

TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

JANUARY-APRIL 2011

DOCUMENTATION

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day

Pg-4

The Statement of Kashag on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan People's National Uprising Day

Pg-6

FEATURE

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's video-conference with Chinese activists

Pg-10

CHINA SPEAK

The way to resolve the Tibet issue

Pg-23

Tibetan Media

Sheja (official Tibetan monthly)
Department of Information & International
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India
Email: sheja_editor@tibet.net
Web: www.tibet.net/tb/sheja

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

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

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

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

**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: bdl@airtelbroadband.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

UNITED STATES

Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama,
1825 Jefferson Place, NW, Washington D.C.,
U.S.A. 20036 Tel: +1-202-785-1777
Fax: +1-202-785-3434 Email: lodigg@savetibet.org

**The Office of Tibet, 241 E. 32nd Street, New
York NY 10016, U.S.A. Tel: +1-212-213-5010,**
Fax: +1-212-779-9245 Email: otny@igc.org
Web: www.tibetoffice.org

**Liaison Officer for Latin America, 241 E. 32nd
Street, New York NY 10016, U.S.A. Tel: +1-212-
213-5010, Fax: +1-212-779-9245 Email:**
phunso@igc.org Web: www.tibetoffice.org

FRANCE

**Bureau Du Tibet, 84 BD Adolphe Pinard,
75014, Paris, France, Tel:+33-1-46-565-453,**
Fax:+33-1-41-170-014,
Email: tibetparis1@orange.fr
Web: www.tibet-info.net/bureau-tibet/

BELGIUM

**Bureau du Tibet 24 Avenue des Arts, 1000
Brussels, Belgium Tel: +32-2-280 4922**
Email: tibetbrussels@tibet.com

RUSSIA

**Tibet Culture & Information Centre,
Korn # 110, POB # 7
St. Bolshaya Novodmitrovskaya - 14 Moscow 127015,**
Russia Tel: +7-495-685-11-22 Fax: +7-495-685-11-32
Email: moscow.tibetcenter@gmail.com
Web: www.savetibet.ru

SWITZERLAND

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

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:**
tsetashi@tibet.com Web:www.tibet.com

JAPAN

**Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama,
Hayama Building No. 5(5F), 5-11-30
Shinjuku Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0022, Japan**
Tel: +81-3-3353-4094, Fax: +81-3-3225-
8013 E-mail: lohhd@tibethouse.jp
Web: www.tibethouse.jp

AUSTRALIA

**Tibet Information Office, 8/13 Napier Close,
Deakin, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia Tel:**
+61-2-6285-4046 Fax: +61-2-6282-4301
Email: tiboff@bigpond.com

NEPAL

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

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: otsa@officeofitibet.com
Website: www.officeofitibet.com

TAIWAN

**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: ottaiwan@ms75.hinet.net



TIBETAN BULLETIN NEEDS YOU

AN APPEAL

Tibetan Bulletin promotes awareness
and provides facts of the situation in
Tibet and Tibetans in exile. Published
bi-monthly and distributed free around
the world, we are looking to increase
our readership and improve the
Tibetan Bulletin with your kind help
and suggestions.

If you have enjoyed this issue and
would like to help achieve our aims of
dissemination of news and views about
Tibet, we would be most appreciative
of your donation.

Help us to publish your favourite
journal on Tibet.

Kindly address your donations to:

a) For Cheques and Drafts from
outside India: His Holiness the Dalai
Lama's Charitable Trust

b) For Cheques and Drafts from within
India: Tibetan Administrations Welfare
Society (TAWs)

c) For Money Order: Department of
Information and International
Relations

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ PostCode _____

Country: _____

Email: _____

POSTAL ADDRESS:

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

C O N T E N T S

www.tibet.net/en/tibbul

DOCUMENTATION

- 4 The Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day
- 6 The Statement of Kashag on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan People's National Uprising Day
- 8 The Statement of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile on the 52nd Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day

FEATURE

- 10 Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's video-conference with Chinese activists
- 12 Bless Tibetans, Free Tibet
By Hong Bing Yuan
- 14 Kalon Tripa Prof Samdhong Rinpoche's Address to the General Assembly of the Swiss-Tibetan Friendship Association

ENVIRONMENT

- 16 Consequences of China's policies on Tibetan pastoral nomads
By Tenzin Norbu

INTERVIEW

- 19 An interview with Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche

OBITUARY

- 22 Ven. Sangay Gyatso and Mr Dashi Tamdin

CHINASPEAK

- 23 The way to resolve the Tibet issue
By Zhang Boshu



TIBETAN BULLETIN

Tibetan Bulletin is an official bi-monthly journal of the Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.



Signed articles or quotations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Central Tibetan Administration. Contributions are welcome and may be addressed to the editor, *Tibetan Bulletin*. However the publisher regrets its inability to return unused articles unless they are accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage.

Tibetan Bulletin is distributed free of charge. To subscribe please email the circulation manager or see page 2.

Editor

Sherab Wooser
Email: tibbul@tibet.net

Layout & Design

Dorje Tsering

Circulation Manager

Tsering Ngodup
Email: circulation@tibet.net

Tibetan Bulletin is published by:

Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamshala- 176 215 H.P. India

Tel: +91-1892-222510 / 222457

Vol. 15, Issue 1
January - April 2011

REGULARS

Contact..... 2 Announcement.....31

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day

10 March 2011

Today marks the 52nd anniversary of the Tibetan people's peaceful uprising of 1959 against Communist China's repression in the Tibetan capital Lhasa, and the third anniversary of the non-violent demonstrations that took place across Tibet in 2008. On this occasion, I would like to pay tribute to and pray for those brave men and women who sacrificed their lives for the just cause of Tibet. I express my solidarity with those who continue to suffer repression and pray for the well-being of all sentient beings. For more than sixty years, Tibetans, despite being deprived of freedom and living in fear and insecurity, have been able to maintain their unique Tibetan identity and cultural values. More consequentially, successive new generations, who have no experience of free Tibet, have courageously taken responsibility in advancing the cause of Tibet. This is admirable, for they exemplify the strength of Tibetan resilience.

This Earth belongs to humanity and the People's Republic of China (PRC) belongs to its 1.3 billion citizens, who have the right to know the truth about the state of affairs in their country and the world at large. If citizens are fully informed, they have the ability to distinguish right from wrong. Censorship and the restriction of information violate basic human decency. For instance, China's leaders consider the communist ideology and its policies to be correct. If this were so, these policies should be made public with confidence and open to scrutiny. China, with the world's largest population, is an emerging world power and I admire the economic development it has made. It also has huge potential to contribute to human progress and world peace. But to do that, China must earn the international community's respect and trust. In order to earn such respect



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama delivering the National Uprising Day Statement at Tsugla Khang

China's leaders must develop greater transparency, their actions corresponding to their words. To ensure this, freedom of expression and freedom of the press are essential. Similarly, transparency in governance can help check corruption. In recent years, China has seen an increasing number of intellectuals calling for political reform and greater openness. Premier Wen Jiabao has also expressed support for these concerns. These are significant indications and I welcome them.

The PRC is a country comprising many nationalities, enriched by a diversity of languages and cultures. Protection of the language and culture of each nationality is a policy of the PRC, which is clearly spelt out in its constitution. Tibetan is the only language to preserve the entire range of the Buddha's teachings, including the texts on logic and theories of knowledge (epistemology), which we inherited from India's Nalanda University. This is a system of knowledge governed by reason and logic that has the potential

to contribute to the peace and happiness of all beings. Therefore, the policy of undermining such a culture, instead of protecting and developing it, will in the long run amount to the destruction of humanity's common heritage.

The Chinese government frequently states that stability and development in Tibet is the foundation for its long-term well-being. However, the authorities still station large numbers of troops all across Tibet, increasing restrictions on the Tibetan people. Tibetans live in constant fear and anxiety. More recently, many Tibetan intellectuals, public figures and environmentalists have been punished for articulating the Tibetan people's basic aspirations. They have been imprisoned allegedly for "subverting state power" when actually they have been giving voice to the Tibetan identity and cultural heritage. Such repressive measures undermine unity and stability. Likewise, in China, lawyers defending people's rights, independent writers and human rights activists have been arrested. I strongly urge the Chinese leaders to

review these developments and release these prisoners of conscience forthwith.

The Chinese government claims there is no problem in Tibet other than the personal privileges and status of the Dalai Lama. The reality is that the ongoing oppression of the Tibetan people has provoked widespread, deep resentment against current official policies. People from all walks of life frequently express their discontentment. That there is a problem in Tibet is reflected in the Chinese authorities' failure to trust Tibetans or win their loyalty. Instead, the Tibetan people live under constant suspicion and surveillance. Chinese and foreign visitors to Tibet corroborate this grim reality.

Therefore, just as we were able to send fact-finding delegations to Tibet in the late 1970s and early 1980s from among Tibetans in exile, we propose similar visits again. At the same time we would encourage the sending of representatives of independent international bodies, including parliamentarians. If they were to find that Tibetans in Tibet are happy, we would readily accept it.

The spirit of realism that prevailed under Mao's leadership in the early 1950s led China to sign the 17-point agreement with Tibet. A similar spirit of realism prevailed once more during Hu Yaobang's time in the early 1980s. If there had been a continuation of such realism the Tibetan issue, as well as several other problems, could easily have been solved. Unfortunately, conservative views derailed these policies. The result is that after more than six decades, the problem has become more intractable.

The Tibetan Plateau is the source of the major rivers of Asia. Because it has the largest concentration of glaciers apart from the two Poles, it is considered to be the Third Pole. Environmental degradation in Tibet will have a detrimental impact on large parts of Asia, particularly on China and the Indian subcontinent. Both the central and local governments, as well as the Chinese public, should realise the degradation of the Tibetan environment and develop sustainable measures to

safeguard it. I appeal to China to take into account the survival of people affected by what happens environmentally on the Tibetan Plateau.

In our efforts to solve the issue of Tibet, we have consistently pursued the mutually beneficial Middle-Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the PRC. In our talks with officials of the Chinese government's United Front Work Department we have clearly explained in detail the Tibetan people's hopes and aspirations. The lack of any positive response to our reasonable proposals makes us wonder whether these were fully and accurately conveyed to the higher authorities.

Since ancient times, Tibetan and Chinese peoples have lived as neighbours. It would be a mistake if our unresolved differences were to affect this age-old friendship. Special efforts are being made to promote good relations between Tibetans and Chinese living abroad and I am happy that this has contributed to better understanding and friendship between us. Tibetans inside Tibet should also cultivate good relations with our Chinese brothers and sisters.

In recent weeks we have witnessed remarkable non-violent struggles for freedom and democracy in various parts of North Africa and elsewhere. I am a firm believer in non-violence and people-power and these events have shown once again that determined non-violent action can indeed bring about positive change. We must all hope that these inspiring changes lead to genuine freedom, happiness and prosperity for the peoples in these countries.

One of the aspirations I have cherished since childhood is the reform of Tibet's political and social structure, and in the few years when I held effective power in Tibet, I managed to make some fundamental changes. Although I was unable to take this further in Tibet, I have made every effort to do so since we came into exile. Today, within the framework of the Charter for Tibetans in Exile, the Kalon Tripa, the political leadership, and the people's

representatives are directly elected by the people. We have been able to implement democracy in exile that is in keeping with the standards of an open society.

As early as the 1960s, I have repeatedly stressed that Tibetans need a leader, elected freely by the Tibetan people, to whom I can devolve power. Now, we have clearly reached the time to put this into effect. During the forthcoming eleventh session of the fourteenth Tibetan Parliament in Exile, which begins on 14th March, I will formally propose that the necessary amendments be made to the Charter for Tibetans in Exile, reflecting my decision to devolve my formal authority to the elected leader.

Since I made my intention clear I have received repeated and earnest requests both from within Tibet and outside, to continue to provide political leadership. My desire to devolve authority has nothing to do with a wish to shirk responsibility. It is to benefit Tibetans in the long run. It is not because I feel disheartened. Tibetans have placed such faith and trust in me that as one among them

I am committed to playing my part in the just cause of Tibet. I trust that gradually people will come to understand my intention, will support my decision and accordingly let it take effect.

I would like to take this opportunity to remember the kindness of the leaders of various nations that cherish justice, members of parliaments, intellectuals and Tibet Support Groups, who have been steadfast in their support for the Tibetan people. In particular, we will always remember the kindness and consistent support of the people and Government of India and State Governments for generously helping Tibetans preserve and promote their religion and culture and ensuring the welfare of Tibetans in exile. To all of them I offer my heartfelt gratitude.

With my prayers for the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings.

The Dalai Lama
10 March 2011

The Statement of Kashag on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan People's National Uprising Day

Today is the 52nd anniversary of the Tibetan people's uprising against the Chinese authorities in 1959 and the third anniversary of the peaceful protests throughout Tibet in 2008. On this special occasion, the Kashag would like to pay homage to all the martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for the cause of Tibet, those who are still suffering and particularly we would like to express our solidarity with Tibetan intellectuals such as writers, poets, musicians and environmentalists, who have been arrested and incarcerated in recent years. We praise their courage and conviction.

During the last nine years, from 2002 to 2010, the twelfth and the thirteenth Kashag considered the 10 March anniversary as the most important occasion to inform the Tibetan people, both in and outside Tibet, about issues concerning Tibetan politics and the administration. The Kashag has transparently informed the Tibetans about developments, policies, course of actions, principles and future plans regarding the issue of Tibet and its origins, Tibetan people's strength and weaknesses, opportunities and risks, achievements and failures, and the status of Sino-Tibetan talks and the international situation. Particularly, in 2009 during the 50th anniversary of our being in exile, the Kashag commemorated and thanked the extraordinary achievements of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which spans across the globe and the great accomplishments of the Tibetan people, in and outside Tibet.

