

# TIBETAN

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## Tibetan Media

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

**Tibetan Freedom** (official Tibetan weekly)  
Department of Information & International  
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India  
Email: tibfreedom@gov.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@gov.tibet.net  
Web: www.xizang-zhiye.org  
www.tibetonline.tv



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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS:

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

## Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

### INDIA

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

### 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

### RUSSIA

Tibet Culture & Information Centre, P.O.Box 161,  
Moscow 103009, Russia Tel: +7-495-627-31-73  
Email: tibet.center@ru.net  
Web: www.savetibet.ru

### NEPAL

Tibetan Refugee Transit Centre, Shantipur Road,  
Ichangu, P.O. Box 14189, Kathmandu, Nepal Email:  
trc@mail.com.nt

### 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@officeoftibet.com  
Website: www.officeoftibet.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

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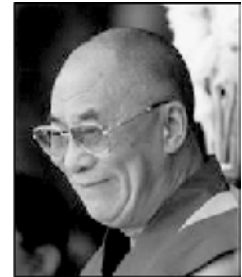
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### Editor

Sherab Wooser  
Email: tibbul@gov.tibet.net

### Layout & Design

Dorje Tsering

### Circulation Manager

Tenzin Sangmo  
Email: circulation@gov.tibet.net

*Tibetan Bulletin* is published by:

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

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## The statement of the Kashag on the occasion of the Seventy-Fifth birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

July 6, 2010

On this auspicious occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, the Kashag, on behalf of the Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, as well as all of his disciples and well-wishers across the globe, makes obeisance to him and prays that he may live for hundreds of years.

Since his childhood until now, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, while developing a great sense of empathy and compassion for all sentient beings, has provided enormous service to humanity by catering to the needs of people with different mental dispositions while, at the same time, contributing to the maintenance and promotion of the entire teachings of the Buddha Sakyamuni, known in the Buddhist world as the “Fourth Guide”. Particularly in this post-modern era, His Holiness has provided inspirational guidance to the believers (in all religions of the world) and non-believers alike. Transcending the bounds of religion, His Holiness has also given unprecedented and timely advice of what he calls “secular ethics”, emphasising on the need to develop universal responsibility through the promotion of basic human values and inter-religious harmony and co-existence for the common good of the world we live in. Moreover, for resolving the issue of Tibet, His Holiness has come out with the mutually-beneficial Middle-Way policy and non-violent means to realise it. His Holiness has further transformed the nature of the exile Tibetan polity into

a genuine democracy. There is no way we can repay our debts of gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. However, with a strong sense of the realisation of all that he has done for us, we would like to re-pledge ourselves today that we shall put into real practice the many valuable advice that he has given to us.

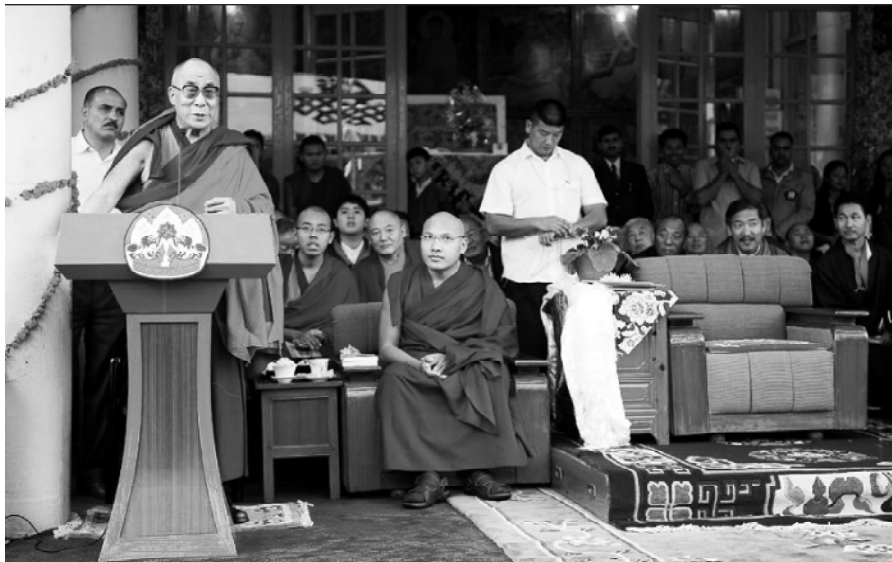
That nothing untoward has happened to the person of His Holiness the Dalai Lama thus far is mainly due to his altruistic feelings and karmic merits, the protection given by the guardian deities of Tibet, the collective merit of the Tibetan people, and particularly due to the assistance and co-operation extended by the central and state governments of India and its great

nature] as well as the sky [above]//May [I] also remain eternally to serve as one who solves the infinite sentient beings’ myriad problems,” His Holiness immerses himself in their service. We have nothing but admiration for all his endeavours, but these are certainly taking a great toll on His Holiness’ health. The physical wellbeing of His Holiness is very important for humanity in general, and for the short and long-term benefits of the Tibetan people in particular. Therefore, we would like to implore him to kindly see to it that his daily programmes do not come in the way of his good health.

A few leaders of the People’s Republic of China, who are blind to choosing between

right and wrong and who lack foresight due to their preoccupation with short-term personal and political power gains, are liberally spending both human and financial resources to issue baseless accusations against and to slander His Holiness. This is because of the jealousy arising out of their inability to match His Holiness’ meritorious deeds all over the world. Their actions, which

resemble spitting in the air that will fall back on themselves, has become a source for the people of the world to view the autocratic Chinese leaders as the ones who are unable to accept the truth and who rely only on lies and violence rather than seeking truth from facts. This has also become a condition for the Tibetans to remain more united. However, as stated in the Indian and Tibetan treaties on worldly affairs that the power of the opposition should not be underestimated or



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the gathering on July 6, 2010 at Dharamshala.*

people. While expressing our heart-felt thanks to all of them, and especially to those overseeing the security of His Holiness, we would like to urge them to further intensify their assistance and co-operation in this respect.

With great compassion, His Holiness labours day in and day out for the benefit of all humanity. Inspired by this verse of Shantideva, the great Bodhisattva: “Like the earth and the other great elements [of

neglected, the Kashag would like to make some important appeals to the Tibetans in and outside Tibet at this critical period.

