet work in Australia receives very little acknowledgement outside of our circle of supporters and interest groups, due to narrow political interest by the mainstream government, the media agenda and the realist dynamics of international relations.

Therefore, Australia's acknowledgement of Joan by honouring her with the Order of Australia in January, has possibly given more joy to the local Tibetans than to Joan herself—as this accolade is as much an acknowledgement of Tibet, as it is of Joan's individual and selfless efforts.

As the Tibetan community steadily grows in Australia, Joan is witnessing more visibly,

qualitative results of a lifetime of work that TFG and its members have cultivated, in what is essentially a relatively slow progressing movement in our fast-paced world. Gandhi ji called this a means to an ends.

We Tibetans feel, it has been a good investment Joan has made in the larger context of the Tibetan movement, with TFG and other Tibet support groups. It is also inspiring and admirable to see someone of Joan's maturity, her enthusiasm, energy and spirit after decades of Tibet work, the same level of endurance and joyous effort she maintains. I'm sure Joan has an endless energy supply, which only seems to multiply with age!

When I think of Joan Wilson, I think of someone who carries Tibet. Essentially she has been a walking advertisement for our Tibet -- carrying Tibet with her everywhere she goes, in body, speech and mind—in compassionate action -- always seeing the best in us Tibetans.

We have a Tibetan proverb, which says, "A child without an education is like a bird without wings!" We congratulate Joan Wilson on receiving the Order of Australia, I couldn't think of a more fitting honour, for she has helped many of us Tibetans grow our wings. ■

Report by Tenpa Dugdak

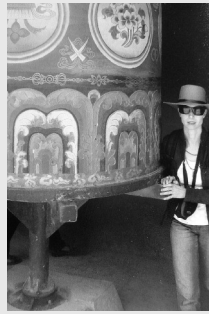
Photo: Tibetans and supporters take part in a rally to seek Australian government and parliament's support to resolve the issue of Tibet, in Canberra, Australia.

Tribute to Gabrielle Lane

This is a tribute to the life of an extraordinary woman

GABY LIVED WITH HER BELOVED SON in the Blue Mountains, and was a deeply valued member of *Sakya Trinley Ling*. She was a heart felt Tibetan Buddhist practitioner and dedicated her life towards the preservation of Tibetan culture and protection of human rights of the Tibetan people; through organizing fundraising stalls, political and cultural events and political and spiritual movie nights. Gaby was a valued participant at Regional Tibet Conferences in India, and travelled with her Vajra sisters to Tibet in 2007. Gaby also taught weekly Buddhist classes to the children of the Blue Mountains.

Gaby died young, aged 45, but did so much good in her life.



She had an awesome capacity to forge compassionate, loving connections with others in her personal life, dharma life, and work life as a Psychotherapist. The love people felt for Gaby was displayed in her last few months in hospital, where her room was overflowing with gorgeous Buddhist drawings from the children she had taught, and flowers from all who had known and loved her.

Gaby was beautiful and brave in the face of her imminent passing, and deeply embraced her Buddhist beliefs and practice. She was an inspiration of how one can live with integrity and meaning in the face of our worst fears. Gaby is deeply missed by her young son, her friends and family, and her Dharma sisters. ■

By Gaby's dharma sisters, Sakya Trinley Ling

INTERNATIONAL

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

China enforces Highly Repressive Policies in Tibet

4 February 2013

DHARAMSHALA: A PROMINENT HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATION has criticised the Chinese government for carrying out widespread secret arrests and torture of Tibetans in custody and authoritarian control over all judicial institutions.

The Human Rights Watch (HRW), in its World Report 2013 released Thursday, documented China's policies threatening the Tibetan people's socio-economic conditions and religious freedom.

HRW report said China's repressive measures in Tibet continued after its massive crackdown on popular protests that shook the region in 2008. "The situation in Tibet remained tense following the and the introduction of measures designed to place all Tibetan monasteries under the direct

control of government officials who will be permanently stationed there."