Since this is the last 10th March statement of the present Kashag, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the general public and reiterate some issues as a reminder. As it was mentioned in our 10th March statement of 2009, for more than half a century, Tibet has been

subjected to a series of repressive campaigns under various forms and names to annihilate the Tibetan people and its culture. This has pushed Tibet to the brink of extinction. However, at the same time, the strength of Tibetan people's unity and solidarity has gone undiminished, which has enabled us to sustain our struggle from one generation to the next.

Moreover, with the phenomenal accomplishments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama throughout the world, Tibetan Buddhism, culture, tradition and values have gained renewed recognition and interest. Consequently, the number of Tibet supporters and followers of Tibetan Buddhism and culture, both in the West and East, have grown many fold. Lately efforts to translate Kangyur and Tengyur into various Western languages were initiated, and the speed at which contact and discussions between Tibetan Buddhism and science is taking place today are a matter of great pride and constitute positive changes. Irrespective of the absence of any concrete change in the political situation, the fact that Tibetan religion, culture and tradition are developing paves great prospects for the future. When future generations look back at our times, they may consider our contemporary times as an era of expansion and spread of the Tibetan culture.

Furthermore, the nonviolent struggle of the Tibetan people and the transformation of the nature of Tibetan polity into a democratic system are two achievements that are source of pride and the strength for the Tibetan people. As a result, the issue of Tibet has been able to be sustained around the world and these have become reasons why the People's Republic of China is unable to ignore the issue of Tibet.

As this miracle the Tibetans have achieved in exile is a result of the profound accomplishments of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. We express our deepest gratitude to him.

Since the PRC occupied Tibet, the Tibetan people have had not even a fleeting moment of peace and joy. Furthermore, policies were implemented that aimed to annihilate not only Tibetan religion and culture and natural resources, but even the trace of Tibetan identity as well. Since repression across Tibet worsened in 2008, the Tibetan people have been languishing in an environment of constant fear and suspicion. The recent campaign, targeted at Tibetan intellectuals, scholars, writers, artists and environmentalists, has resulted in their arbitrary incarceration on concocted charges. This further validates the existence of a definite objective to wipe out Tibetan identity and heritage. As Tibetan language is the bedrock of Tibetan identity and culture, the recent move to phase out Tibetan as the main medium of instruction in schools also constitute an aspect of the strategy towards the objective of annihilation of Tibetan identity. Under such circumstances, the people in Tibet have been struggling for the preservation and promotion of Tibetan language and culture by disregarding even at the risk of losing their lives. For this, they deserve our heartfelt gratitude.

The Tibetan and the Chinese people are neighbours and share close social, economic and commercial relations. However, if enmity between the two people grows and the relationship is strained due to manipulations by the Communist leaders then this is highly undesirable. Tibetans living in exile are trying their best to create a good relationship with the Chinese people.

Likewise, the Kashag wish to request the Tibetans inside Tibet to maintain friendly relations with Chinese and other nationalities. Particularly, we would like to urge Tibetans not to engage in any violent act with other nationalities.

A series of recent peaceful people's protests in the Middle East and North Africa to move towards freedom and democracy is a source of inspiration for us. We offer our solidarity for all those who take part in these protests and extend our support and stand with them in unity as long as their actions remain non-violent. These events prove the fact

same request in the strongest terms. Since the institution of the Dalai Lama, as an emanation of Avalokitesvara, and the inhabitants of the Land of Snows, the spiritual domain of Avalokitesvara are intimately connected by a pure karmic bond, the Tibetan people must make all efforts to ensure that this relationship continues to last forever without change. The Tibetan people need to make great efforts to keep this bond between the successive Dalai Lamas and Tibet. In order for this to happen, we request the Tibetan people to make even more efforts to increase their collective merits.

to complete our tenure without any major failures and controversy. This has been achieved because of the kind guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the sincere hardwork of the officials of the Central Tibetan Administration, the cooperation and support of the general public. I and all my fellow members of the Kashag deeply thank and extend our gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. At the same time, with deep regret we offer our sincere apology for our inability to work in accordance with your vision during our tenure. We beseech His Holiness to continue to lead us until we attain liberation. Similarly, we wholeheartedly thank the Tibetan people in and outside Tibet for their consistent cooperation and support. Likewise, we profusely thank all the officials of the Central Tibetan Administration who have worked with sincerity and devotion for the exile Tibetan administration only because of their commitment to the cause inspite of inadequate salary and facilities.

Taking this opportunity, we thank and extend our gratitude to all the Tibet Support Groups, heads of the governments and members of parliaments across the world who support the just struggle of the Tibetan people, and especially the general public, the leadership of central and state governments of India, for their unwavering support for the welfare of Tibetans, the preservation and promotion of Tibet's cultural and spiritual heritage and for the realization of the Tibetan people's aspiration.

Finally, the Kashag prays for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the spontaneous fulfilment of all his wishes. May the truth of the issue of Tibet prevail soon!

The Kashag

10 March 2011

NB: This is the English translation. Should any discrepancy arise, the original Tibetan should be considered the final and authoritative.



exilelens.com

The official ceremony observes a minute's silence in respect of the sacrifices made by countless Tibetans for Tibet's freedom

that suppression by authoritarian regimes anywhere cannot last forever.

Presently, a major cause of concern for Tibetans in and outside Tibet is that His Holiness the Dalai Lama will relinquish his role as the political leader of Tibetan people, and transfer his political and administrative responsibilities to the elected leadership. As a result, a great number of Tibetans in exile from the various settlements, organisations, monastic institutions and individuals and particularly many Tibetans from inside Tibet collectively and individually have been ardently supplicating His Holiness the Dalai Lama not to take such a step. We, the Kashag, would like to make the

To fulfil His Holiness the Dalai Lama's wish to relinquish the temporal responsibilities, His Holiness will issue a message to the coming session of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. And all future course of action will depend on how the members of the legislative body intelligently formulate legislation regarding this. The Kashag would like to urge the members of the exile parliament to consider this a matter of utmost importance and accordingly think carefully to take the right path.

Even though there are no major achievements during the tenure of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Kashag for the last nearly 10 years, we have been able

Furthermore, the families and relatives of these officials also feast on the work opportunities presented by a myriad of aid-Tibet projects. After studies reported that the Tibetan plateau has some of the Asia's largest reserves of mineral resources, the Chinese state-run mining industries have been running amok exploring and extracting mineral reserves from across Tibet. The four largest electric power industries of China have plans to construct dams on all major rivers of Tibet. Even the Chinese private enterprises have been liberally exploiting the minerals resources of Tibet as wild card game without any form of restraint or regulation and concern over the natural environment. Similarly, the wild life of Tibet has also been irreversibly victimized by extensive poaching. Thus, the chilling question of just how many more years before the entire Tibetan environment is ripped to tatters sends shivers down our spines.

Because of the years of Chinese population influx into Tibet, driven mainly by state-sponsored economic opportunities, the social resources in Tibet are today controlled by the Chinese people, while the native Tibetan nomads and peasants are further marginalized to the edges. This makes it amply clear that China's malafide intention is to annihilate both the habitat and inhabitants of the Land of Snows.

In addition to imposing a whole new range of rules and regulations on monasteries and reincarnation of lamas, the Chinese authorities have installed special "work teams" in the monasteries to undertake forced education campaign of "love your country, love your religion". In fact, there are also many monasteries wherein the authorities have installed special units of local public security. These security officers closely monitor and regulate the daily life at the monastery and also resort to intimidation of monks and nuns.

Disregarding the language aspirations of Tibetan teachers, students and intellectuals, and in total contravention of China's own laws and regulations, the authorities have imposed a policy of instituting Chinese as the main language of instruction in all Tibetan schools, beginning from the preschool.

Eminent Tibetan people including writers, singers and environmentalists were persecuted by arbitrary detention and incarceration on concocted charges. Without adequate legal representation, some of them were sentenced for a fixed term, while some others were sentenced for life imprisonment. There were also many cases of torture deaths, missing people and those in terrible physical health as a result of beatings in detention. As of now, at least 831 Tibetan prisoners of conscience are reported to be languishing inside Chinese prison. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile condemns in the strongest terms the colonial wrongdoings of China and ardently urges it to revoke all its oppressive policies in Tibet.

For all those who perished during the recent disasters in Kyigudo and Drugchu, the Tibetan government and the people held special prayer services and raised relief funds by mobilizing public donations. Even though it is impossible to prevent natural calamities, there were nonetheless clear indications of human blunders being a major contributing factor in triggering those disasters. The Chinese authorities are therefore well-advised to be seriously concerned about the likely ramifications of their excessive exploitation and devastation of Tibet's natural environment.

The Tibetan struggle headed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama is founded on the cardinal principles of non-violence and truth. Since our approach of pursuing the mutual interest of both Tibet and China serves as a model framework for the resolution of global conflicts, with the passage of time, the international support for our approach has been increasing by leaps and bounds, including the support from foreign governments and parliaments, NGO's and individuals. As a result, the Tibet issue today has become virtually a mandatory topic of discussion for the world leaders.

From as far back as the 1980's, the exile government has consistently pursued the Middle-Way Approach by engaging in a series of talks to resolve a mutually beneficial solution to the Tibet problem. Furthermore, after the revival of contacts between Beijing and

Dharamshala in 2002, the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the People of Tibet that outlines the aspiration of the Tibetan people and formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of PRC, was proposed to Beijing during the 8th round of Sino-Tibetan talks. Similarly, in January 2010, Dharamshala further issued an exhaustive clarification to China's misinterpretation of the memorandum. As the Chinese government still tries devious means to prolong the process, we urge the Chinese leadership to broaden its horizon of intellectual acumen and have the courage to seek a meaningful solution to the issue of Tibet.

In just a few days, the final elections of both the Kalon Tripa and the Tibetan parliament will be held. We urge all the Tibetans to value their democratic responsibilities and participate in this great celebration of democracy by casting their votes. Regarding the implementation of the concluding recommendations made by the 1st Tibetan General Meeting in 2010, appropriate follow-up measures to address those recommendations were mapped out and forwarded to the relevant departments for implementation. Everybody should therefore be aware of the fact that the implementation of all those recommendations are as of now in full swing.

As we have already spent over half a century in exile, we should express our heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of India for providing us a second homeland, as well as to the governments, organisations and individuals across the globe for their consistent support to the Tibetan cause.

In conclusion, we pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and as per the existing democratic practices beseech him to continue to lead us as the political and religious leader of Tibetan people. We also pray for the day when His Holiness the Dalai Lama will grace the Land of Snows with his footprints and Tibetans in and outside Tibet are reunited in glory.

**The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile
10 March 2011**

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's video-conference with Chinese activists

Following is the English transcript of an internet question and answer session His Holiness the Dalai Lama held live from his residence in Dharamshala with China-based civil rights activist Teng Biao and human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong. This interactive session was arranged by noted Chinese writer Wang Lixiong on 4 January 2011.

The questions to His Holiness the Dalai Lama were put forward by Chinese people from various cities in Mainland China.

1. Your Holiness, what is your view about Ngabo Ngawang Jigme? He was the representative delegated by you to negotiate with the People's Republic of China and also the one who signed the 17-Point Agreement [in 1951]. Even if you had not granted him [plenipotentiary] powers [to sign the Agreement], you had later accepted that agreement. Eventually, most of the time, he stood against you and acted like the spokesperson of the Chinese government on the Tibet issue.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: I knew Ngabo even before 1950. People who knew Ngabo at that time viewed him as an honest person, someone of integrity. I also viewed Ngabo as progressive and trusted him. He was then one of the main people who had my trust and confidence. After the signing of the Agreement, when I met Ngabo in Lhasa, he told me that they were compelled to sign that Agreement because, had they refused to sign, it would have resulted in an 'armed liberation' of Tibet. Thus, he felt that a 'peaceful liberation' was better than an 'armed liberation'. He, however, also said that when they signed the Agreement, even though they were carrying the Chamdo governor's official seal, they did not use it. They instead had to use a forged seal provided by the Chinese government.

Similarly, in 1979, after Deng Xiaoping displayed significant flexibility, I dispatched fact-finding delegations to Tibet. At that time, when my delegates



His Holiness the Dalai Lama interacting with scholars from mainland China via the internet

met Ngabo, he told them to be aware about the fact that whether in times of the Qing dynasty, or for that matter, the rule of Guomintang, places within the territory of Ganden Phodrang [Government of Tibet] never paid taxes to them. Ngabo thus gave a clear indication of his patriotism.

Similarly, in 1989, during a session of Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress, Ngabo refuted as factually incorrect the official Chinese paper claiming that the Nanjing government (of Guomintang) made all the decisions regarding the enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama, as well as on matters relating to the identification and recognition of the Dalai Lama. Ngabo said that the reincarnation of

the Dalai Lama was recognized by the regent of Tibet in accordance with religious tradition and that there was no foreign presider at the enthronement ceremony. The aforesaid claims, Ngabo said, were not true as asserted by the Guomintang officials. Even though I was a minor at the time of the enthronement, I still vividly remember that there were representatives of British India, China, Nepal and Bhutan uniformly seated in one row. Thus, in these matters, Ngabo had done his best in clarifying the actual facts. Following his demise, we organized a memorial service. In fact, some of our friends criticized our memorial service for him as inappropriate. We all know it is a fact that people under fear are forced to

speak diplomatically according to the given circumstances. This is the reason why I always had complete trust in him. Even though he has now passed away, I always pray for him.