As a result of the clear display of the united Tibetan spirit in 2008, the sympathy and support to the Tibetan cause by the people of the world, and due especially to His Holiness' achievements and great deeds, the other side is using all its political, financial and human powers to create discord among Tibetans and between Tibetans and the local communities where Tibetans live in exile. It is particularly using many deceitful means to erect obstacles on the way of Holiness' activities and deeds globally. The Kashag would like to make an emphatic appeal to the Tibetans in and outside Tibet that they should remain alert to these Chinese manipulations and always be careful in maintaining unity among ourselves and keeping good relations with the local communities.

Since the upcoming elections for the fifteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and the third directly-elected Kalon Tripa are crucially important, the people at large are currently engaged in serious discussions and debates as to whom they should vote. At such a time, the people should be careful about the other side's evil designs

and infiltrations. Moreover, each Tibetan must sincerely and courageously take part in the election processes by not shirking their democratic responsibilities and rights. It is very important to use one's own intelligence, rather than following what others say, in making the right choice of candidates in the ensuing elections. The Kashag would like to appeal to all the Tibetan people to give a serious thought over these.

For over fifty years, the Tibetans in and outside Tibet have been able to withstand the unbearable circumstances and emergencies with great courage and strength, and for over four generations the Tibetans have been able to maintain their religion, culture and tradition. This is solely due to the grace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Furthermore, the fact that Tibetans have, in un-diminishing spirit, been able to continue our non-violent movement is a matter of great pride for us. Looking at the changes that are taking in the world and within the country, the issue of Tibet is heading towards finding a solution.

Nevertheless, His Holiness often states that one must hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Hence if the issue of Tibet takes time to resolve, then it is important for the Tibetans in and outside

Tibet to preserve their unique character of good moral conduct without losing their spirit. Good moral conduct is not only a symbol of the Tibetans but also a source for the Chinese and the people around the world to have affection for and to support our cause. Likewise, the young Tibetans must make efforts towards their general studies, and particularly towards becoming professionals well-versed in both traditional and modern education.

The mutually beneficial Middle-Way policy, which has been adopted by the overwhelming majority of the Tibetans under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, is the sole way to resolve the issue of Tibet. The Kashag is currently pursuing this policy, based on the fact that it enjoys the overwhelming majority support of the Tibetans and the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has endorsed it unanimously. We believe that all of the Tibetan people will, after having relied on their respective intelligence to ascertain the merit of this policy, support it whole-heartedly.

Finally, the Kashag prays that His Holiness may live long and all his wishes be spontaneously fulfilled. May the truth of the issue of Tibet prevail soon! ■

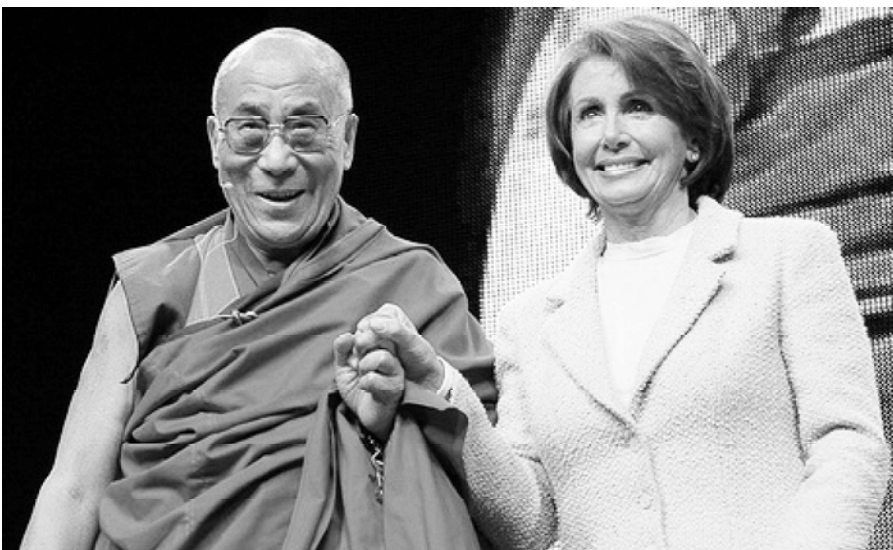
**The Kashag**

## US Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi's statement on the 75th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Washington, D.C., July 6, 2010

Today marks the 75th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, along with Tibetan supporters all around the world, will be celebrating this occasion and honouring a man of peace and wisdom.

His Holiness often describes himself as a 'simple monk, no more, no less.' But His Holiness represents much more to many people around the world. For thousands, he is a source of spiritual refuge and a connection to inner peace and harmony. He has travelled the world, building bridges between the different



*Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi with His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

faiths. He has used his position to promote wisdom, compassion, and non-violence as a solution - not only in Tibet - but to other world conflicts.

The Dalai Lama has made the human rights situation in Tibet an issue of international concern, and it is long past time to resolve it. A negotiated agreement would ensure internal stability in Tibet and bolster China's reputation in the world.

His Holiness has expressed a willingness to visit China and engage directly with high level officials. It is my sincere hope that Beijing will send a confident message by inviting His Holiness to China for substantive discussions.

His Holiness has asked for international support for his non-violent efforts to engage the Chinese government. I am proud to say the U.S. Congress has been a bedrock of support for the Tibetan cause. In 2007, I stood with President

Bush to award the Congressional Gold Medal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his 'many enduring and outstanding contributions to peace, non-violence, human rights, and religious understanding.'

On the 75th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I offer my continued appreciation of his life's work promoting compassion, peace, and human rights for all of the people of the world. ■

## Archbishop Desmond Tutu's message on the 75th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

6 July 2010

Today I join Free Tibet in celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of my great friend Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet, the spiritual and political leader of Tibetans both inside Tibet and in exile.

My great sadness today is that in Tibet people face very grave consequences if they join me in celebrating the birthday of this extraordinary man who they hold so dear. Tibetans in Tibet cannot openly pray for his long life or burn incense to mark his birthday, as is traditional for Tibetan Buddhists;

nor can they carry or display a photograph of their Dalai Lama without fear of punishment, including detention and even torture. Great efforts are taken in Tibet to minimise his influence: monks and nuns are forced to denounce the Dalai Lama or face a variety of measures from fines to expulsion from their monastery or nunnery.