"As part of its drive to build "a New Socialist Countryside" on the Tibetan plateau, the government continues to implement large development programs mandating rehousing or relocating up to 80 percent of the rural population. The relocation policies have been carried out—contrary to Chinese government claims—with no effective choice and without genuine consultation of those affected, while compensation mechanisms are opaque and inadequate," the report said.

"Pastoralists deprived of their traditional livelihood face declining living standards and increased dependency on government subsidies," it added. The report further said, "Chinese security forces maintain a

heavy presence and the authorities continue to tightly restrict access and travel to Tibetan areas, particularly for journalists and foreign visitors," it said.

"Tibetans suspected of being critical of political, religious, cultural, or economic state policies are systematically targeted on charges of "separatism,"" it said.

"Chinese people had no say in the selection of their new leaders, highlighting that despite the country's three decades of rapid modernization, the government remains an authoritarian one-party system that places arbitrary curbs on freedom of expression, association, religion, prohibits independent labor unions and human rights organizations, and maintains party control over all judicial institutions," it said. ■

CTA Refutes Chinese Government's Allegation on Self-Immolations

13 March 2013

PRESS RELEASE: THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION would like to categorically reject the baseless allegations made by Padma Choling, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, that they have evidence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama providing money to encourage people to set themselves on fire. Choling made this allegation in Beijing last Friday.

One of the world's leading media organisation, *The New York Times*, recently reported that "Chinese officials in the past said the self-immolators were mentally unstable or blamed outside agitators.

Despite the accusations, Chinese officials have never provided evidence of any connection between the acts and the Dalai Lama or other Tibetan leaders in exile."

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on 20 November 2012 urged the Chinese authorities to promptly address the longstanding grievances that have led to an alarming escalation in desperate forms of protest, including self-immolations, in Tibetan areas.

"The blame and solution lies squarely with Beijing. Occupation and repression are the cause and reform is the solution. If the blame game continues and unless independent fact-finding delegations and the international media

are not allowed to visit Tibet to assess the real situation in Tibet, the international community, including the Chinese people, will view the Chinese government with deep scepticism. At the same time, we once again invite the Chinese authorities to Dharamshala to prove their allegations of our alleged role in the self-immolation," said Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Sikyong of the Central Tibetan Administration.

As life is precious, the Central Tibetan Administration has consistently discouraged self-immolations and any other forms of drastic actions. But the self-immolations persist. The self-immolators have called for freedom for Tibetans and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his homeland. The time has come for the international community to press the Chinese government to enter into dialogue to peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet. ■



Photo: Kalon Pema Chhinjor with Tibetans marking the 54th National Uprising Day in Melbourne, Australia, on 10 March 2013

11 March 2013

DHARAMSHALA: TIBETANS AND SUPPORTERS ACROSS THE WORLD organised rallies and prayer services to commemorate the 54th anniversary of Tibetan people's protest against the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet on 10 March.

Tibetan community and supporters living in Canberra, Sydney, Hobart, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Melbourne held protest rallies before the Chinese Embassy and Consulates.

Tibetans worldwide mark 54th National Uprising Day

Religion and Culture Kalon Pema Chhinjor presided over the commemoration of 54th Tibetan National Uprising Day in Melbourne on 10 March.

The function began with a minute's silence and prayer service in memory of all those Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet.

In his address, Kalon Pema Chhinjor said Tibetans living in the free world and Tibet supporters must redouble their efforts to let the world aware of the cries of Tibetans inside Tibet.

He spoke about the efforts made by the Central Tibetan Administration to seek genuine autonomy for Tibet, adding that the Chinese leadership must consider this reasonable demand. He said the issue of Tibet will not going to disappear.

Members of the Chinese-Tibetan Friendship Association, Tibet Support Groups, Vietnamese and Nagaland communities joined hundreds of Tibetans to mark the epochal moment in Melbourne. In his address, Mr Tsering Samdup, president of the local Tibetan association, urged the international community, including the UN and peace loving people, to stand up for the Tibetan self-immolators' genuine aspirations for freedom and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet.