2. Your Holiness, are you losing control over the behaviour of a few Tibetans in exile? What do you think if that happens and how are you going to work on this?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: There are over 150,000 Tibetans living in exile, out of which perhaps 99 percent share common concern and sincerity on the issue of Tibet. Of course, there will be difference of opinions and it should exist since here we are following the path of democracy. I tell my people that they have the right to freedom of speech and freedom of thought, and they should express themselves freely. So there will be different opinions. Take the example of the Tibetan Youth Congress. They struggle for independence and criticize our Middle-Way policy. During my occasional meetings with them, I tell them ‘the Chinese government expects that I should arrest some of you’, but we cannot do such things here in a free country and I would never do such a thing.

3. My question to you, my teacher, is the struggle of non-violence and truth (non-cooperation) effective in confronting communist China? If yes, in what ways the Tibetan people are benefited by non-violence and truth?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: I always tell the same thing to Tibetans. And I want to mention here that even though our consistent stand of middle-way policy based on the foundation of non-violence has not yielded tangible result through dialogue with the Chinese government, it has helped us in getting strong support from the Chinese intellectuals, students and those who are interested in and aware of the reality. This is the result of my efforts.

It is difficult to deal with the Chinese government, but I think despite our

inability to maintain extensive contacts with the Chinese intellectuals and public, our stand will win their support and it will continue to grow. It was some months after the Tiananmen event, I met some Chinese friends at Harvard University as I happened to be at that time in the US. After I explained to them our position, they said the entire Chinese people would support the stand of the Dalai Lama if they know about it.

4. Your Holiness, please explain how reforming the system of reincarnating lamas is permissible? Does such a reform contravene the Buddha’s teachings?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: From the outset, I want to ask the questioner to read a little of the Buddha’s teachings as contained in Kagyur (teachings of the Buddha) and Tengyur (Commentaries by Buddhist masters). The custom of recognizing reincarnate lamas did not develop in India. Similarly, the tradition of reincarnation of lamas did not develop in many Buddhist countries such as Thailand, Burma and China. There is a system of recognizing someone as a reincarnation of an enlightened being, but the system of recognizing someone as Tulku or Lama does not exist. In Tibet, the first ever reincarnation was recognized after a little child who clearly remembered his past life and which was proved to be true. Later on, this system slowly and gradually nearly became a class structure in society. Because of this I have made it well known that there is a difference between Tulku and Lama. A Lama need not be a Tulku and a Tulku need not be a Lama or one could be both Lama and Tulku. The one who is qualified as a result of one’s own study and practice is known as Lama. A Tulku, even without such a standard of education, enjoys status in society in the name of the former Lama. And there are many who lack the Lama’s qualification and even bring disgrace. So I used to say since some forty years ago that there needs to be some system to regulate the recognition of

Tulku. Otherwise it is not good to have many unqualified ones.

I consider my interest in the system of reincarnation as a service to the Buddha’s teachings. In the case of the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation, the four hundred year old tradition of the Dalai Lama as both spiritual and temporal leader ended with the direct election of political leadership by the Tibetans in exile in 2001. In 1969, I made it well known in my official statement that whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not would be decided by the Tibetan people. In future, to decide whether to have the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation and if there is a need, it is not necessary to always follow the past precedence but we can act in accordance with the given circumstances. This conforms to the teachings of the Buddha and do not go against them. When I explain about the possibility of reincarnation of Lamas in general and that of the Dalai Lama in particular, some Tibetans from inside Tibet and as well as Chinese friends wonder if this is in line with our religious tradition.

5. At present there are a lot of people in China who have a deep-seated anger and animosity to you. What do you have to say to them?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: At one point the Dalai Lama was called a demon. On a few occasions I was asked what I thought on the Dalai Lama being called a demon and I told them in good humor, “I am a demon. I have horns on my head”.

This is understandable since the Chinese people have access only to one-sided and distorted information. For example during the Olympic torch relay, I especially requested the concerned people that the Olympic Games were a matter of pride for the 1.3 billion Chinese people and that we must never create any problem. Moreover, even before the right of hosting the Olympic Games was awarded to China, when I was visiting the US capital city of Washington,

D.C., some journalists asked me about my viewpoint. I told them that China being the most populous country with a rich cultural heritage and history was worthy of hosting the Games. This is a factual account.

But still the Chinese government greatly publicized that we were creating obstacles for the Olympic Games. Because of such propaganda, the Chinese people are not aware of the entire situation and thus we cannot blame them.

While on the other side, there are many people around the world who respect me.

Therefore, I want to urge my Chinese brothers and sisters to examine the minute details and thoroughly research the information you receive from all sources. When I meet Chinese students, I tell them that being in a free country they should fully utilize both eyes and ears.

6. As far as we know, the central government of the Republic of China participated in the selection process and enthronement ceremony of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama. So, Your Holiness, do you recognize the

Taiwan-based Republic of China and how much of an influence do you think the Taiwan government will again have in the reincarnation process?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: It is similar to my earlier account of Ngabo's story. Generally, when I am in Taiwan, I have supported the call for 'One China'. But eventually it is up to the people of mainland China and Taiwan to decide whether they want to be united in the future. What is more important is that Taiwan's democracy, its robust economy and Taiwan's good standard of education should be properly safeguarded. This is what I usually say.

Wang Lixiong: We have virtually seen the Dalai Lama, just that, as Your Holiness said we could not smell each other. Using the Internet in the 21st century, we consider this opportunity of interacting with Your Holiness as of fundamental importance. Thus, if interactions like these are deemed constructive for Sino-Tibetan relations and understanding each other further, then in the future I think and I hope that many Chinese scholars and concerned people will take part. Tashi Delek.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: Very good. If it is convenient for you, I am always available and fully prepared to interact using modern technology and clear the doubts of Chinese friends. I always say, "Han zang da tuan jie" (Friendly relations between Chinese and Tibetans).

If we get the opportunity of frequently holding similar meetings and interactions, it will help build genuine trust and understanding amongst us. We will not be able to build trust by standing far apart. The clearer we discuss our issues the more trust we will gain in each other. If there is trust then there will be cordial relations and with cordial relations, even if there is a problem, we can solve it.

Can you see my face clearly? Can see my grey eyebrows? See you later.

Tashi Delek. Thank You.

N.B. Translated from the Tibetan original. In case of any discrepancy please consider the Tibetan as final and authoritative.

Bless Tibetans, Free Tibet

By Hong Bing Yuan*

Writing on the 52nd Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day in Dharamsala

"Man – is a being in search of meaning", while heroic epics record the magnificent chapters of life. In an era when the spirit rots due to material desire, the Tibetan people are writing an epic with endless blood and tears in seeking for freedom.

In the late 1950's, in order to resist the brutal persecution and cultural genocide policy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Tibetans were forced to stage a national uprising. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, led eighty thousands Tibetans to cross the Himalayan mountains, which even eagles can not fly over, and began a solemn and stirring road of spiritual exile.

The CCP tyranny drenched the national uprising in blood. During the subsequent half a century, 1.2 million Tibetans died as a result of the CCP's



Mr Hong Bing Yuan in a file photo

political persecution and military massacre. The Tibetan culture that goes back thousands of years has suffered unprecedented destruction, yet, in order to protect their spiritual beliefs and their unique culture from extermination by the CCP regime, the Tibetan people have never ceased their resistance, and they have also overcome one difficulty after another on their journey of spiritual exile. Their journey of spiritual exile, paved with blood and bones, is a journey to break through the iron bars of the CCP's political and legal jail, a journey that leads to freedom and dignity, and a journey that will take them into the centre of human history.

Freedom is hard to gain. However, in order not to become the political slaves of CCP tyranny, the Tibetan nationality has undertaken all the hardships to be free, and pushed forward without hesitation. Thousands of years ago, Sakyamuni stepped down from the throne, walked into the wilderness and immersed in the sacred truth of Buddhism. In contemporary times, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, discarded the throne the CCP tyranny set for him and led the Tibetan people into a journey of exile, and a journey that would lead to glory. The journey started by His Holiness, has turned the heroic epic of Tibetans seeking for freedom into a paragon of mankind's cause of freedom.

The CCP tyranny is the root cause of no freedom and the sufferings of the Tibetan people. In the Seventy-Thousand-Character Petition, the 10th Panchen Lama stated that under the bloody slaughter by the CCP, those that survived in many villages in the Tibetan region were only women, old people and children. He also recorded a historic fact: that after shooting Tibetans in groups, the CCP army buried the corpses in a pit, then they forced the relatives of the victims to sing and dance on top of it, to celebrate the victory of tyranny. Such a tyranny with no conscience cannot possibly give the Tibetan nationality freedom, because within the politics and legal system of the tyranny, there is only slavery, no freedom.

Some people say that the CCP has now changed for the better. Yet this is a lie. As history is always in motion; perhaps the CCP has changed in many aspects. However, it has never changed in nature, in terms of its totalitarian dictatorship, and it has never changed in its policy of cultural genocide against the Tibetan people. The brave Tibetan people are still bearing endless sufferings under the persecution of the CCP. In March 2008, another peaceful protest against the tyranny erupted in all Tibetan-inhabited areas; and once again the CCP responded to the peaceful protest with a massacre. In the street of Lhasa, an iron-strong Kangba man strode forward with his head held high towards the guns of the police and soldiers

—his arms stretched out toward the blue sky, as if wanting to hold the sun; he flashed a broad smile and shouted, “I am the Tibetan you killed fifty years ago, I resurrected, and I’ve come back!”

Flames jetted out from the guns of the police and soldiers, the Kangba man was again shot dead. But, I believe, his brave and magnificent soul will resurrect again and again, till Tibet is free.

Some people try to make people believe that Hu Jintao is a pacifist who holds kindness towards Tibetans. However, this is another lie. In fact, Hu Jintao rose to the top position in the CCP regime by stepping on the blood, bones and tears of the Tibetan people. In March 1989, Hu Jintao, wearing a helmet, with an automatic rifle in his hands, directly commanded the army and soldiers to slaughter monks who were peacefully protesting in the streets of Lhasa. The above fact is well-known. But there is another sin hidden behind the iron curtain of the autocracy: Hu Jintao once murdered a Panchen Lama.

In January 1989, the 10th Panchen Lama died suddenly. According to insiders, after he passed away, the Panchen Lama stared into the sky in anger, appearing like a Big Wade King Kong (Yamântaka); his skin was dark black, as if it had been burned by fire; his face looked like red sandalwood and blood bled from his nose. Obviously, he had died of poisoning. Hu Jintao, then Secretary of the CCP Committee of Tibet, was the culprit behind the plot to murder Panchen Lama. The reason that the CCP made the decision to murder the Panchen Lama, is mainly because the Panchen Lama expressed his wish to welcome His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, back to Tibet. That will be the first time to disclose the sin of Hu Jintao, murdering a Panchen Lama, in my forthcoming book “To the Summit of the Firmament — Crossing the Himalayas”.

Dear friends, hereby I would restate a truth that has been proved countless times by history: Freedom can never be realized by the patron of autocratic tyranny and dictators, people's resistance to tyranny is the only origin of freedom;

and for nations under totalitarianism, to give up resistance, is the same as giving up all hope to freedom.

The recent Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia, Egypt Revolution, and present Libyan revolution, etc., indicate once again: freedom and democracy is an irresistible trend of history. Current extreme social conflicts in China also predict for sure that a new national resistance movement will emerge within several years; all historical factors that caused the former Soviet Communist Empire to fall apart overnight are maturing rapidly inside of China; the CCP tyranny, the eastern Bastille established on the theories of Communist totalitarianism, will definitely collapse amidst the people's uprising; the day Eastern Asia wins freedom will come eventually.

Dear friends, we clearly have heard the call of a historical opportunity. But a historical opportunity only brings good luck to those who are fully prepared. Therefore, let's make all necessary preparation to grasp this historical opportunity.

Fifty two years ago, the Tibetan nationality practiced their natural right to stage an uprising in the face of tyranny; the March 10th Uprising Day is recorded in history as the emblem of struggling for freedom. For half a century, the hot blood of the Tibetan nationality that has been yearning for freedom can burn every rock on the Tibetan Plateau into pieces; the deep love the Tibetan nationality has for freedom has moved heaven and earth. I wish free Tibet, the ideal that so many bones, blood and sufferings have been sacrificed for, be realized at an early date.

Bless Tibetans, free Tibet.

March 10th, 2011

** Hong Bing Yuan was born in Inner Mongolia and upon graduation from Beijing University taught at the School of Criminal Procedural Law at Beijing University before taking an active role in the 1989 protests. Author of numerous books, Yuan now lives in Australia as one of China's most prominent public dissidents.*

Kalon Tripa Prof Samdhong Rinpoche's Address to the General Assembly of the Swiss-Tibetan Friendship Association

Zurich on 19 February 2011

Dear Brothers and sisters,

It is a great honour for me to participate in the General Assembly of the Swiss-Tibetan Friendship Association and have the opportunity to share with you some of my views and experiences. Swiss-Tibetan Friendship Association is one of the oldest organizations for the Tibetan refugees which has played an important role over the last half a century in not only looking after the welfare of the Tibetan refugees settled in Switzerland but also in preservation and promotion of Tibetan cultural heritage, in strengthening the Tibetan struggle for achieving freedom and genuine autonomy for all the Tibetan people and in promoting awareness of Tibet issue in the Western world. I deeply appreciate all the efforts made by the past and present members of this Association. I take this opportunity to express our gratitude on behalf of 6 million people of Tibet to all of you and through you to the international community in general and people of Switzerland in particular. Switzerland was the first Western country to invite a large number of Tibetan refugees for resettlement and these settlers have been the happiest among the Tibetan Diaspora. They are able to lead a very happy life with freedom and dignity and also able to help fellow Tibetans living in India, Nepal and Bhutan. We will never forget the kindness of Swiss people and government for their help offered when we were badly in need of it.