All these restrictions are terrible violations of the universal right to freedom of religion and religious belief as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

My friend's lifelong commitment to compassion, tolerance and non-violence have earned him respect throughout the world, and in 1989 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has inspired not only me, but also people of all faiths from all corners of the globe, to live with compassion and grace even when faced with the most difficult circumstances.

While people across the world freely and publicly celebrate this most auspicious day, the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I join Free Tibet in asking the Chinese government to please, please stop preventing the veneration in Tibet of a man who is such an example to us all of compassion, tolerance and forgiveness. To the international community, I ask you today to please hold in your hearts and thoughts the many people in Tibet who are forced to celebrate His Holiness the Dalai Lama in secret. The people of Tibet may not be able to read my words today, but my wish is that they know that we stand in solidarity with them, petitioning on their behalf that they may be able openly and freely to celebrate this 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of their revered and beloved Dalai Lama. ■



*Archbishop Desmond Tutu with His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

## In conversation with The Dalai Lama

*Barkha Dutt, prominent journalist and Group Editor of NDTV, India's leading news channel, travelled to Dharamshala to conduct a special interview with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to commemorate his 75th birthday. NDTV broadcast the interview on July 6, 2010. Following is the full transcript, including unaired segments of the interview, taken from [www.ndtv.com](http://www.ndtv.com).*

**NDTV:** He is easily one of the world's most respected and more importantly, the most loved political and spiritual leaders. He was only 2 years old when he was recognized as the future Dalai Lama, in fact, the 14th Dalai Lama and only 6-years-old when he began his monastery education. And today, as he turns 75, we are extremely privileged to be with him in Dharamshala at his monastery, a home away from home not just for His Holiness but also for the Tibetan people in exile for decades now. We look back and ahead at his life and times, we also have with us today in our special audience not just his followers but also people who visit Dharamshala, which has got an international name because of His Holiness, and of course tourists and foreigners and followers come from all across the globe and like I said it's clearly a privilege to be with you your Holiness.



You know, most of us mere mortals, when we approach our birthday, sometimes we are happy, sometimes there is a sense of fear that life is slipping by, that we are getting old, but you seem to be perennially young. How do you manage to stay so young hearted?

**The Dalai Lama:** I think sufficient sleep and...

**NDTV:** I never get enough of that, I think that's the problem.

**The Dalai Lama:** As a Buddhist monk there is no dinner but a very heavy breakfast and lunch so sufficient food. I think physically these things are important. Then another factor, nowadays according to latest scientific

findings a healthy mind is very important for a healthy body. So I think in my own case, comparatively I think my mental state is quite peaceful. Whenever I am hurt or face some problem, I look at it from a wider way, a holistic way and that also helps to reduce anxiety.

**NDTV:** Many people describe you as a twinkly-eyed, you know there is a twinkle in your eyes, you are always laughing, you make us laugh, you make everybody

look at human beings from the President or King or Prime Minister upto beggar ... in my eyes all are the same. So whenever I meet people I look at them as just other human beings ... basically our brothers and sisters. So that also creates more peace in my mind. But that level of mind does not remain always. Occasionally, sometimes I burst.

**NDTV:** You get angry?

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh yes yes.

**NDTV:** You get angry?

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh yes, if you ask some silly question repeatedly, then I may lose my temper.

**NDTV:** Now I am scared.

**The Dalai Lama:** Actually once it happened in America. One New York Times columnist, one lady, she asked me, first some other questions, then she asked me, what I want my name or legacy to be in future. And I told her, I am a Buddhist practitioner and

I do not think of my name like that. Then we had some other discussion, then again she asked me the same question, and I answered in the same way, then again after some time she asked me the same question... then I lost my temper.

**NDTV:** This is a lesson for me to ask only once.

**The Dalai Lama:** Good, good.

**NDTV:** But when you get angry, do you express it? You know in modern urban life, a lot of us get angry very quickly, we lead highly stressful lives, we have short tempers. When you get angry how do you control it? Because you are a Buddhist, a spiritual leader?

**The Dalai Lama:** You see when I get angry or irritated due to very small mistakes of some people, then I just express and then finish, nothing. But sometime when it is a more serious form of anger, I try to separate myself from anger, then watch my anger, that emotion... then immediately the strength of anger diminishes, according to my own experience. And then, I also share with my friends, just as these, in order to bring more calmness to my mind. You cannot have some sort of special practice for each case, but you must build your basic mental attitude in a healthy way, like in the case of a healthy body if the immune system is strong then some virus or germs can't disturb you much, so similarly, your mental attitude has to be calm, then if some disturbance come, even if some negative emotions come, they remain for very short period, all the emotions remain on the surface, and do not disturb much in depth.

**NDTV:** Now tell me something, you spoke about the brain, the human brain, but you are the kind of person who married a scientific temperament of inquisitiveness with spirituality, which is very rare. And I read somewhere that on your table, you have the model of the human brain that you keep assembling and trying to understand... it's very rare for a spiritual leader to believe so much in science, where did that come to you from?

**The Dalai Lama:** I believe, firstly, that if you are a genuine religious practitioner, especially a Buddhist, you have to be realistic. So in order to develop a realistic approach, a realistic awareness, you must know the reality. So in that respect, the scientific way of thinking, their method of investigating the reality is very important, very useful. I think basically some of my friends may already know, that Buddhism in general, particularly the Nalanda tradition, their way of thinking is very scientific. So Buddha himself has made it very clear in one of his quotations that all his followers should not accept his teachings out of faith but out of thorough investigation and experiment. Sometimes I refer to these great spiritual leaders of Nalanda as as great masters.

From the Buddhist eye they are masters, but from general eye they are Nalanda professors, very brilliant. They have in writing advising not to believe in the Buddhist word rather believe in their own investigation and logic. So I think that's the basic way of thinking, it's the Nalanda tradition.

**NDTV:** That is practical and scientific.

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes. So I am training through that way, and then personally, since my childhood I always had this curiosity...wanting to know what's this and what's that. And particularly when I was very young, the British Mission in Lhasa... when a new person came, he always brought me some toys. So when I received information of some new officials in the British Mission in Lhasa, I always got very excited, 'Oh! what kind of new toy would come?'