In their speeches, the Tibetan supporters said the peace and freedom loving nations and people must persuade the Chinese government to find a lasting solution to the Tibet problem through dialogue. ■

Report by Samdup Tsering

US Congressional panel chairmen urge China to end repressive policies against Tibetans

19 March 2013

DHARAMSHALA: EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN OVER TIBETAN SELF-IMMOLATIONS, the chairmen of the bipartisan Congressional-Executive Commission on China have urged the Chinese government to end repressive policies against the Tibetan people and to resume a dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

"We hope for an end to these tragic self-immolations soon. The Chinese government can reduce tension, but not through its current policy of harsher regulations and heavier security," said Senator Sherrod Brown, Chairman of the Commission, said in a statement on 18 March.

"Ending policies that deny Tibetans their freedoms of expression, association, and religion, while showing greater tolerance for

cultural diversity, and resuming a dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives without preconditions would go a long way toward easing tensions," Senator Brown added.

"In recent years, Chinese officials have tightened controls on Tibetan Buddhism and monastic institutions, used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators, promoted resettlement and educational policies that have threatened and disrupted Tibetan culture and language, and closed Tibetan areas off to the outside world," said Congressman Chris Smith, Co-chairman of the Commission. "Reversing these policies and allowing international observers into the region would do much to alleviate the situation."

"This month marks five years since the start of mostly peaceful protests that swept across

the Tibetan plateau in March and April 2008 in opposition to Chinese policies that infringe on the culture, language, religion, and livelihood of Tibetans. Following the protests, policies that were already harsh have intensified," the statement noted.

"In a special report released in August 2012, the Commission noted how the self-immolations had spread geographically and from the Tibetan Buddhist monastic community to the lay population. The Commission continues to monitor the situation and issue periodic updates, the most recent issued on March 8."

Since 2009, 108 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet calling for freedom for Tibetans and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. 90 of them died. ■

Mr. Pema Chhinjor, Kalon for Religion and Culture visits Australia

15 March 2013

MR. PEMA CHHINJOR, KALON (Minister) for Religion and Culture of the Central Tibetan Administration visited Australia from 6 to 13 March. He met with the Tibetan Communities of Queensland, Victoria, Canberra and NSW and spoke to them on the policies and achievements of the New Kashag. He visited the Tibetan Buddhist Centres of Chenrezig, Tara Institute, Kagyu E-Vam Buddhist Centre, Drolkar Buddhist Centre, Tibetan Buddhist Society (Canberra), Rigpa Centre and

Vajrayana Institute in Sydney.

In Melbourne Kalon Pema Chhinjor participated and spoke on the commemoration of the 54th Tibetan National Uprising Day at the Federation Square on 10 March.

He joined the Tibetan Communities' participation in the Canberra Centenary celebrations on 11 March. On the invitation of the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, he briefed the members on the present



Kalon Pema Chhinjor addressing the Tibetan community Dee why, NSW

Kalon Pema Chhinjor was warmly received by the Tibetan Community leaders, heads of Tibetan Buddhist centres and teachers during the visit. ■



Historic show of support for Tibet from India's ruling and opposition parties

TIBETAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AT TALKATORA INDOOR STADIUM, NEW DELHI

JANUARY 30, 2013, DELHI: VARIOUS REPRESENTATIVES FROM INDIAN political parties gathered at the Talkatora indoor stadium where the inaugural ceremony of 'Tibetan People's Solidarity Campaign' was held. Over 5000 people, including 4500 Tibetans from India, Nepal and Bhutan and about 1000 Indian supporters from Delhi, NCR region and Ladakh were present at the function.

Shri L. K Advani, former Deputy Prime Minister graced the ceremony as the Chief Guest. Shri, Priya Dutt, MP and Dr. E.M Sudarsan Natchiappan, MP were official Congress party delegates. Shri Hassan Khan, MP represented National Conference.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Penpa Tsering, the Speaker of Tibetan Parliament in Exile said that this mass campaign is a 'first of its kind' and that it marks 'a historic moment for our struggle.'

He further remarked that 'If China is sincere in granting autonomy, then Tibet can play a positive role as a bridge of peace between the two most populous nations in South Asia-India and China.'

While expressing gratitude to the Indian Government and people, the speaker requested the delegates from the ruling

Congress party to 'remind China that resolving Tibetan issue is in the larger interest of Chinese people.'