I have been asked to say a few words on the democratic system practiced by Tibetans in exile and about the Tibet Support Groups¹ (TSG) contribution to the Tibetan struggle and their relevance in the future. Both of these subjects are very important but these are vast and complex. Therefore, I don't know how much justice I can do to these topics.

However, I will try.

1. As far as the system of democracy being practiced by Tibetans in Diaspora is concerned, democracy is not a new concept or system for the Tibetan people. Our apparent opening up to democratic functioning was not prompted by the Chinese occupation of Tibet nor was it prodded by our interface with the outside influence. In the first quarter of the Twentieth Century, His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama had made lots of efforts to democratize the political system of Tibet, much before the present People's Republic of China even came into existence. But he couldn't achieve much due to various internal resistance as well as external factors. The present, 14th Dalai Lama, since his childhood and long before taking over the temporal power, had an unmistakable will to democratize Tibet. But unfortunately, by the time he was given the reins of the country half of its territory was already occupied by People's Republic of China's military force. In spite of this, for nine long years, from 1950 to 1959, he tried his utmost to introduce many measures and reforms towards democratization but every time these moves were systematically thwarted by the Chinese military junta. It is only in exile that he got the free hand to implement his vision.

There was but uniqueness about this transformation so characteristic of the leader and his people. In our case, the Head of the State advocated democratization and consequent relinquishing of his authority but the people refused to accept it. Just contrast it with some of the authoritarian, dictatorships of 20th Century. During the last fifty one years of life in exile, His Holiness has gradually persuaded and educated his people to adopt a democratic way of life and translate the

ideals into implementation so that what is achieved is a genuine democracy and not mere lip service.

The model of Tibetan democracy is fundamentally different from the modern democratic principles. The modern political systems all over the world, by and large, are governed by the economic ideology of Capitalism or Marxism/Socialism. The political systems are derived from these two ideologies. Both of these ideologies are based on the potential conflict with humanity and not on the potential of co-operation or collaboration of the humanity. Marxism laid its foundation on the concept of class struggle and Capitalism laid its foundation on the concept of so called free and fair competition.

Today's democratic system is based on capitalistic idea of individual rights and market oriented economy. Tibetan Diaspora governance system is based on basic principles of equality of all sentient beings on the basis of their potential for unlimited development. Such equality can be established in day to day living only through co-operation and not through competition. Competition invariably leads to a form of confrontation or struggle. Love and equality cannot be achieved through competition. Whether in political system or in economic system, it prevents genuine co-operation and collaboration. Realizing this aspect of human nature, the Buddha had advocated a democracy free from sense of competition. Such system was practiced in various Republics in ancient India such as Vaishali during Buddha's lifetime. Truly speaking, awakening of human intelligence is the ultimate objective of the society. It creates a level of rationality, which leads to unanimity - a state of harmony.

Although we do not deny the possibility of multiparty systems of democracy for Tibetans in future, we strongly believe that a party less democracy is possible in which each individual has freedom to deal with every issue according to his or her wisdom without any imposition or any conditions from groups or ideologies. The Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile) is a living example of party less democracy. It represents all Tibetans equally. There are no group ideologies, programs, majority or minority. Domination of majority over minority too is a kind of imposition of its views against the will of the minority, far from an ideal situation in a democracy.

Decentralization of decision-making processes and implementation processes makes each individual responsible and sovereign to think and to act. It enables the individual to think globally and act locally. In our view, when a few persons live at the cost of others it is totalitarianism. On the other hand, the principle of 'live and let live' is ordinary democracy. But, where everyone lives for the other is a model of democracy, and this is what we are trying to achieve.

An ideal democracy has to have three basic components:

1. An enlightened leadership,
2. Right philosophical ideology, and
3. Enlightened and responsible people

We, the Tibetans, fortunately possess the first two components and we are striving hard to meet the third criteria. Plato spoke of 'the philosopher king' and Bertrand Russel talked about 'common will'. Both these factors are embodied in essence in the person of the present Dalai Lama, and in the Buddhist philosophy of non-violence and interdependent origination which presents the perfect right view. Now, only our people need to mature to usher in the ideal democracy.

In June 1991, a Charter for governance of Tibetan Diaspora received the assent of His Holiness after it was duly

approved by the XIth Assembly. The Charter made the people sovereign and every organ of the government - executive, legislative, judiciary and even the authority of His Holiness - derived its power through the provisions enshrined in the Charter. Although our Charter was drafted under the guidance of His Holiness, its draft carries the nature of polity as secular and therefore the entire Charter was drawn on that basis. But during the debate in the Assembly the word 'secular' was substituted by the word combination of 'dharma and polity'. However, the basic structure of the Charter remained unchanged. Thus we have a Charter based on secularism without the word of 'secular'. In our Charter the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies is the supreme although there is demarcation of authority among legislative, executive and judiciary. The Assembly alone has the power to withdraw the powers and functions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as Head of State and Head of Executive. Similarly the Assembly can impeach the Kalon Tripa or the Kashag or the Chief Justice Commissioner or Justice Commissioners. The other check and balance provisions are similar to modern democratic systems.

In the beginning the Charter provided His Holiness to nominate candidates for electing members of Kashag by the Assembly and thereafter the Kalons shall elect Kalon Tripa from among themselves. This provision was amended in the year 2001 and since then Kalon Tripa, the Head of the Executive, is being directly elected by the people and he nominates his colleagues with the approval of the Assembly. Since 2001, the entire administrative and the political decisions are taken by the elected Kalon Tripa and His Holiness remains a kind of figurehead. At the present moment, His Holiness is actively considering to withdraw himself completely from the ceremonial duties of exile administration in order to make the process of democratization reach its ultimate stage. For this the basic structure of the Charter needs further amendment. The proposition of His Holiness has obviously alarmed the

Tibetan people inside Tibet and in Diaspora. But on the other hand His Holiness appears to be quite resolute. I think this development will be of a very important nature. It will be a turning point in the history of Tibet's polity and governance.

2. As far as the Tibet Support Groups' (TSG) contribution to the Tibetan struggle and their relevance in the future is concerned, His Holiness the Dalai Lama reminds us constantly that this expression of international support has become the fourth refuge in the political vocabulary of the Tibetan people. To explain what he means, when Buddhists pray, they say, 'I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha' and because of TSG's whole-hearted support, they have become the political refuge in our struggle for survival as a people with a distinct culture and national identity. The worldwide Tibet support movement is one of the unique international coalition movements in the world. Devoted to the universal values of truth, justice and freedom and to the spirit of non-violence and reconciliation, this movement continues to attract and inspire the imagination of thousands of talented individuals across the globe. Their dedication and enthusiasm to the support of the Tibet cause makes the Tibet movement worldwide one of the great movements of non-violence in contemporary times. Their sustained and concerted campaigns over the years have resulted in promoting the awareness of the Tibetan issue all over the world and kept it as a burning topic and mobilized governments and parliaments around the world to speak up for the people of Tibet.

The efforts and dedication of TSGs have inspired a new generation of committed Tibetans in Tibet. They are risking their lives to preserve Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage by their non-violent resistance. The Tibetan people are blessed by this expanding network of friends and supporters around the world. No other cause however just, no other struggle however long, has been as blessed as the Tibetan people by the commitment of these Support Groups.

Thanks to the work of Tibet Support Groups, the political cause of Tibet, and the preservation and promotion of Tibet's rich cultural and spiritual heritage, specially the Tibetan Buddhist and cultural centres, have remained alive on the agenda of world community.

The nature of entire Tibet Support Group movement is voluntary participation, inspired by love for justice, by using their own time, resources and energy with full awareness that no personal, political or material benefit, whatsoever, could be gained for their tireless and unceasing effort. Therefore, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama always says that Tibet Support Groups should not be considered as pro-Tibet or anti-China. They are rather pro-justice and anti-injustice.

The Tibet Support Groups consist of multi-faceted groups of experts and professionals in the fields of human rights, environment, development, culture and religion and so forth. Some TSGs work for the overall improvement of the human rights situation in Tibet. These include efforts to highlight cases of individual prisoners of conscience and their eventual release and documenting the atrocities committed on them. Other TSGs produce a constant stream of high quality research work on the negative impact of ill conceived development works in Tibet, and on its culture and people. Some focus on the expanding railway line, rampant mining, indiscriminate deforestation, forced resettlement of nomads in permanent structures on the grasslands and the growing expansion of Chinese settlement on the Tibetan plateau and their negative impact on the fragile environment of Tibet.

Then, there is another aspect to the Tibet Support movement. This aspect is the Tibetan Buddhist centres, academic institutions for Tibetan studies and Tibetan cultural centres. These Tibetan cultural centres attract an ever-expanding circle of devout friends for Tibet in every corner of the globe, every year. This component is important for us because the activities of these centres ensure that Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage can and will survive outside of Tibet. These centres also reflect the abiding relevance

of Tibetan culture and spirituality. That an expanding international civil society, beholden to no one, no government, no sovereign, flourishes is an eloquent message of the international community's recognition of the universal values of compassion and non-violence inherited by the Tibetan people from ancient India. This I feel gives us the confidence to say that with or without the Tibetan people, their culture and the values that underpin it will be cherished by the world. This is because Tibetan culture speaks not just the language of the Tibetan people. It speaks the universal language of humanity.

The Tibetan people's movement for our cultural survival is invigorated by the fact that an increasing number of our Chinese brothers and sisters are embracing it. Appreciation of the values of Tibetan culture is growing amongst the Chinese, both in and outside of Mainland China. We are deeply grateful to many brave Chinese individuals and organizations in China for speaking up for the Tibetan people in the aftermath of the brutal crackdown on the widespread and peaceful protests in 2008 that called for freedom in Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his homeland. Many of these individuals organized an open letter expressing their support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle-Way policy and called on the Chinese government to stop its propaganda against Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Today most of the state powers are only concerned for economic gains. People's Republic of China (PRC) is not only emerging as an economic giant but also an unlimited market for every product. Therefore, usually state powers are adopting a policy of appeasement towards PRC and consider Tibet issue an unnecessary irritant in their relationship with PRC. If strong public opinion in these democratic countries were not created by Tibet Support Groups, all these governments of various countries would have chosen to push aside the Tibet issue long ago and our movement would have become difficult to sustain. Today, if most of the governments have to entertain the

Tibet voice, it is because their own public opinion demands it. This, indeed, is an enormous, effective and result oriented contribution the TSGs have made to the Tibetan struggle.

I have touched just a few important aspects of their contribution but couldn't recount exhaustively because it is so large and so varied.

The Tibet Support Groups remain more relevant than ever before since the Tibetans are passing through a most difficult period ever since the year 2008 uprising in Tibet. Coming few years will not only be very critical but most important period for the future of Tibetan people as rapid changes will take place in socio-economic and political spheres of the world in general and PRC in particular. The repressive measures adopted by the PRC authorities and the tolerance and patience of Tibetan people both have reached the threshold of their limits. Thus it is not a time to feel fatigue and give up. Each one of us who cares for the just cause of Tibet must revitalize ourselves, sharpen our focus, consolidate our action, repackage the whole movement and a final and forceful push be given to achieve the desired result. It is for this all the TSG's dedicated themselves for over five decades.

To conclude, I feel the following four-point program for Tibetans and Tibet supporters is important:

1. To successfully generate a culture of non-violence within ourselves;
2. To be prepared to struggle for the Tibet problem, even if it takes many generations before we succeed. Younger and new generations of Tibetans and Tibet Support groups should be ever ready to carry on the responsibilities until we regain our genuine autonomy;
3. Should the Tibet problem be resolved in the near future, to be prepared to shoulder the responsibilities of rebuilding and sustaining a non-violent new Tibetan society; and
4. To maintain the sacred traditions and identity of Tibet in all circumstances.

Thank you. Jai Jagat.

Consequences of China's policies on Tibetan pastoral nomads

By Tenzin Norbu*

For centuries, the Tibetan pastoral nomads and herders have successfully maintained a sustainable and mobile lifestyle, traveling to different seasonal pastures. The grasslands on the Tibetan Plateau represent one of the last remaining agro-pastoral regions in the world. These pasture lands are made habitable through the co-existence of the herders and their livestock. Through their efforts they have maintained the sustainable use of this area for many centuries. China's introduction of different policies over the years have not only punished these pastoral nomads but also threatened the sustainability of this delicate environmental balance. The current policy of displacing the Tibetan nomads and herders from their pastoral grounds directly goes against the article 6 and article 11 of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**¹ and article 8(j) of the **1992 Convention on Biodiversity**² that China has ratified.

During the revolutionary **commune system**, fifty years ago, in the name of "democratic reform", the nomads were herded into communes, stripped of all possessions, reshaped into production brigades, and given rations according to their work points. No production meant no rations. From the outset, the new class of cadres in command saw the nomads not as stewards and curators of the landscape, but as ignorant, backward and irrational, utterly lacking in enthusiasm for class



Gomang Township, Mangra County, Amdo

warfare. At the same time, under the commands of the new cadres, the herd size steadily grew to an unsustainable level and the chain of grassland degradation began. Twenty years later, in the late 1970s, the communes collapsed, having failed except for one achievement: the number of animals, in all Chinese official statistics, had climbed steadily every year, to record levels: 30 million sheep and goats, six million yaks. In the early 1980s nomads were given their animals back, but not their land. As soon as they regained some control over their lives, they cut the number of sheep back to more sustainable levels.

Household Contract Responsibility System (HCRS) or the **Grassland law** was adopted in the year 1985. This law was adopted in order to protect the degrading grasslands and to modernize the animal husbandry.