**NDTV:** What was your favourite toy?

**The Dalai Lama:** Trains, you know railway, like that (gestures) and cars. Anyway when I received such things, for few moments I would play and then I would try to know the system that caused the movement and then I would always open it up. Actually, many toys were damaged in the process. And then after coming to India finally, I got the opportunity of meeting people from different religious traditions that was immensely helpful, then meeting people from different professions and then eventually scientists. As I was interested, I became more acquainted with them, had more discussions with them and found them very, very useful, very helpful.

**NDTV:** But you know, one of the most compelling facts about you your Holiness is that you still retain a child-like, if I may use that phrase, a child-like innocence, a child like humour, yet you were only two years old when you were recognised as the next Dalai Lama. Do you sometimes, speaking as a human being and not a holy man today, do you look back and feel that your childhood was lost?

**The Dalai Lama:** No. I think in a way yes, to some extent. For two or three years after they recognised me as the

Dalai Lama of the nation, I was still with my parents, my younger brother, elder brother, sister etc and then I think when I was about 5 years, I reached Lhasa and was then separated from my mother.

**NDTV:** For a child that must have been very difficult?

**The Dalai Lama:** During my sort of station or living in Potala, at some distance was a building where they could stay but my mother preferred to stay somewhere else. I think in summer time, every other day they used to come, occasionally I also went to their home. After a few years, my tutor put some restrictions that I should not go to meet my mother. I felt a little anger but I obeyed his instructions. But sometimes as a child when my lessons were not very successful then my mood would be bad. Then as soon as the lessons finished I would run to my mother's place and spend some time there, and in the beginning I would be determined that I would never return for the lesson but then when the time for the afternoon lesson would come, I slowly returned.

**NDTV:** So that actually sounds like any other child who was traumatised by exams, but you use this interesting.....

**The Dalai Lama:** So therefore, in one way I was isolated from my mother, from my parents, but also they used to always come. Then what happened was that there were sweepers and also other officials. Of course in ceremonies or official functions they would show great respect but usually when I played with them they did not treat me as a Dalai Lama. They would often defeat me, sometimes I would cry, I did not want to be defeated. So they treated me in a normal way, including those sweepers who later become my best friends. They are uneducated but very honest, very trustworthy people.

**NDTV:** You use this word 'realist' talking about scientific temperament, this phrase talking about realistic approach has defined your politics, you have two avatars, you are a spiritual leader and you are also the political leader of Tibet, your realistic approach where you have spoken about autonomy for Tibet rather



than independence is the Middle Way, is the moderate approach, yet it seems like it hasn't moved Beijing, it hasn't moved China, do you regret at 75 your moderate political approach?

**The Dalai Lama:** No, no. Of course among Tibetans and among our supporters, our friends, there are some signs of increasing criticism about our approach but if you look at the whole picture, although there was some positive result from the Chinese government, the whole thing inside Tibet completely failed. From the Chinese government side there is no positive result, but the Chinese people, not the entire 1.3 billion people, but some intellectuals, some professors and writers, and some artists, I think before the Tiananmen massacre happened, very few... after that more and more Chinese are showing their concern and showing solidarity with us. Now a number of Chinese intellectuals are showing us their support, and I can give an example for that ... see in the last two years there have been over 1000 articles written in Chinese language by Chinese writers, more than 100 of them living in China. All these articles fully support our way of approach, and are very critical of their government policy.

**NDTV:** I agree but do you...

**The Dalai Lama:** Within the Chinese government there are many officials who personally express their support for our approach. This is what I feel is the positive result, but there is a problem which has to be solved with the Chinese, and we cannot stop it by ourselves. Sometimes I jokingly tell that these people are new guests without proper invitation. Such guests have come with a gun. Once they build a trench, they will control everything - the Tibetan way of life, tell us how to be a good Buddhist. Sometimes the Chinese media describing me, 'Dalai Lama not teaching proper Buddhism'. So it seems they know better. So the Tibetan problem created from outside and so we have to find a solution with them. So Chinese people support is very essential. Also the outside world, including the United States, Indian government, European Parliament... all these influential bodies they also very easily support ...

**NDTV:** You still have faith in the US? I remember when I met you last time, you had come back from your first trip from Washington and President Obama had not met you. Subsequently he did but many people think he acted under Chinese pressure. So do you still have faith in Washington?

**The Dalai Lama:** Of course. The President himself when I met, but before of course our in-person meeting, I knew him through correspondence and through telephone. He is a very good person. Then after all America is a democratic country, finally both the Houses are very important and also is the public thinking. Usually in a democratic country, it's the public thinking that reflects in the Parliament, in the Houses, that in turn reflects on the administration. In America, at the public level, both the houses are very sympathetic, very supportive. Then in this country also, the Indian government can easily support our stand.

**NDTV:** But the Indian government did not let you make a political speech when you went to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. They said that you were to visit as a spiritual leader. Do you sometimes think that India is also giving in to pressure from the Chinese because India is trying to form a parallel strategic relationship with China. Doesn't that disturb you?

**The Dalai Lama:** Previously, I used to respond when people asked what is the government of India's attitude to the issue, and I have always said that those fields in which the Indian government could help, it has provided maximum help - in educational field, in rehabilitation etc. In the political field, government of India's attitude or policy towards China in general and particularly Tibet I described as over cautious. It's understandable. But in recent years, the government of India's stand on this issue is now more firm.

**NDTV:** We are in conversation with His Holiness The Dalai Lama on the occasion of his 75th birthday in Dharamshala at his monastery so it's a very special occasion for us as well and for all the people who have known and followed

and worshipped and befriended the Dalai Lama, one of the few Holy man with whom you can crack a few jokes. We are going to hear from all of them today and we are carrying from Delhi the special message for you your holiness from one of India's best known photographers, Raghu Rai, who has spent a long time photographing you and following you around and he loves you a lot and this is the message Raghu Rai has sent for you...

**Raghu Rai's message:** Your Holiness, many happy returns of the day on your 75th birthday and you may look as handsome and as strong like the Himalayas, like you have always looked. Your Holiness, you know that we all love you and I personally love you very deeply because each time you have given me a high. My mind, body and soul gets enriched and rejuvenated with the energy that you exuberate. You are a highly spiritual and evolved person and so my question to you is, please connect with the supreme energy for our sake and find out when are we going to go back to Tibet so that I can travel back with you in your home land and photograph you all over again. My best wishes again and lots of love.