The Sikyong (democratically elected political leader of Tibetan people) in his keynote address mentioned that the holding of this campaign in India's capital city stands as a 'testament to India's love and sympathy for Tibetans.'

Sikyong reiterated that 'freedom for Tibetans and return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet' remains the 'true aspiration of Tibetans inside Tibet and dream of Tibetans outside Tibet.' In his reasoning as to why Tibet deserves attention and support, Sikyong stated that 'Tibet stands as a catalyst and test for China' and that 'autonomy in Tibet will be the beginning of moderation for China.' Sikyong attributed the success of the Tibetan struggle to India, and expressed hope that Tibet could be made 'India's success story.' He concluded with a vision that 'Tibetans will one day go from the holy land of India to the holy city of Lhasa with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.'

Shri L.K Advani shared few excerpts from Sardar Patel's November 7, 1950 letter on Tibet addressed to the then Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Advani ji

admitted with conviction that 'a resolution between China and Tibet, will make the 21st Century - India's Century.' He lauded the 'Tibetan spirit' and assured that 'Tibetans will see the light of the day.' Advani ji concluded by saying that 'just as His Holiness the Dalai Lama always refers to India as Tibet's guru, we hope to match up to that expectations.'

Ms Priya Dutt, expressed 'concern and solidarity for Tibetans inside Tibet and paid homage to 99 young lives sacrificed in a struggle to regain identity.' She thanked the Tibetan people for the presence and blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in India.

Dr. Hassan Khan encouraged Tibetan people to persevere and said that 'the day will come soon for Tibetans to return to their homeland.'

Dr. E.M Sudarsan Natchiappan assured India's love and support for the Tibetan struggle and said that 'Tibetans are not just India's neighbors but also it's brothers and sisters.'

Ms. Dolma Gyari, Minister for Home, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) was the master of the ceremony and Mr. Tempa Tsering, Representative, Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama proposed the vote of thanks. ■

Statement of Sikyong on 54th Tibetan National Uprising Day

THE STATEMENT OF SIKYONG DR. LOBSANG SANGAY ON THE 54TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TIBETAN NATIONAL UPRISING DAY

10 March 2013

ON THIS DAY IN 1959, THOUSANDS OF TIBETANS from all walks of life and all three regions of Tibet (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) converged in Lhasa to resist and protest the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet. We are the children of this tragic yet historic moment in Tibet's rich, unique, 2,000-plus year history. Today, we are gathered here to re-dedicate ourselves to the brave struggle started by the selfless elder generation. We pay tribute to all those who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet. The yearning for freedom that moved our elders to undertake the epochal events of March 10, 1959 is a beacon that guides our present-day struggle to secure our basic freedom, dignity and identity.

The continuing vicious cycle of repression and resentment in Tibet is manifested in the

devastating number of Tibetans setting themselves on fire. Since 2009, 107 Tibetans have self-immolated including 28 in November 2012 just before and during the 18th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Sadly, 90 of them have died. Such a high toll is perhaps unprecedented in recent world history. Though most of the self-immolators are monks, their ranks include the full spectrum of Tibetans – nomads, farmers and students – from all three Tibetan regions of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo including the capital city of Lhasa. We dedicate this day to all the self-immolators and those who have died for Tibet.

The occupation and repression in Tibet by the government of the People's Republic of China are the primary conditions driving Tibetans to self-immolation. Tibetans witness and

experience China's constant assault on Tibetan Buddhist civilization, their very identity and dignity.

They deeply resent China's demonization of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They look on with alarm as Chinese settlers stream into Tibet, taking away Tibetan jobs, land and their very future—and in the process, transforming Tibetan towns and cities into Chinatowns. They oppose the forced removal of hundreds of thousands of nomads from the grasslands to permanent ghettos, reducing formerly self-sufficient families to impoverishment. They see colonial-like development activities cart away billions of dollars worth of Tibetan natural resources to a resource-hungry China. These policies could easily lead one to suspect that China wants Tibet but not the Tibetan people.