Perhaps this law was implemented in order to gain more state control over the pastures and to stop the over-exploitation of the grasslands, which the government appeared to consider the most important cause for grassland degradation. Long after the Chinese farmers had been given such guarantees of their land (*land lease certificates*) the nomads were at last (*in the 1990s*) given certificated guarantees of long term leasehold to their land (*30 to 50 years*). This encouraged conservation of pastures, giving nomads a sense of ownership.

Along with the implementation of the grassland law, the state authority gradually implemented the so-called "**Four-Way Programme**" or 'Si Pei Tao', ordering region-wide fencing regimes and shelters for nomads and livestock. This added a financial burden onto poor pastoralists. The

Nomadism is a strategy to optimise use of available natural resources and capitalise on socio-political conditions. While often ridiculed as primitive or even 'incomplete' by outsiders, it is in fact a highly sophisticated adaptation for exploiting energy captured in the grasslands of the region.

- R. Merkle, 2000

It was mobility that was the very essence of herding. Pastoral nomads in the Old World Dry Belt, whether in the savannahs of Africa, the steppes of central Asia or the high altitude pastures of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, have always needed to move their animals regularly to make use of the spatial and temporal patchiness of grassland resources. Nomadism was therefore more than just an ecological adaptation or an adaptation to the political environment. It was a 'region-specific, temporally and spatially ubiquitous survival strategy, an independent socio-ecological mode of culture' which was based on subsistence and coexisted as an alternative to the sedentary cultures of agricultural and urban societies.

- Scholz, 1995.

Animal Husbandry Bureau stated that this programme was meant to improve people's lives, and control livestock and grazing. This program limits the mobility of the livestock and encouraged the herders to invest and spend more time in winter pastures, and less in the upper pastures in summer, leading to increased grazing pressure on a smaller land area. Thus the Four Way Programme at some point

lower plateau pastures and herding up into the alpine meadows in summer.

Mobility was crucial, moving on before grazing pressure destroys plants, exposing the dying turf to the icy gales and blizzards of Tibet which can strip soil, leaving only bare rock. Nomadic knowledge of how, when and where to graze, and the nomadic willingness to live in portable woven yak hair tents,

global science have caught up with what the nomads have always known.

In 1990s, even after implementing new grassland policies, little changed and it became obvious that everything on the grasslands was going wrong. The living turf was dying, eroding and slumping, only to be torn away in wild weather, back to bare rock or 'black beach' as Chinese scientists called it. Burrowing rodent populations exploded, in plague proportions. Toxic invasive weeds multiplied. The rangelands were degrading, including the arid area of northeastern Tibet where both of China's great rivers, the Yangtze and Yellow, rise from glacier melt. Chinese scientists and administrators turned to just one explanation. The nomads were to blame. They were overstocking, beyond the carrying capacity of the pastures, and this was the cause of degradation. The compulsory overstocking during the commune system could not be discussed; it was and is off-limits. So only one cause was possible: to blame the nomads. But some recent research revealed that overgrazing and degradation of the grasslands is not entirely dependent on the grazing livestock. The herders even talked about weather changes, rodents and mining activities as important factors causing grassland changes.



intensified or at least in part, was responsible for the problems for which the herders are now being blamed. But at the same time, other policies, driven by China's long standing disdain for mobile people, were also implemented. Limits on family size and herd size were gradually made compulsory. Gone was the annual cycle of overwintering in

summer and winter, with their animals, kept the pasture free of invasive toxic weeds, erosion, shrub invasion, and infestations of pests. None of this was known to China in the 1980s, except to the nomads themselves, and no-one asked them how they dealt with the risks of living at the third pole. It is only in the 21st century that Chinese and

Under the "new countryside" programme launched in 2006, the local Chinese government of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) had moved a total of about 300,000 families involving 1.43 million Tibetan nomads and farmers into new or fixed settlement homes. Another 185,500 families are expected to move into new homes by 2013.

- Xinhua, 2011

In 2003, a grassland rehabilitation policy was announced. In pastoral areas this policy is referred to as the ‘**Restore Grassland Policy**’ or ‘tuimu huancao’ in Chinese, meaning “closing pasture to restore grasslands”. In recent years, moving herders from the grasslands to state built housing has intensified and has now become the central measure in protecting these grasslands. The land lease certificates guaranteeing nomads long term land tenure have been nullified by the new command. Instantly, all their skills, risk management strategies, environmental services, traditional knowledge and biodiversity conservation are gone, redundant, as if they had never existed.

For decades, the policies such as destocking and rodent poisoning were carried out forcing herders to act in a way contrary to their religious beliefs. It was made compulsory that one person from each family should join in the drive to poison these rodents (*Tibetan pika*). Over the past 20 years, an areas extending 320,000 square kilometers were poisoned! Actually, these rodents (*as argued by many researchers*), are the keystone species of the grasslands and that large-scale killing may even be harmful for the grasslands, and is almost certain to endanger other wildlife and the broader environment.

This new policy, ‘tuimu huancao’ like most simple ideas, it is overly simple. It assumes the only way to conserve China’s upper watersheds is to remove animals and nomads. Yet China’s own scientists have now learned, through patient observation, that the grasslands of Tibet, when grazed moderately and intermittently, moving herds on well before the short summer growing season ends, actually maintains a higher biodiversity than on ungrazed pastures, where toxic



Sershul, Kandze

weeds invade and biodiversity declines. It took Chinese scientists 50 years to discover what the nomads have always known, and Chinese policy remains far behind the latest scientific knowledge.

Now climate change has arrived, explaining everything. No longer need China fear its past policy failures as the cause of degradation of Tibetan rangelands. Climate change explains all, especially in Tibet, where climate change is happening faster than in most parts of the planet. But the most immediate impact of climate change is the exclusion of nomads from their lands, labeling them officially as “ecological migrants”. The compulsory “ecological migration” of the Tibetan nomads is grounded in ignorance, prejudice, a failure to listen and learn. Around the world, governments increasingly recognize that pastoral nomadic mobility holds the key to sustainability on the dry lands of the world. There are other solutions to the problems of degradation of Tibetan lands. The displaced nomads are facing the worst of all social problems, without any special skills to adapt themselves in their new urban settings, they try their best to earn money away from

their herds, scavenging waste, road building, laboring on official projects, selling medicinal plants and mushrooms to Chinese traders.

(Footnotes)

¹ *Requires the state to ensure everyone to freely choose or accept his living by work as well as an adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.*

² *Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices.*

***Mr Tenzin Norbu is the head of the Environment and Development Desk of the Department of Information and International Relations, CTA.**

Herders should not, as a result of the measures adopted under the tuimu huancao policy, be put in a situation where they have no other options than to sell their herd and resettle.

- Olivier De Schutter, 2010

An interview with Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche

On February 8, 2011, Saransh Sehgal interviewed Kalon Tripa Professor Samdhong Rinpoche in Dharamshala, India. The out-going Kalon Tripa spoke on the challenges faced by the exiled Tibetan community and on negotiations regarding the future of Tibet.

The interview was published on February 22, 2011 in Himal, a South Asian monthly news magazine published from Kathmandu by reputed Nepalese journalist Kanak Mani Dixit

Saransh Sehgal: Since your term ends this March 2011, the entire handover will be given to a new leadership in exile...

Kalon Tripa: It is just a usual handover, nothing special, merely a change of government. A new leadership will take oath. A briefing by the outgoing person on the handling of current and ongoing affairs, soon to be presumed by the new person, is expected.

Will the new leadership face more challenges than you have?

I don't think the future leadership will face any new challenges, whatever challenges we have been facing will continue. The greatest challenge will still be dealing with the PRC [People's Republic of China] to find a solution to the Tibet issue. This is neither an easy task, nor will it be accomplished in a short spell of time. It will need a lot of patience and a lot of perseverance.

In my view, there are basically three challenges not related to the political settlement with PRC for the diaspora community in exile.

Standard of education: We have facilities to educate everyone, not just Tibetans but the entire Indian himalayan region. What we lack are good teachers and quality education. The universalisation of education does not bring with it quality. Improving the quality of education is not a one-man job; the entire community has to work together. We need a similarity in attitude between the parents, teachers and students, which is very difficult to achieve. We have been struggling on this for the last ten years. I could not leave any satisfactory achievement in this

regard. If the quality of education is not improved, the life of the new generation may not be as good as we expect it to be.

Our settlements: His Holiness and the then Indian Prime Minister Pt Jawaharlal Nehru both had a long term vision and placed the Tibetan people in exile in communities within India. They created these communities because India is so vast and so heavily populated that one hundred thousand Tibetan people can easily disappear among its vastness. These settlements are, by and large, based on agriculture and a few are based on small-scale industries. The new generation though is not interested in agriculture or industry-based production. They want white-colored jobs. If we integrate these settlements, the Tibetans can very easily assimilate with the vast majority of Indian people and our identity, culture will be preserved. Moreover, the new generation is now looking towards the West. They are not willing to remain in India, Bhutan or Nepal. It could be because of the higher standard of living and an easier life in the West.

Tibetan moral character: This worries His Holiness the Dalai Lama very much. Tibetans are considered religious-minded people who are highly moral, do not speak big lies, and do not harm other people unless compelled to. Today, however, this kind of good conduct appears to be in deterioration. If this is lost, the value of our struggle for independence will also be lost with it.

What is the political message that you are getting from inside Tibet?

The majority of the Tibetans living inside Tibet consider His Holiness's

approach of the middle path the best and the only practical way to achieve freedom for the Tibetan people. They sincerely support the process of negotiations, but people inside Tibet are under great repression and cannot express their views clearly to the outside world. One message is clear though: they all are with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

What is your view on the current Tibet talks between the representatives of the Dalai Lama and Beijing?

There are two different angles from which people evaluate it. One angle is the earlier contact [the Sino-Tibetan dialogue that took place in 1978–1993] between the Dharamshala and Beijing but nothing came out of it, no tangible results were achieved. From this angle, the talks are a complete failure.

The other angle is that the objective of dialogue is to have contact and exchange views. In this regard, we have achieved quite a lot during the last nine rounds of talks. For example, India and China have had 15 rounds of talk on border issues but they are not able to agree on any one agenda. We, on the other hand, by the sixth round of talks, had made China understand what His Holiness was asking for. We had also understood their way of thinking and what their doubts and suspicions were. During the seventh round, they were compelled to say that His Holiness should come out with what he was looking for. They complained that they did not get it when the Dalai Lama sometimes asked for a genuine autonomy, sometimes for a higher degree of autonomy, and at other times for a meaningful autonomy. That gave us an opportunity to explain the kind of

autonomy the Dalai Lama is looking for, which is within the constitutional framework of the People's Republic of China and is detailed in our memorandum for genuine autonomy. The memorandum, which was made public later, was handed to China during the eighth round of talks as a logical conclusion to the past seven rounds.

Beijing chose to advertise the memorandum and it worked in our favor until they misprinted it and in 2010, we submitted a note, which is also in public domain, making it clear that we are not seeking independence or a Greater Tibet. We are only seeking constitutional provision of autonomy for the entire region of Tibet. So, from this angle, the nine [including the time when the note was submitted] rounds of talks have come to a logical conclusion. Now, the ball is in their court. It is up to China to respond and we are waiting.

On future talks, we have not yet made any special efforts. To our usual contacts, we always tell them that we are ready for a round of dialogue at any time convenient to them. The Dalai Lama's envoys are in regular contacts with Beijing. Hopefully, after April, we might have another round of dialogue. We, however, don't have much hope of a result from this present Chinese leadership under Hu Jintao.

What is your view on the recent Karmapa cash controversy?

A major disproportionate boil-up of things which I do not appreciate, but as far as the Karmapa management is concerned, they have made a great mistake and that mistake has to be acknowledged. It is a financial crime and mismanagement, and for that, the law should take its own course. But it should not be mixed up with the integrity of the Karmapa or with its political aspect. He was not knowledgeable of the money and had nothing to do with it or donations since his arrival in India.

The Karmapa administration was very weak. So, things have to be cleaned up and a system of accountability has to be established. But this should be completely disassociated from the Karmapa as a person.

Do you expect the new Prime Minister to put forward new strategies or will s/he continue with your administrative policies?

I have no wishes. People ask me what my wish for the future leadership is. Some ask me what my advice or suggestion would be. I say I have nothing of the kind. I do not want to influence in any way the mind of the new leadership. A new leadership must be fresh. He or she [now it's a he] should be influenced by no one and must have an original thinking of his/her own. Let him/her do what s/he sees is right. The most important thing is people's mandate, and I am asking people to support whoever they vote till s/he completes his/her tenure so that s/he completes his/her vision or policies. A freedom of mind is the most important thing to have and it can only be weakened if other people encroach.

What do you think has changed in today's exiled Tibetan community?

Fifty-one years it has been and during these 51 years, one thing that has changed is the generation. Sixty percent of the people who came in exile in 1959, people who lived in Tibet and had the past Tibet experience, people of my age or much older, have now passed away. People below the age of fifty are either born and brought up in India or are the new arrivals after 1980 when Tibetan refugees started crossing the border once again.

Tibetans born and brought up in diaspora are more or less all educated or at the least, they have passed through the basic school system. The new Tibetan generation is literate and a majority of them go for higher education to a BA, MA or some other programme. Therefore, certain fundamental differences remain between the old and the new generation who has not seen the past Tibet.

The cultural heritage is very much alive though. The older generations were able to disseminate and hand down the culture to the new generation. The new generation has a new way of looking at things and the interests are a little different, of course. They are modern educated people. They have their own lifestyle. Nevertheless, third and fourth generation

Tibetans even today know the Tibetan language and lead a Tibetan style of life. Therefore, I am inclined to say that there has not been a great change in the cultural spectrum, but some of the values of life has changed. For example, I say the new generation is more after money and easier lifestyle than the older generation is. But this is quite natural. And many are inclined to go to the West to developed countries. So this, I may say are a few viewable changes. Otherwise, we are still the same.