**The Dalai Lama:** Thank you.

**NDTV:** And I guess Raghu asked the question that so many wants to know. Do you believe in your heart of hearts and I ask you this because you are a realist, "do you believe that you will ever go back to Tibet in this lifetime?"

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh yes.

**NDTV:** You still believe that?

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes. Firstly the Tibetan spirit is inside Tibet and despite so much of change or new development and also brainwashing or torture on various matters, Tibet's spirit never changes, it is forever very strong. Then on top of that many Chinese, according to some information there are over 200 millions of Buddhists in China including many party members and high officials who are outwardly communist atheist but inside they are Buddhists. Sooner or later they have to realise that their policy is unrealistic and will always be counter-productive.

**NDTV:** Do you ever feel because while you are a holy leader, spiritual leader but you are also human at heart. Do you sometimes feel that in this issue of going back to Tibet for you or for your people, time is not on your side anymore?

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh yes, 51 years have passed but as I mentioned earlier, you see, last 60 years or more than 60 years, things are changing quite rapidly in China so the present situation cannot remain forever. We have to believe that things will change but then if you ask, how soon, that is the question and nobody knows the answer.

**NDTV:** In your lifetime?

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh, in the next 5 years, 10 years or I think 15 years, things will change definitely.

**NDTV:** You joked once that to retire was also your human right?

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes. Since 2001, we already achieved elected political leadership of our establishment here. My position is same as a retired position, so now I am looking forward to complete retirement.

**NDTV:** Do you think the Tibet movement will remain the same if you do retire because there are many people and young Tibetans who feel your message of non-violence has actually not worked because it has not managed to move a cold un-feeling government in Beijing. So do you see those young people today, some of them who talk about having a more aggressive approach. Do you worry about what will happen to this movement after you?

**The Dalai Lama:** No. Up to now inside Tibet and as well as outside Tibet I can imagine almost 95% or even I may say 99% of people are totally dedicated to non violent paths. Among Tibetans there is the youth organisation and some other organisations that want complete freedom, complete independence so here there is the difference is. Somekind of debate is going on in our community.

Actually from our side, from time to time, we ask people since we are totally dedicated to the democratic principle and also the Tibet issue is the issue of

Tibetan people. So finally it's up to the Tibetan people. So time to time we ask people.

**NDTV:** So you are saying is that if Tibetan people wanted complete independence or more aggressive approach you would have not discouraged them?

**The Dalai Lama:** As I just mentioned, almost 99% are totally dedicated to non-violent methods. The number of people supporting independence is growing and we also sometimes find it difficult to explain because there is failure inside Tibet. Still from time to time we ask just that...I think 2008 in November we had this big meeting here and we asked the people and there were strong voices about independence and criticism of our approach but finally majority of them support our existing stand.

**NDTV:** So if the majority opinion within the community changes, you will be willing to change your position?

**The Dalai Lama:** Have to. I am not a dictator. Logically we are criticising these dictator policies and a person who criticises them, how can he practice being a dictator?

**NDTV:** Why do you want to retire then? What would this movement be without you?

**The Dalai Lama:** Age... and it is a democracy, a national struggle - people should carry on the responsibility not just one individual. So now I am 75 and now I am looking forward to and think it time for retirement

**NDTV:** Are you serious or are you joking?

**The Dalai Lama:** I am serious, you know I have three commitments: Number one commitment is the promotion of secular values, irrespective of a believer or non believer. So that's why I have always received invitation from different parts of the world. Not that they invited me as Dalai Lama but Dalai Lama's thinking is something they feel is quite realistic or suitable so that is my number one commitment.

Two - promotion of religious harmony. Both of these two things I usually

describe as ancient Indian thought. So I myself describe me as the messenger of ancient Indian thought. So wherever I go I promote these two things. These two things till my death I am committed.

Third is the Tibetan issue, so when I retire completely, I will have more time energy and will spent on these two things

**NDTV:** Have you set a time frame mentally for this retirement?

**The Dalai Lama:** No. The difficulty is that people have too much emotion and too much expectation.

**NDTV:** People won't let you retire?

**The Dalai Lama:** Well that is little bit difficult, but then also finally I am also a human being and I also have the right.

**NDTV:** Well retirement is your human right of life but I don't think its happening. There are so many people and let's start taking some questions. We have Catherine Levine...

**Catherine:** I am from Canada and I have studied philosophy of the mind so I am very interested to hear you speak and very honoured to be here today and Happy Birthday. You indicated that you do have hope for Tibet's future? What are the main sources of hope for you?

**The Dalai Lama:** Truth. Honesty. Transparency. Our voice here is very small and very weak but people trust. Other side, very few trust. So the truth, honesty and transparency is the source of our hope and source of our strength. So the power of truth brings trust and with that self-confidence. Then transparency, which brings trust and trust brings friendship.

**NDTV:** You have never in all these years lost hope? Not one moment of self-doubt, not one moment of thinking that its been decades and decades and I am not able to change anything, not one moment of losing hope?

**The Dalai Lama:** No. Of course some disappointments occasionally come but basically as I mentioned earlier, we believe in truth. So when we, my officials and some set of Chinese officials meet, since we are totally honest, truthful and

transparent, we always feel very easy to talk with them. On their side there is always uneasiness.

**NDTV:** That's a very interesting way of putting it but I think many of us marvel at where do you keep getting this optimism from? We have another question from Jeremy Russell...

**Jeremy:** I heard you say that you expect to outlive the Chinese Communist Party, I wonder if you still feel that way and whether you feel the change in the Chinese Communist Party would be gradual or sudden?

**The Dalai Lama:** The communist party inspite of lots of destruction but also some positive things they have done. Particularly in the early period when real revolutionary movement was taking place they were totally dedicated people. When I was in China in 1954-55, of course I met several times with Chairman Mao, all those top leaders and also I met a number of top leaders in different provinces. All of these people were totally dedicated to the well-being of the people. I really admired that. So my impression is good about this Marxist party. So I offered, "I want to join Communist Party" but then they said 'no hurry'. So I think even they know that eventually their Communist Party will be spoilt so better to not join the party. At that time it was really a wonderful party, really a working class people's party. So logically now the time has come for them to retire with grace. However, I have some sort of reservation to say that in China democracy must start immediately. China, who has 1.3 billion people, has never experienced democracy and large numbers of people are uneducated. So some kind of centralised authority should be there. So therefore under Communist leadership, there should be a gradual change.