File photo/Tibet Today

Yet when Tibetans respond to these violations with even the slightest show of dissent, they risk prolonged imprisonment, torture, public humiliation and disappearance at the hands of security forces. The prohibition of peaceful protest and harsh punishments compel Tibetans to resort to self-immolation. They choose death rather than silence and submission to the Chinese authorities. Recent attempts by the authorities to criminalize self-immolators, and persecute their family members and friends through sham trials are likely to prolong the cycle of self-immolation, persecution, and more immolation.

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

The only way to end this brutal and grave situation is for China to change its current hard line Tibet policy by respecting the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

The Kashag is fully committed to the Middle Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for Tibetans, to solve the issue of Tibet. His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has shown this to be the most viable and enduring approach. After careful deliberations, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile unanimously adopted the Middle Way Approach. It is supported by Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, and has garnered the support of key foreign governments, world leaders, and Nobel laureates. It has, in particular, resonated and supported by a growing number of Chinese intellectuals, scholars and writers.

At this time, the Kashag hopes that the new Chinese leadership will view this pragmatic

political approach, which bridges both Tibetan and Chinese interests, as a win-win solution. In 2002, the resumption of dialogue gave hope to Tibetans for a peaceful resolution of the issue of Tibet. Unfortunately, this hope has been shaken by the present stalemate in the dialogue process. Tibet is not a constitutional or an institutional problem for the government of the People's Republic of China. As per Article 31 of the PRC Constitution, China has created a separate institutional mechanism of one country, two systems for Hong Kong and Macau. The Chinese leadership has also displayed the political will by forming a cabinet level committee to deal with Taiwan (Republic of China). However, when it comes to Tibet, the Chinese leadership has neither employed the available constitutional mechanism at its disposal, nor has it shown the political will to resolve the issue peacefully. From our side, we consider substance primary and process secondary, and are ready to engage in meaningful dialogue anywhere, at any time.

Finding a just and lasting solution to the issue of Tibet is also in the interest of the world at large. Tibet, one of the oldest civilizations is viewed as the Third Pole as its glaciers feed the 10 river systems of Asia. It will contribute to the peace and prosperity of over a billion people in Asia who live downstream and depend on Tibet's water for sustenance. A speedy resolution will send the right message and serve as a model for other freedom struggles as the Tibetan struggle is one firmly anchored in non-violence and democracy. Last, but not the least, solving the issue of Tibet could be a catalyst for moderation of China.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the great people and government of India. We are also immensely grateful to all governments, international organizations, Tibet Support Groups and individual supporters across the globe for their supportive resolutions, statements, and for their unflinching and generous support. At the same time, we believe

that the moment has come for governments and the international community to take concrete actions to press the Chinese government to enter into meaningful dialogue with the Tibetan leadership.

We call on the international community to press the Chinese government to allow the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights entry into Tibet, and also to give access to diplomats and the international media. Only in this way can the truth about the grave situation in Tibet be unveiled and the self-immolations abated.

The Kashag has announced 2013 as a year of Solidarity With Tibet Campaign. Each of our numerous events are organized peacefully, legally and with dignity. Thousands of Tibetans and Indian friends gathered in New Delhi on January 30 for a 4-day mass campaign organized by the Central Tibetan Administration. Many prominent Indian leaders representing various parties attended and pledged action for Tibet. Tibetans and friends in Europe today are holding The European Solidarity Rally for Tibet in Brussels. This month Tibetans in North America, Europe and elsewhere are organizing Tibet Lobby Days. The core message we request everyone to communicate are the three Ds: Devolution, Democracy and Dialogue.

The character of our people is being shaped by our endurance of the darkest period in Tibet's history. Under the enlightened leadership of His Holiness the great Fourteenth Dalai Lama, we continue to meet adversity with exceptional unity, resilience, and dignity. I fervently pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Kashag is uplifted and deeply gratified by the support and solidarity it has received from Tibetans inside and outside Tibet. With unity, self-reliance and innovation as the guiding principles, we are determined to fulfill the aspirations of all Tibetans to enjoy the freedom and dignity, which we deserve and is our right. Let me conclude by again paying homage to our brothers and sisters in Tibet. ■



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