What do you think about the future of the Tibetan cause without the Dalai Lama? Will there be a void when he dies?

Yes and no both. His Holiness's dynamic leadership is unparalleled. When he is no more, there will be a great vacuum and more psychological setback. There is a danger that people might be disheartened and lose their self-confidence. But in spite of this, His Holiness is cautious and is preparing for that time. He has democratized the Tibetan community and now, there are procedures to elect a new leader. So, there won't be a dislocation. He is now in a process of withdrawing from much of his roles. After March, he will retire completely as he says. He is not shrinking from his responsibilities; he is preparing the people for the worst time ahead.

How do you see the future path for Tibet?

It is very clear. We are looking for a complete implementation of the national regional autonomy provision enshrined in the present constitution of the People's Republic of China. If this is sincerely implemented, it is good enough for the preservation of the Tibetan culture, religion and identity.

What is your future role in the exile community?

As a citizen of Tibet, my role is the same as of every other Tibetan: the struggle for Tibet's autonomy.

Saransh Sehgal is based in Dharamsala, India and writes on Tibet's geopolitics. He can be reached at saranshsehgal@gmail.com.

<http://www.himalmag.com/component/content/article/4280-sitting-down-with-the-tibetan-prime-minister-in-exile.html>

Sangay Gyatso, a leading protester in 2008 Tibet uprising, dies

Sangay Gyatso, a monk who played a leading role in the widely-covered protest staged in front of a visiting international media contingent in eastern Tibet during the 2008 peaceful uprisings, passed away on February 26, 2011.

According to a report received by the Central Tibetan Administration, Sangay Gyatso succumbed to physical and mental trauma suffered during his year-long escape in the hills to evade government persecution.

Defying intense restrictions by the Chinese government, Sangay, 41, and his colleagues on April 4, 2008 at Labrang Monastery spoke to a group of foreign journalists who were on a state sponsored visit.

Fearing arrest by the Chinese government, he fled and spent more than a year in the hills facing insurmountable hardship. Lack of proper food compounded by mental trauma left him debilitated and bedridden. When his condition kept worsening, his family admitted him to a hospital in Xining from where he was taken to another hospital for surgery. The hospital discharged him, saying there was no hope for his recovery,

and the Chinese police also did not arrest him for that reason.

Sangay spent his remaining days in his home and passed away on 26 February 2011. He is survived by his old parents, both of whom are septuagenarians.

Sangay was born in 1969 in a nomadic family in Labrang Tashikhyil. He was ordained at the age of 16 and began his religious studies at Labrang Monastery. In 1991 he joined Drepung Loseling Monastery in India to pursue his studies. Unfortunately, he had to return to Tibet as his health could not adapt to the environment in India.

Like Sangay Gyatso, many Tibetans in Tibet are forced to leave their homes to escape torture by the Chinese authorities.

An estimated 227 Tibetans have died since March 2008. Over 6,810 Tibetans have been arrested and detained and at least 510 Tibetans sentenced without fair trial and independent legal representation since March 10, 2008.

A total of seven Tibetans have been sentenced to death since then - two with immediate death sentence who were subsequently executed and five are currently facing suspended death sentence or death sentence with a two-year reprieve. All defendants are young Tibetans below the age of 30.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile expresses grief over the demise of Mr Dashi Tamdin



Late Mr Dashi Tamdin

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile expressed grief over the passing away of Mr Dashi Tamdin, a former joint secretary of the parliamentary secretariat. Mr Tamdin breathed his last after a prolonged illness in New York on December 21, 2010.

The Tibetan Parliament in its condolence message said, "The Tibetan Parliament in Exile mourns the demise of former Joint Secretary of the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat Mr. Dashi Tamdin due to a prolonged illness.

Mr Dashi Tamdin began his service at the Central Tibetan Administration in 1974 at the Department of Finance. During his long career as a civil servant, Mr Dashi served under various capacities at the Department of Security and the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat. He applied for early retirement in 2003.

The Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament in exile in its condolence message to the family of the deceased, expressed deep appreciation for the services that the late Tamdin has rendered for the Tibetan cause and prayed for peace for the departed soul.



Sangay Gyatso (1st left) speaking to foreign journalists about repression of human rights by the Chinese government during a peaceful protest in Labrang in Amdo Province in northeastern Tibet on 9 April 2008

The way to resolve the Tibet issue

By Zhang Boshu*

Ever since March, the issue of Tibet and the Olympics have been stirred up together, drawing the attention of the entire world. Short sighted politicians in our own country have been pleased that their petty schemes to stir up nationalist sentiment have been so successful. This not only manipulates domestic opinion but also uses so-called “mainstream public opinion” to oppose the criticisms coming from international society. On the other hand, this serves to push for the consolidation of the situation in Tibet in the hope of getting through the Olympics peacefully. They did not realize that the Tibet issue has already become a major factor affecting China’s future. Solving the Tibet issue will take courage and great wisdom. Petty scheming could ruin Tibet and ruin China.

How did the Tibet issue arise?

The Tibet issue is first of all a human rights issue.

Although the authorities are not willing to admit it, I want to say it plainly. This problem that plagues the leadership of the Communist Party, if we look at its origin, was created by the Chinese Communist Party itself as the ruler of China.

We don’t have to look too far back in history. Whether in fact the relationship between the Tibet government and Beijing from the Yuan Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty was one of relatives or of equals is a matter of dispute among academics. For now, we don’t need to pay any attention to controversy. What is most important is that from 1912 onwards, Tibet was for a long period in a de facto “state of independence”. That situation continued until 1951 when the Tibet local government signed an agreement with the Beijing central government — the “Seventeen Point



The author Zhang Boshu in an undated photo

Agreement on the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet”. The document was moderate and constructive. The agreement stressed that Tibet is part of China but also recognized that Tibet’s current system would not change and that the Dalai Lama’s position would not change. We can call that the earliest version of “One Country, Two Systems” in contemporary China.

In 1954, the 19 year-old Dalai Lama and 16-year old Panchen Lama both went to Beijing to take part in the First National People’s Congress, attending as honored guests of Mao Zedong. They were appointed Vice Chair of the NPC and Vice Chair of the National People’s Consultative Congress, respectively. Tibet’s future seemed bright. Problems began to appear in 1955. Mao Zedong’s utopian socialist social transformation began to accelerate that year. Ripples spread from the Chinese interior to Changdu and the Tibetan areas of Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai, and Gansu Provinces. In these areas, which were not bound by the 17 Point Agreement, “democratic reform” broke out on a spectacular scale. Radical local Communist Party leaders sought to carry out “democratic reform” and “socialist

transformation” simultaneously so as “to make spectacular progress in just one step”. They struck hard against the masters of the serfs and their “representatives”, confiscating the lands and property of monasteries and forcing collectivization, slandering the religious beliefs of Tibetan people, and forcing upper class people, lamas and monks to “reform their thinking”.

The result was that they stirred up dissatisfaction and resistance among the Tibetan people. During 1956 – 1958, armed conflicts in the Tibetan areas grew larger and larger in scale. When one died another arose but were soon were put down by campaigns by the PLA to put down rebellion and wipe out rebels. Tens of thousands of Kam and Amdo region Tibetans fled across the Jinsha River into Tibet. This sowed the seeds for the 1959 Lhasa “rebellion”. These historical circumstances led to the “rebellion” and indeed were a necessary condition for that event to occur.

There is no need to go into detail about what happened after that. The victorious “suppression of the rebellion” at Lhasa showed that the central government had achieved absolute control of all the Tibetan areas including Tibet itself. It also marked the rapid move of Tibet towards “socialism”. Chinese of my age grew up hearing songs like “The Red Sun is rising about the snowy mountains” and seeing movies like “Serfs”. In those days we really believed that under the leadership of the Communist Party “the serfs have been liberated” and were living happy lives. Later, after reading a lot of historical materials, I learned that there were many untruths in the propaganda.

The dictatorship system of the Communist Party, the arrogance and ignorance of leaders, and the extreme leftist policies

pursued by them in the Tibetan areas brought terrible disasters to both the religious and lay people of Tibet. In 1962, the Panchen Lama, who was ranked as a “national leader,” wrote a letter to Premier Zhou Enlai expressing his deep sorrow at what he had seen and heard of the suffering of the Tibetan people. Since the Panchen Lama was certainly not opposed to the leadership of the Communist Party, and was loyally and faithfully reporting to the Party the actual situation in the Tibetan areas, this letter known as the “70,000 Character Document” can be seen as a document that accurately reflects the difficult situation of the Tibetan people during those years. I might as well quote from it here:

— On “class struggle” in the Tibetan areas: “In most or in many areas, the cadres didn’t care if the campaign was planned or carried out well. They were intent on making a spectacular display that would strike terror in people. They didn’t care if they attacked the right people. The objective was to do the campaign on a big scale and achieve numerical targets.” They attacked many people whom they shouldn’t have attacked. Often “those who were the objects of struggle meetings had not done anything particularly bad or committed serious errors. So they had to make up many false and serious accusations. They exaggerated at will, turning truth and falsehood upside down.” Many innocent people were forced to flee abroad against their will. Those who stayed behind lived in terror.

— On the lives of the people in the Tibetan areas: “Because of the rise in the agricultural areas of the five unhealthy tendencies [Tr. Note: post Great Leap Forward Party critique of GLF excesses — wu feng over-egalitarianism, the common practice of exaggeration, confused orders, too many compulsory orders, and special privileges] and excessively tight controls on grain, and the standards for the amount of grain the people could retain was set too low, a severe grain shortage resulted, ...and many households had no grain. In some areas some people even starved to death. Formerly Tibet was a dark and barbarous



The 10th Panchen Lama undergoing a Cultural Revolution struggle session in Tibet's capital Lhasa in 1964

feudal society but there had never been a shortage of grain like that, especially since Buddhism permeated the society, everyone rich and poor, had the custom of helping the poor and giving alms. People could easily support themselves as a beggar, so we never knew of anyone ever having starved to death.”

— Implementation of “dictatorship” resulted in the improper deaths of many prisoners: After the “suppression of the rebellion”, the proportion of prisoners in the Tibetan population reached several percent, something completely unprecedented. In 1959, Chairman Mao set forth a policy that since the population of Tibet was small, people shouldn’t be killed or at most only a few people should be killed. But in fact, just the opposite happened. Except for the somewhat better treatment of imprisoned members of the upper classes, most people who were locked up in prison endured very bad conditions. The prison wardens didn’t care about the lives or health of the prisoners. They often verbally abused and savagely beat prisoners. Moreover, wardens deliberately moved prisoners back and forth between very warm and cold places so that the prisoners could not adapt and their clothes were always unsuitable. Their clothes could not keep them warm, their mattresses were not waterproof, and the wind and rain

entered their cells. They never got enough to eat, living in miserable conditions, yet they still had to get up early to do work. The hardest work was always given to these people. They became worn out physically, often came down with diseases. As a result of no rest and inadequate medical care, many prisoners died who should not have.

—On religion and nationalities issues: “Under the so-called ‘elimination of superstition’, the first priority was opposing religion. The second priority was destroying images of the Buddha, Buddhist scriptures, and stupas.” When they demanded that monks and nuns return to secular lives, “first in all the temples and monasteries, under the pretext of ‘study’ and ‘mobilization’, they brought all the monks and nuns together into a large hall or room, and made them study nervously day and night, forcing them to criticize each other in order to create a big wave of sharp struggles and attacks. People who openly express their belief in religion were given labels such as a superstitious element or someone who doesn’t like the revolution. They were constantly attacked without rhyme or reason. Even worse, in some places they made the lamas stand on one side and nuns and lay religious women stand on the other. They were then forced to chose each other in marriage. In Tibet, there were originally over 2500 temples.

After 'democratic reform' there were only 70 left. Originally there were 110,000 monks and nuns. Ten thousand fled abroad, leaving 100,000 behind. After 'democratic reform' there were only 7000 monks and nuns left. What especially cannot be condoned is that in some areas there was deliberate desecration and insults to religion such as the Buddhist Canon used for compost. Many paintings of the Buddha and scriptures were used to make shoes or other objects. There is absolutely no reason for this. Because there were many insane things done that even a lunatic wouldn't do, people in all classes of Tibetan society were deeply shaken. Their emotions were in chaos and they became exceedingly sad and shed tears. They said 'Our land has been made into a dark place,' quoting a Tibetan proverb that means 'a place without religion'.

Alas, when I read these characters, my own heart bleeds and my face burns.

Most of these problems also existed in the Chinese interior as well. But they were more serious in Tibet. They were more extreme and more widespread there. No matter how well-meaning or noble was the initial motivation of those in power was to use their social ideals to transform Tibetan society was, its shocking results are all crimes. These are crimes that resulted from ignorance, arrogance, rage and violence.

Under these circumstances, the over 100,000 Tibetans who fled to India and other foreign countries called upon the entire world to support the human rights of Tibetans. Therefore the Tibet issue became a symbolic issue for the entire world. What can be surprising about that? Moreover, this was going on during the Cold War and so in the minds of western people, Tibet became a focal point in the game of competing national interests in which China, the Soviet Union, India, the United States and other countries were engaged.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency did in fact provide funding, technical and other support to Tibetans in exile. That was part of the effort of the United States

to contain the "spread of communism". Chinese can of course curse the damn Americans for plotting to "split China" without revealing their real intentions. But on the other hand, if the Communist Party had not done so many stupid things in Tibet and forced Tibetans to flee into exile, what would other people have been able to say? What pretext could they have to butt in? I haven't even mentioned the Cultural Revolution. That "historically unprecedented" "revolution," because it was even redder and even further left, was even more extreme and more cruel. Of course it created even greater disasters for the Tibetan people. I won't discuss them here.