I think one thing we immediately need is transparency and free information. 1.3 billion people have every right to know the reality. It's immoral. 1.3 billion Chinese people also have the capacity to know what is right what is wrong. Maybe during war or during civil war some censorship, that's it. In a free

country, during war and some emergency period, they practice that but in a peaceful period this is totally unacceptable.

Then the independent judiciary is very very crucial. 'Look at India', I often tell my Chinese friend that they should look at India - north Indian, south Indian, west Indian and east Indian - different languages, even different script, cultural differences but no separation. They have their own language and their own script, separate identity but everybody remains in this union. Kashmir has some problems and that's with mainly Pakistan. So Chinese should learn these things. So India has advantage of free information and transparency and independent judiciary. I think China should be transparent and have free information and eventually create an independent judiciary. This is very necessary.

**NDTV:** Do you still think of yourself as a Marxist?

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes. As far as social economic theory is concerned I am a Marxist.

**NDTV:** Maybe that will give you some membership to the Communist Party of China.

**The Dalai Lama:** Now unfortunately Chinese Communist Party is no longer a Communist party, it is a capitalist party. One my Nobel laureate friend, a very respected friend whom I admire, he supported the People's Republic of China - a socialist country many years ago. About two years ago I met him and asked him, "are people from China really socialist?" He said, "no, no longer socialist but capitalists and authoritarians."

**NDTV:** Which is a potent combination to deal with. And now to hear from His Holiness's one of oldest friends, Professor Sharma, who has also been the former Principal of Dharamshala College. Sir, since you know His Holiness so well tell us something that none of us know?

**Sharma:** That's a very difficult question to answer.

**NDTV:** Because we all don't know him as well as you do?

**Sharma:** I had moments of great importance with His Holiness. My most memorable moment was when a friend rang me up to say that there was a very bad news and the bad news was that his Holiness was leaving Dharamshala. Something had happened and I will not go into the details. That was at 9:30 in the evening and so in the morning I got going and in the afternoon I arrived here at his Holiness's office but His Holiness was very busy as hundreds of foreign journalists were there and I was told that no audience could be granted. I sent a message back saying that I will not leave this place, sit on dharna until midnight unless His Holiness allows me to meet him. He was kind enough that his then secretary sent the word to me that His Holiness will meet me at quarter to six in the evening after he was free from the journalists. I went to meet His Holiness and as usual he was standing at the threshold. I will not reveal to the public what he said to me when both of us waited for a second at the threshold before entering the room. Only at that moment I wished like Sita for the ground under me to open so I could go inside it and disappear. I was so shocked and then I said no your Holiness let us sit. Then we talked and talked but I don't know what I talked and a stage came when I started crying like a baby and His Holiness got up and I got up and His Holiness embraced me like anything and promised, 'I will never leave Dharamshala'. That is one of the most memorable events of my life.

I have the privilege of having his grace and blessing for the last 40 years.

**NDTV:** I hope you are never leaving Dharamshala and if you ever do it will only be to go to Tibet.

**The Dalai Lama:** The local people at that time and when the trouble happened I was in America and someone asked me so I expressed that if the local people don't want us to be here then we have to leave. Then when I reach here some of my old friends, especially this person very emotionally asked me that till the day I leave for Tibet, please remain here.

I was very much moved. Of course as a human community some problems occasionally occur but basically all local people have genuine friendship not a friendship due to money matters but friendship built on trust.

**NDTV:** So you are not leaving Dharamshala.

**The Dalai Lama:** No.

**NDTV:** We will not allow you to leave. Another veteran from Dharamshala, Ajay Singh.

**Ajay:** In today's world you are one of the most radiant personalities for the people in Tibet and in the world and for all the millions of people who follow Buddhism and for all of them you are the epitome of hope and belief and where ever you go, you spread so much joy and peace, so would you now appoint a successor?

**The Dalai Lama:** Now as far as the successor and regarding the Dalai Lama institution is concerned, as early as 1969, I made an official statement. Publicly I stated that this centuries old institution whether it should continue or not is up to Tibetan people. But Tibetan spirituality and Tibetan national struggle of course will be carried on by Tibetan people. Now for that reason we already have an elected political leadership. Every five years elections take place. In the spiritual field, among Tibetan's different Buddhist traditions - now younger generation say between twenty to thirty years old now - very healthy young spiritual leaders are coming. So after me, they will carry on the responsibility regarding spirituality. But meantime, you see, some suggestions among Tibetans, maybe worthwhile to take into serious consideration - to choose one sort of successor. So last few years we have discussed about my successor or how to keep this institution. So the topic is already but no concrete decision yet.

**NDTV:** You said once, that you believe that even the institution of the Dalai Lama could fade away, do you really believe that?

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes! The Buddha himself...there's no Buddha institution, no Nagarjuna institution but the teachings still remain, not the organisation. Of course I cannot compare myself to these great leaders, but some of my thoughts, my books will remain after me, for a few 100 years, but that's nothing to do with the institution.

**NDTV:** So it doesn't matter if there's no Dalai Lama after you?

**The Dalai Lama:** Some people got the impression that the institution is very important for Tibetan Buddhism, it's not. Of course as far as the freedom struggle is concerned, the institution is useful, that also, afterwards, it won't matter.

**NDTV:** When I met you last time, you said, I'm not a Godman.

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes. I am a human being. No question. On my first visit to Israel, some correspondent or media persons from Israel came here and I used the wrong word. Instead of saying I'm a normal human being, I mentioned I'm a perfect human being or something like that, but I meant that I'm normal, just a human being. So I used the wrong word. When I reached Tel Aviv, some newspaper mentioned it with a little negative attitude, 'Dalai Lama considers himself as a perfect human being'. And also another point ... when they asked about Hitler, the holocaust, being a Buddhist, I said even Hitler, basically, particularly when young, must be a normal human being, more compassionate.

**NDTV:** You're saying you can show compassion for Hitler?

**The Dalai Lama:** Of course! If I keep hatred, no use. Hitler has already gone.

**NDTV:** But there are modern day Hitlers, there are modern day terrorists...there are modern day people who perpetrate hate, can you really always turn the other cheek? That's what Mahatma Gandhi used to say, that's what Jesus used to say, turn the other cheek...but some would say that's weak, to turn the other cheek.