Enlightened Communist Party Leaders Once Reflected on the "Leftist" Misfortunes that Brought Disaster to Tibet

Objectively speaking, there has been no shortage of enlightened people within the Chinese Communist Party leadership. At different times and in different positions they have opposed

leftist work methods in Tibet. However, under these historical circumstances, they could achieve only limited results. Xi Zhongxun, from northwestern China, was a Vice Premier and Secretary General of the State Council in the 1960s. He was responsible for contact with the Panchen Lama. He made a very complete report to the State Council about the how the "Seventy Thousand Character Document" came to be written by the Panchen and so was charged with "accommodating and not interfering with the Panchen. The Tenth session of the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party dismissed Xi Zhongxun and, in addition to the major crime of "using a novel to attack the Communist Party," also charged him with "accommodating and not interfering with the Panchen."

Another dismissed, high-level Communist Party official was Li Weihan, who was an old communist who had been head of the United Front Department since 1947. During April and May 1962, at a Nationalities Work Conference held in Beijing, some of the nationalities



Red guards burning Tibetan Buddhist scriptures at Jokhang, Tibet's holiest shrine

religious figures offered some sharp criticisms. Li Weihuan remained calm and honestly said that he welcomed criticism from everyone. He praised the talk of the Tibetan Buddhist Lama Xijiashenzhi [romanization of Chinese name], saying that he was “open and above board, with “a heart as clear as a mirror” and stands as a symbol of “patriotism in the area of national minorities religious affairs”. Li Weiquan’s action was later severely criticized by Mao Zedong who said that “The United Front Department is neglecting the class struggle and is being capitulationist.”

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, many issues in Tibetan affairs were neglected. Nationalities policy and the relationship between the Han nationality and the Tibetan nationality needed to be adjusted and the lives of Tibetans needed to be improved. In May 1980, just after Hu Yaobang had become General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Hu and Wan Li flew to Tibet for an inspection visit. On the plane, Hu said to the accompanying Xinhua News Agency journalists: “In our policies in the national minority areas, we must always seek truth from facts, and adjust measures to suit local conditions so as to fully respect the autonomy the Tibetans have to govern their minority area themselves. That is the crux of all the Tibet issues.” On May 29, in the work report that Hu Yaobang presented at the meeting with the cadres of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, he stressed that the development of Tibetan must resolve “six big issues”.

The first is, under the unified leadership of the center, to fully implement the autonomy rights in the nationalities areas. “Any document, order or regulation which is not suitable for the conditions of Tibet should not be implemented.” “You should according to your own characteristics, draft specific decrees, laws and regulations, and rules to protect the special interests of your own nationality.” The second: “Under the present difficult conditions in Tibet, you should carry out a policy of recuperation and rebuilding and considerably reduce the burden on the



Chinese propaganda posters from the 1960s show happy smiling Tibetans with bumper harvests—enthusiastically parading around wheatfields with Mao Zedong pictures. But in reality tens of thousands of Tibetans starved to death. China's disastrous agricultural policies led to severe famine in Tibet.

people.” “We have decided that within several years required purchases by Tibetans will be abolished.” Third: “Tibet should implement special flexible policies to promote the development of production.” Fourth: “Devote the resources that the state is providing to Tibet to the development of agriculture and herding and the daily necessities most needed by Tibetan people.” Fifth: “With the condition that the socialist road be followed, develop science, technology and education in Tibet.”

Hu Yaobang especially stressed: “Looking down on Tibetan history, language and art is totally wrong... Loving the minority people is not a matter of empty words. Their social customs and habits must be respected. Respect their language, respect their history, respect their culture. If you don’t do that you are only speaking empty words.” Finally, Tibetan cadres should manage Tibet. Within two years, Tibetans should make up two-thirds or more of the cadres in Tibet. “We have been here for thirty years. We have completed our historical mission.” “Today there are 300,000 ethnic Han, including military, in Tibet. How can that ever do?” The above can be summarized in six characters “cut taxes, open up, and

withdraw personnel”. These were the “emergency measures” energetically promoted by Hu Yaobang to resolve the Tibet issue.

These views, strong criticisms of social evils, were enthusiastically welcomed in the Tibetan areas. Of course because of historical conditions, the enlightened leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were unable to discuss and consider institutional perspectives on the problems that occurred in Tibet. Hu Yaobang in his May 29th speech said that we should not look back on the past but rather “unify ourselves and look to the future”.⁴ This reflects Hu Yaobang’s experience and resourcefulness and the frustrations of a generation of reformers in the Chinese Communist Party. After all, the many of the tragedies in contemporary Tibetan history are directly linked to the Communist Party system and the social policies that that Party carried out. This is all a result of these policies. If we do not reflect upon the origins of the Tibet issue, then we will not be able to resolve it.

New Symptoms Arose in the Tibet Issue During the Years of Reform

With opening and reform, especially since the early 1990s and the turn of the new

century, the Chinese economy has grown very quickly. The central government has also certainly invested a lot of capital in Tibet and devised a series of special preferential policies and measures to accelerate the development of Tibet. There have been direct state investment construction projects, Chinese central government financial subsidies, and support for projects from partners around the country for the modernization and construction of Tibet. The overall economic level of Tibet has improved considerably as a result. However the political structure has remained the same as before with the Party exercising control over political, economic, cultural, and religious affairs just as before. An autonomous region in name, but in actual fact, autonomy was in the same lamentable state as before. The core of the Tibet issue has not been truly solved, and under the new social conditions a variety of new problems have arisen.

The market economy has become an economy controlled by influential people. It is that way in the Chinese interior, and it is that way in Tibet. The blending of the system of Party dictatorship and the policy of opening up created a new privileged stratum that includes Han and as well as Tibetans who have positions in Party and government institutions and cultural institutions. Faced with swarms of merchants coming from the Chinese interior, many ordinary Tibetans in Lhasa and other areas fell discriminated against and marginalized.

Even worse is the all encompassing control of religious affairs. On the surface, religious life in Tibet has already been restored. The state spent great sums repairing damage and protecting symbolic Buddhist structures, the temples are filled with burning incense. The Buddhist Canon will never again be used for compost. But this is just the surface of things. There is a deeper reality that is hidden behind these things as if beneath a mask.

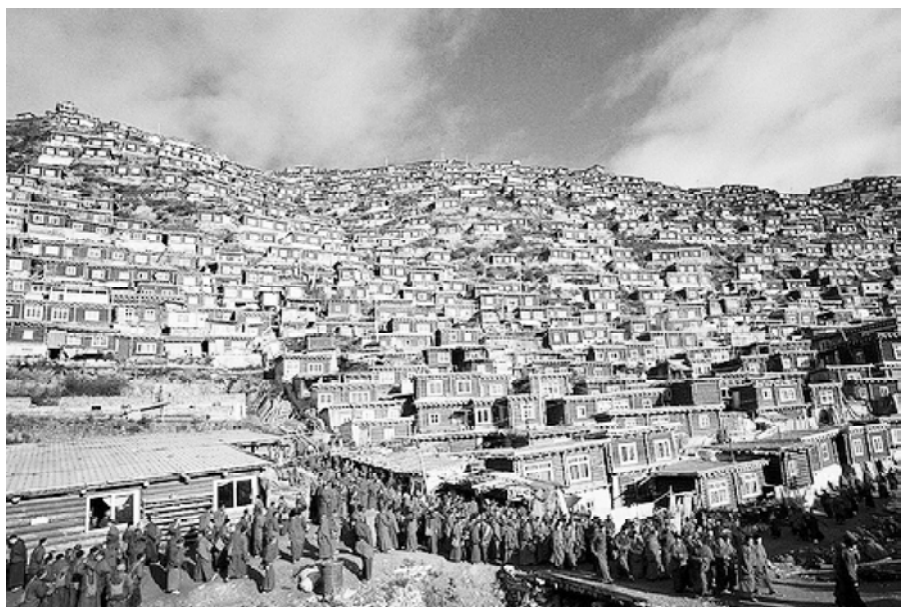
The independent scholar Wang Lixiong has done much research on, and taken many trips to, Tibet. His conclusion: In

Tibet there is no true religious freedom. On one hand, the government strictly controls the registration of religious activities in the temples, limits religious personnel to a certain “authorized personnel complement”, and forbids ties between temples. Religious activities outside the temples are forbidden. On the other hand, spontaneous religious activities outside government control are rigorously suppressed so that they will not have any influence.

In the Kang region of [Tr. note: ethnographic] Tibet, not far from the county seat of Sela County, is the mountain valley of Larong with its Wuming Buddhist Institute [Tr. note: also known as the Sertar Tibetan Buddhist Institute, Sertar, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, China. When founded in 1980, there were only 30 or so people at the Institute. At the end of the 1990s, there were nearly 10,000 Tibetan and Han monks there. This worried the Chinese government. The authorities ordered that they reduce the number of personnel from the authorized number of 4000 nuns to just 400 and 4000 monks to just 1000. All the 1000 Han who had come to study Buddhism were forced to leave. This requirement was rejected by the Living Buddha who ran the Institute because to make a monk return to secular life involves a serious violation of vows. The government took action,

sending people to destroy the housing of the monks. On July 10, 2001 during the height of the destruction of monastic housing, 1700 monastic cells were destroyed in a single day. “I have heard people describe that scene, the sounds of houses being destroyed, the dust rising up everywhere, on one side one thousand nuns crying, as if the world itself were shaking. In the area around the Wuming Buddhist Academy were many nuns in groups in the countryside hiding out to avoid pursuit by the government.

An even more deadly consequence of the strict control of religion has been breaks in the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism. Traditional Tibetan religion has an internal control mechanism. For example, although there is a reincarnation system for the Dalai and the Panchen, but in the Geluga School, eminent monks and heads of monasteries have a set term of office. They are chosen from among the most learned lamas. The winners in the competition can become the head of the Ganden Monastery — that is a natural teacher for the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. This system has continued for several hundred years without a break, thereby ensuring the authenticity in the transmission of the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism from generation to generation and ensuring as well the excellent character of eminent monks. But since



The sprawling campus of the Serthar Buddhist Institute in Kanze, eastern Tibet, before its dismantling in 2001 housed over 10,000 monks and nuns from all over Asia

1959 this continuous process has been interrupted. From the 1980s to the present, although on the surface religious activities have been renewed, it has become hard to find a trace of the very core of the religion — the pious beliefs of eminent monks, deep research into Buddhism and teaching aimed at enlightening all sentient beings.

The governing authorities operate a “reverse elimination” selection system among the leaders of the monks. “Any monk leader who insists on religious principles, refuses to be a tool of the authorities, will be subject to pressure and purging or even sentenced to prison as a warning to other clergy. Any monk with a relatively high traditional rank who keeps silent and doesn’t cause trouble is a candidate for recruitment by the United Front Department. He will be given rewards but a club will be always be ready to intimidate him. Any monk willing to put personal advancement first, who is opportunistic, gives up religious principles, and willing to be a tool of the government will be given all sorts of advantages, membership in the National People’s Congress, the National People’s Consultative Congress or even higher government positions. The green light will be given for their activities, resources will be provided so that they will be a model who can draw in other leaders among the monks.” In sum, therefore, although the Chinese Communists boast of religious freedom but their religious policy is aimed at the destruction of Buddhism, no less than it was in the days of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong wanted to completely extirpate Buddhism. In Tibetan history there were eras when Buddhism was extirpated yet Buddhism still continued because the religion lived in the hearts of believers and so could not be destroyed by an external force. Today the Communist Party religious policy aims at the degeneration of the monk stratum of Tibetan society. This is a mortal danger to Buddhism.”

As a consequence of all this, although Tibet has made considerable economic progress over the past thirty years and the lives of ordinary Tibetans have improved, Tibetans are still dissatisfied

and “events” occur over and over again in the Tibetan regions. The Tibetan issue is still “an issue” that is the focus of constant international attention. The events that have occurred since March are just new developments in the course of this ongoing transformation.

Demonizing the Dalai Lama is Extremely Stupid

After the “hitting, smashing, stealing and burning” event of March 14, the Chinese government immediately announced that this was instigated by the “Dalai Clique”. When in April there was interference with the transmission of the torch, the authorities again asserted that the “Dalai Clique” had instigated “Tibet independence elements”, with the aim of destroying the Olympic Games, in order to further the cause of “Tibet independence”.

The “human rights issue” was substituted for the “independence issue” to serve the needs of people in authority. This is easy to see. But in their effort to dump this pile of shit on the head of the Dalai Lama, we can see how preposterous the traditional political logic of the Chinese communists is. This also reveals that the rulers lack a long term strategic vision and political wisdom.

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. He is also one of the most famous political figures in the world. The year the Dalai Lama fled Tibet he was 24 years old. In half a century of exile, this ethnic Tibetan sage has blended the essence of Buddhism, magnanimity, liberal democracy and other universal values of contemporary civilization. Already in 1987, the Dalai Lama proposed the “Five Point Peace Proposal” which includes the suggestion that Tibet become a “peace zone”, that “China end its policy of moving settlers into Tibet”, that there be “respect for the human rights and democratic rights of the Tibetan people”, that the government “restore and protect Tibet’s natural environment”, and that the two sides “hold sincere talks about the future status of Tibet and the

relationship between the Tibetan people and the Chinese people”.

In 1988, the Dalai Lama also made the “Strasbourg Proposal”, which proposed that “Tibet should become a self-ruled democratic political entity in union with the People’s Republic of China, in which “the Chinese government would be responsible for Tibet’s external affairs, but Tibet could establish offices overseas for the religious and cultural aspects of foreign relations” etc.