**The Dalai Lama:** I think when Indian independence was happening,

Mahatma Gandhi and some other leaders, were totally dedicated to non-violence - ahimsa. Some western powers considered it a weak sign, India's weakness, but nowadays, that kind of concept has changed. Actually, using violence, using weapons is a sign of weakness and fear. Non violence is a sign of strength, self-confidence and truth. Violence happens if you have no truth, no reason to argue... that's when they pick up weapons. Even in a husband-wife relationship when some kind of differences happen, if either side have selfish reasons, then the only thing is to shut up or do some physical violence, these are signs of weakness.

**NDTV:** How does the world deal with an Osama Bin Laden, Taliban...how do we deal with people who kill? Can we really turn the other cheek?

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh yes of course. Then, as one Buddhist master stated, basically we have to think of the maximum benefit. In some cases in order to seek maximum benefit to larger people, it is permissible to use some harsher words, some harsh sort of physical action. That's the Buddhist way of thinking. Method is not that important. Important is your goal and your motivation. When you speak some harsh words, harsh physical action, your motivation should not be hatred, but must do it with compassion. Like happens with good teachers and good parents. To stop wrongdoing by their children or students, out of a sense of concern, out of sense of compassion, sometimes they may say some harsh words, but this is essentially non violence. On the other hand, desire to cheat, or exploit and harm them, and using nice words and with some gift, is essentially violence.

I think in ancient times, people maybe more balanced because their lives were difficult, so trust is in a community was important. In last two centuries, technology developed, then human beings totally paid attention to these fields. Usually I tell people to pray, to meditate, your goal may be achieved in next life eventually. But prayers cannot solve your present problem immediately.

Technology can immediately. Money also has immediate benefits. But through prayer there are no immediate gains. So people totally pay attention to money and technology...a lot of moral crisis happening.

Fortunately now, in the latter part of the 20th century, even among rich families, or some leader of big corporations, now there are more and more people now showing the values of spirituality. On a few occasions they invited me to talk, among scientists also. In previous centuries, in past, modern science and spirituality were something totally different... now these things have come closer. And now in the US, some top scientists have really begun a serious interest in our emotions, how to tackle emotion through meditation and so they actually are creating some projects, special research work in these fields. So these are big changes. And also, I think everybody is now talking that we lack moral ethics. For some people, moral ethics must be based on religious faiths, then it becomes very limited. With religion it is very good but even without religion, the basis of ethics, including our own physical health, truthfulness, honesty, transparency, builds more self confidence. Self confidence reduces fear, brings inner strength and so stress gets reduced, fear is reduced, anxiety is reduced. Now some medical scientists have begun to realise these things. So this is a hopeful sign.

**NDTV:** Next question is from Francisco who is here from Argentina.

**Francisco:** My family is from Argentina and I've been studying here for 6 months. In Argentina we have a long history of military dictatorships, and you've talked about violence. My question is, given the military occupation of Tibet by the Chinese, given this history of violence throughout South America, given today's terrorism throughout the world, can there be a positive benefit to having a military?

**The Dalai Lama:** Maybe under certain circumstance for some period and some kind of emergency, if it is relevant. But the problem again with all those military

people is the lack of moral principles. For certain time periods they hold the power and responsibility but then they forget about democracy and only remember the power. Like the Burmese military general and I think few years in Pakistan. Look at India since independence - democratic principle remains permanently. Drawbacks here and there. But I was also telling some spiritual leaders here that I feel proud as the messenger for India wherever I go but within our home, we have problems like caste system or dowry and we must address them.

**NDTV:** So military is needed for purpose but they have to let go of power. They can't.

**The Dalai Lama:** Short period of emergency but never forever... again related to moral principle

**NDTV:** Okay we have Bhuvnesh Dubey who runs a school.

**Bhuvnesh:** Your Holiness your first commitment of promotion of human values, Ahimsa is a part of human values. How much relevant the doctrine of ahimsa in today's time of violence and Naxalism? What is the reason for the spread of Naxalism in democratic countries like India and how do we deal with it?

**The Dalai Lama:** I think violence on global level including September 11 event, we have to look at these events in a more holistic way. At that time some media people asked and I mentioned that this unbelievable tragedy has its own causes and conditions. These causes have its own causes, and own causes and own causes. So these causes maybe related with last one or two centuries, that means - colonial rule. And also from some of the countries, their oil has been exploited by the industrialised nations while their own people remained poor. So these also are ultimately moral ethics. At that time I expressed a wish that in order to counter these things we have to think at two levels - one is immediate which is to be taken care of by the politicians and the leaders and the second is we have to think long-term that is proper

education and for the promotion of non-violence "ahimsa". Now in today's world the reality is that the world is just one entity. Six billion human beings in the continents are just part of one world. Asian future depends on West and vice-versa and Africa. Your enemy is also a part of you and your future depends on them. So destruction of your neighbour and your enemy is destruction of yourself. So therefore Ahimsa does not mean the mere absence of problem or conflict. Sometimes I jokingly tell people that as long as human's smart brain remain then some problems always remain there. If we really want to build a peaceful world then human beings must go. So the differences are there and we have to find a method of solving these problems without touching the gun and by being non-violent. Through dialogue. So look South African independence movement under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. They actually practiced Mahatma Gandhi's principles. So you see in Africa white people and black people generally remain quite peaceful, so that's a realistic approach.

Recently I was in Patna and also Orissa and I met with a person from the Parliament and we discussed about this Naxal problem and I mentioned about tribes. He mentioned in the constitution the policy is good and some good points are mentioned to counter these problems but the problem is that the person who implemented these policies does not carry it out seriously and that is the problem. So I heard in some of the Naxalite area or villages no electricity and no water and their attitude towards police was negative and that's when I stressed that the real transformation of India must start from these villages. Not just few good cities like Hyderabad or Bangalore and Calcutta is good. So it should be more equal. I met some leaders in Delhi and I mentioned that please go and investigate and should not rely on just official report. So therefore these places are neglected which causes frustration which transforms into anger and anger into violence.

**Jessica:** Do you feel the Obama administration is too lenient in policies towards China?

**The Dalai Lama:** I don't think. Initially a little bit cautious but after Copenhagen the new administration gaining more experience. So this is just the beginning. You will have to wait and see. I think basically there was full sympathy and full support, which is very good. My meeting with him since he became President was a very frank discussion and very good.