During the last seven years, the Dalai Lama has at many times and in many places stated clearly that he does not seek Tibet independence, only real autonomy for Tibet. On the methods and ways of achieving this he strongly calls for a peaceful “middle way”, which would involve honest dialog with the central government and negotiations to resolve issues. Ever since 2002, the Dalai Lama’s special envoy has met with representatives of the United Front Department in Beijing six times in order to explain to the ruling Communist Party rulers the “middle way position” but has not gotten any response to the proposal.

The rigid stance of the Chinese Communist Party is very easy to understand from their political tradition. The institutional arrangements for Tibet have already been decided. So what is there to talk about? Accepting the so-called “autonomy” of the Dalai Lama would shake the foundations of the party-state, so there can be no yielding on this point. Therefore, “talks” are for the Communist side just a perfunctory exercise and only done for show, and so of course there can be no concrete results from them. Yet these delays cause more and more difficulties for the Dalai Lama since he has to explain things to both the Tibetan exiles and to believers within Tibet.

There are many different organizations and groups among the Tibetans in exile with different political positions. There are radical ones like the “Tibet Youth Congress” which has attracted a lot of attention lately. It’s political position is very different from the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way”. The Tibet Youth

Congress was founded in 1970 mostly by second and third generation Tibet exiles. Membership is now several tens of thousands with organizations in 40 countries. At the outset the Tibet Youth Congress stood for non-violence, but is has changed its position over the past several years. At its 2007 annual meeting, the leader of the Congress said that the non-violence propounded by the Dalai Lama is good, but he has been saying this for many years without result. "Very many people don't believe in it. They say it doesn't work." If it doesn't work, then what? The Tibet Youth Congress is inclined to use violence to solve the problem, including preparing a "popular uprising movement" in the Tibetan areas. It is said that over 700 Tibetans have volunteered and that they are willing to give up their lives to protect what they "stand for".

The Dalai Lama has stated clearly that he opposes any scheme or action involving the use of violence. He said that if such an act should occur, he may have to "resign" to show his true position. Several days ago, the Dalai during an interview with Asia Week [Yazhou Zhoukan] said that he believes that giving up the Middle Way of setting aside efforts to achieve Tibet independence in favor of seeking a high degree of autonomy is still the mainstream view of Tibetans in exile as well as the mainstream view of people in the Tibetan areas. As for the Tibet Youth Congress, the Dalai Lama said that he can only admonish the Tibet Youth Congress not to take the radical road. However, he has no way to order the Tibet Youth Congress to shut up.

Beijing may not completely trust the statements of the Dalai Lama because overcoming political enmity built up over a long time will take time and face-to-face communication. However, indiscriminately demonizing the other side, charging that the Dalai Lama is the commander in the "Tibet independence camp" and should certainly be punished by the entire nation, and reviled by everyone, can only put the Dalai Lama in a difficult situation (while he is trying to put pressure on radical forces among Tibetans) and lead the Chinese

communists into a political dead end (frozen into the rigid face of the dictator), giving up the freedom of maneuver needed in political negotiations. Isn't this an extremely stupid way to behave?!

Yet, in the final analysis, this is the obstinate and stubborn traditional political logic that haunts the Communist Party. According to this logic, there can be no equal negotiating partners. There can only be enemies locked in a life and death struggle. Even worse is how the rulers are haunted by their own logic of interests — for according to this logic, Tibet "autonomy" is intolerable. It would be a fundamental threat to the party-state, and a threat to a large group that benefits from this system. Considered in terms of these two logics, the demonization of the Dalai Lama becomes easy to understand. But where is justice? What are the prospects for the great family of the peoples of China? Considering the puerile and shallow "patriotism" and "nationalism" shown in the recent turbulent tide of meticulously planned and instigated demonstrations in both China and abroad by the new "Boxers", as well as the very deep problems facing the country, one is left with a bitter and confused taste in one's mouth and troubled deep into sleepless nights.

The Solution to the Tibet issue Should be Sought Within a Constitutional Framework

The Tibet issue is first of all a human rights issue. But it is not only a human rights issue. Abuses of human rights are an "effect", not a "cause". An irrational system of political dictatorship is what caused the "Tibet issue."

Didn't the Communist Party initially seek to help the Tibetan people and the million "liberated serfs"? I believe that this is true. Yet the history of the world is full of examples of evil deeds done with good intentions. During the late Qing, the court made great reforms in Tibetan affairs and promoted reforms in order to prevent the great powers from continuing to encroach upon Tibet. In 1907, Zhang Yintang gave to the Qing Court "Twenty-four proposals for the

governance of Tibet". During 1905 – 1911, in the the provinces of Sichuan and Kang, a reform to "change from indirect control through local chiefs to direct control by the central government". The purpose in addition to consolidating Qing rule was to transform social traditions for the "good of" ordinary Tibetans. However, these "reforms" were strongly resisted by Tibetan people. Half a century later the Communist Party did the same thing in the Tibetan areas, albeit more systematically and with more determination. The result was larger scale harm to the people, religion and culture of the Tibetan areas.

In fact, history has already shown that China's 20th century communist revolution was a mistake. It was a big wrong turn during a century of social transformation. It not only brought misfortune to the Han nationality, it also brought misfortune to the minority peoples. Today, people are thinking deeply about that history. Things that are past cannot be called back. But we should remember the lessons of history, and look at the issues of today and tomorrow with a scientific attitude. This is the responsibility of the present generation.

Respect for the fundamental rights of citizens, and respect for the distinctive cultures and traditions must be implemented in a constitutional political system. This is the basic path for solving the Tibet issue.

Recently Taiwan successfully changed the ruling party for the second time. This shows the superiority of the democratic system of government. It also demonstrates the necessity and urgency of changing the political system on the Chinese mainland. Clearly, the party dictatorship system of the Chinese Communist Party cannot accommodate unification between Taiwan and the mainland, just as it cannot accommodate true autonomy for Tibet. Only by dissolving the present system and creating a constitutional democratic system in accordance with the universal values and principles of modern civilization can the day come when Taiwan finally returns to the motherland,



Thousands of Tibetans have been arrested in connection with the peaceful protests that swept across the plateau since March 10, 2008. Above is a screen grab of a public sentencing rally held in Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, and broadcast on state-run television. The letters on the screen say “Hold high the banner of maintaining stability”.

Tibet achieves true autonomy, and Han and Tibetans get along with each other in harmony.

From the beginning of the 1960s, the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamasala, India started to experiment at building a system of democratic government. In his Strasbourg Proposal, the Dalai Lama said that “the Tibetan government should be composed of an independent administration and legislature chosen by the vote of all citizens and a court system.” The Dalai Lama even proposed changing the Tibetan form of government that combines politics and religion. He didn’t worry if he might become the “last Dalai” in Tibetan history.¹⁰ Tibetans have already made preparations for a democratic political system. Shouldn’t the central government in Beijing make similar preparations?

Certainly for the Chinese Communist decision-makers who now hold power, changing the present system and creating a new institutional framework would take a great deal of courage and wisdom. This would not be just for Tibet or for Taiwan; it would be for all the 1.3 billion citizens of the People’s Republic of China. To be honest, even after China

has established a constitutional form of government, finding the reasonable sharing of jurisdiction between the central government and the nationalities areas will not be easy.

I once wrote an article entitled “Two Track Republican System: A Proposal for the Reform of the Chinese System of Constitutional Government”. In this article I pointed out that it is an uncontested fact that the “division of powers” and “autonomy” strengthen the rights consciousness of citizens and increases their participation in public affairs (in the nationalities areas, autonomy also helps preserve the cultural traditions of nationalities and protects their special interests). Yet there is another aspect to this problem, that is the tendency of interests to expand and the “logic of collective interests”. The latter will certainly create some “problems of the commons” which will have to be solved by the intervention of a public power at a higher level that is above local interests, especially intervention by the central government.

Returning to the present, there is still a chance for the central government to solve the Tibet issue. That can be done by conducting genuine negotiations with

the Dalai Lama. Recently Beijing has already said that it is willing to resume contact. That is good. Even if it is just a pose, it is positive. Everyone hopes that the talks can produce genuine results so as to create a harmonious bridge between the Han and Tibetan peoples while the Dalai Lama is still alive. If this issue is not handled well, then “splitting” might become a real and present danger.

As a Chinese citizen, I naturally don’t want to see Tibet split off from the household of our motherland. We should believe that the trend of human civilization is towards unifying rather than towards splitting. Unity is helpful for solving many of the problems that humanity is faced with. As a Chinese proverb goes, the melon that is grabbed roughly cannot be sweet — unity needs to be a voluntary unity based upon a community of interests. Forced compliance cannot produce good results. This simple truth can also be applied to politics.

(*Zhang was born in Beijing in 1955. He received an MA in economics from Zhongguo Renmin Daxue in 1982 and in 1985 passed the entrance examination for the Institute of Philosophy of the graduate school of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. His research has been on critical theory in continental Europe in modern western philosophy. He obtained MA and PhD degrees in philosophy in 1988 and 1991. He has held a post in the Philosophy Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences from 1991 to present. In recent years he has striven to understand the lessons of success and failure in the history of the past century of China’s democratic transition and institutional modernization. He has gradually settled upon criticism of 20th Century Chinese despotism as his main research topic.

This assessment by Zhang Boshu was translated for China Digital Times by a reader who wishes to remain anonymous.

This article was written April 22 – 28, 2008 in Beijing.)

- ༡། ཚུད་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ཀྱི་འགོ་བོན་ཆ་ཚང་སློབ་ཡུལ་རང་ངོས་ནས་བརྒྱུ་བ་དགོས་པ་ཡིན།
- ༢། འཚང་སློབ་དུས་ཐོག་མ་འབྲོར་བ་དང་། ཆ་རྒྱུན་མ་ཚང་བའི་རིགས་ལ་ངོས་བཞེས་གནང་རྒྱུ་མིན།
- ༣། དུས་བཀག་གི་ཉིན་གུངས་ ༡༤ རྗེས་ཚུད་འཚང་སློབ་ཡུལ་འབྲོར་བུང་བ་རྣམས་ལ་འདི་ནས་དགོས་ངེས་ཡིག་ཆ་ཚང་མིན་བདེ་ལན་བྱ་རྒྱུ་དང་། དེའི་རྗེས་སུ་ཡུལ་འབྲོར་བུང་བ་རྣམས་ལ་བདེ་ལན་བྱ་རྒྱུ་མིན།
- ༤། དོགས་འདི་ཡིད་ཆེ་གཤམ་འཁོད་ཁ་བྱུང་ཐོག་འབྲེལ་བ་གནང་དགོས།
- ༥། འཚང་སློབ་མཉམ་དགོས་མཁོའི་ཡིག་ཆ་ཁག་ཀྱི་ལུས་མེད་པ་ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༢༠༡༡ ལྷ་ ༤ ཚེས་ ༡༥ འགྲངས་མེད་གཤམ་གསལ་ཁ་བྱུང་ཐོག་འབྲེལ་དགོས་པ་དང་། འཚང་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ལྷན་འབྲེལ་སྐབས་ཐོང་གསལ་ཡིག་ཆ་ངོ་མ་མཉམ་འབྲེལ་དགོས་རྒྱུ་དང་། དེ་མ་བྱུང་ཆེ་གཏོར་མེད་ཐོག་འཚང་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ནང་ལྷགས་རྒྱུའི་གོ་སྐབས་མེད་པ་དེ་དོན་ཡིད་འདམས་ལྷན་བཅས། ངོད་གཞུང་ཤེས་རིག་ལས་ཁུངས་ནས། ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༢༠༡༡ ལྷ་ ༤ ཚེས་ ༢༤ ལ།

London Metropolitan University (LMU) Scholarship

London Metropolitan University, London UK offers one scholarship for either an Undergraduate or Postgraduate for Tibetan Refugee students every year. Those interested should apply directly to the LMU branch office in India taking into consideration the following:

1. Check LMU website: www.londonmet.ac.uk/howtoapply for eligibility criteria and application details.
2. Download Application forms from their website: www.londonmet.ac.uk or apply online.
3. Interested Applicants should visit either of their branch offices at Delhi and Chennai (which ever is closest to you) for submission of forms or further information.
4. Last date for submission of LMU Application form & relevant documents is 31st May for Fall Admission & 31st October for Spring Admission respectively.
5. Applicants who receive Letter of Conditional Offer should submit the following to the Department of Education of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) Dharamsala, H.P.
 - a. A bonafide certificate stating that you are a Tibetan Refugee student holding a valid Residential Certificate (RC) from any one of the following:
 - i. School Principal
 - ii. Settlement / Welfare Officer
 - b. Photocopies of:
 - i. Letter of Conditional Offer
 - ii. Photocopy of LMU Direct Application Forms
 - iii. Applicant's valid Residential Certificate (RC) duly extended with attestation by Settlement Officer
 - iv. Applicant's valid Green Book (GB) duly paid with attestation by Settlement Officer
6. Applicants need to produce IELTS/TOEFL score for those who have not scored more than 70% in English at Class X & XII.
7. The Department of Education CTA will endorse the application once formality no. 5 is completed and accordingly recommend the list of eligible candidates to the LMU Main Office at London for its final selection.
8. Upon its selection, the London Metropolitan University, London will directly contact the final selected candidate for further admission process.

If you have any questions, contact us at:

Scholarship Section
 Department of Education CTA
 Gangchen Kyishong
 Dharamsala-176 215
 Distt. Kangra, Himachal Pradesh
 Phone: 01892-226695, 222572, 222721 Fax: 01892-223481

Note: CTSA Reserved seat and HP MBBS Reserved seat recipients are not allowed to apply for any overseas scholarship provided by this department during the entire study period.