**NDTV:** No disappointments with Obama?

**The Dalai Lama:** No, no.

**NDTV:** You don't think he is cozying up to China?

**The Dalai Lama:** I don't think so. When I met Obama I reminded him of Indian Prime Minister's expression. India in economic field is a little behind China but India also has some fundamental values like democracy, rule of law, free press and transparency. These are not only India's values but also universal values. So I mentioned to Obama that the concept of G-8, G-20 is only for money matters. Unfortunately people and even media pay attention to these values and not the fundamental values. So I mentioned to Obama the Indian Prime Minister, usually I describe him our prime minister because for the last 51 years now I have lived here. I express myself as son of India and that expression makes some Chinese officials furious. But that is true, now major portion of my life spent here. If you open my brain then I think I am 100% Indian because my teachers, all these India Nalanda masters are our gurus and we are chelas. And also you see, we are quite reliable chelas because you know once in the 8<sup>th</sup> century the Nalanda brilliant thoughts and concept reached Tibet we kept them. During those centuries in their own homeland lots of destructions ... now Nalanda just ruins, nothing. So, during these period when our guru little bit suffered we kept all your treasures intact. So we are quite reliable chelas.

So I reminded Obama that Indian Prime Minister's expression is very important that the West is investing in China but if you always talk money money money then the other side will get a sense of pride which is based on ignorance. Genuine pride must have a sound basis. Some of these drug dealers make lots of money through wrong means and then feel proud...that is wrong. Money is important but must be based on moral principles then should feel proud. So unfortunately in China millions of money come from outside - Taiwan, Western Europe and America. I don't think much money from India. So with this money they are exploiting cheap labour in China. Actually exploitation is wrong and there is no independent labour union. So basically the world has become always about money, economy and science and never about inner values.

I was returning from Japan and I was told by the younger generation that there is too much stress, anxiety and loneliness and due to which suicide rate is increasing. The standard of life compared to India is much higher in Japan but mentally lots of problems. So within India I have a friend from Sikkim and they mentioned to me last decade or so that lots of development is taking place but in the mean time they also told me that the drug problem and mental stress is going up as well. So these are clear signs that material things and money only provides physical comfort not mental comfort.

**NDTV:** Your Holiness there is somebody here who has a question on money since we are talking about it.

**Wolfgang:** It's an honour to speak to you. My question is related to that because I am from Austria who left his job and came to India and left western comforts like so many people do these days. So we feel that that something is missing despite us living comfortably, maybe its called spiritual awakening. So we come to other countries and do volunteering and reads books of you, for example. My question is when we know that life is more than materialistic comforts, shall we try to combine our

lifestyle - our materialistic lifestyle with the spiritual life or shall we even reduce or remove the material lifestyle and go in the spiritual levels more?

**The Dalai Lama:** Combination, combination. Follow spirituality and living like a beggar ... that is also not good. Of course some people or saints who live in the Himalayas completely naked. People cannot do that. Majority of people cannot do that. Otherwise the whole world will die of starvation. So material development is very necessary. The Southerners, Africans, many Asians within India still need a lot of further development in the economic field. Now here the Marxist principle also is very important. The moral principal of equal distribution is very important.

Few people become billionaires but many people still remain poorer. Look at America - huge gap... now that famous socialist country also having that gap where few people are billionaires with power and the rest poor particularly in the interiors... gap... huge gap. We still need a lot of material development but at the same time we blindly believe that if you receive the maximum material development all human problems are gone. That's totally wrong, unrealistic and short-sighted. Only thinking about the physical comfort. All of us have experienced that mentally happy physical discomfort is okay, but mentally unhappy and physical comfort cannot give you happiness. Mental happiness can subdue physical pains. So there is no point in neglecting taking care of our mind. Spirituality does not necessarily mean God, Buddha, but just about mental calmness. So that practice of compassion is very very helpful for a calm mind.

**NDTV:** I am going to play for you now another message we are carrying from Delhi...it is from the dancer Sonal Man Singh.

**Sonal:** I offer my prayers and salutations to His Holiness Dalai Lama. I think I was a school girl and he was a 16 year old and he was visiting India and I showed him his picture and he laughed in his

shaky way and hugged me. You know just to be hugged by him and be enveloped - it's like going into the deep waters of Ganga. So your Holiness you are anekshatru, you are yugpurush and you are what you are. I want to wish you many many healthy fruitful laughter filled years where you spread joy and beauty to all and my one question is how do you do it with all the problems you have faced in your life ... fantastic. My humblest namaskar.

**The Dalai Lama:** Thank you.

**NDTV:** How do you do it?

**The Dalai Lama:** There is no other choice. If you rely drugs or alcohol, it's going to be self-destruction. So we have a wonderful human mind which has the ability to think with reason or fact. So use that maximum way and then become realistic. Once in the 8th century a Buddhist master expressed: when we are facing problems think of the problem and if you can overcome that problem then no need to worry. If there is no way to overcome that problem then don't worry too much. Very realistic advice.

**NDTV:** It's actually extraordinary, your optimism.

I want to ask you something, I don't think I have ever met a spiritual leader, I am not saying holy man or godman, just a spiritual or political leader who is so loved by so many people, how does it not go to your head because many people become arrogant after all this attention?

**The Dalai Lama:** Self discipline. And also there are verses, I recite every day. The verses mention that if you are being respected by everybody and praised by everybody, then you must think that you are the lowest person. I always practice that. And one of the 8th century Nalanda masters said that some people are praising you but some people are also criticising you, think that also.

**NDTV:** It balances it out.

**The Dalai Lama:** Yes very good, it is realistic.

**NDTV:** We now want to play a message from somebody who used to be you Liaison Officer, who knew you long back, Inder Malik.

**Inder Malik:** Your Holiness, I am extremely grateful to you. During my long stay I got so much knowledge and wisdom not only from you but also from your senior and junior tutors that I could write a book on you. My book Dalai Lamas of Tibet, for which you wrote the foreword and inaugurated in 1984 became a hit and I became a writer. Divinity was writ large on his face, that was my first impression in 1962 and now I have been seeing him for the last 50 years after that and the glow has been expanding and expanding. Now, I have the pleasant duty in wishing you a long long and a very healthy life because you are required by the whole world.

**The Dalai Lama:** Thank you.

**NDTV:** Tracy Chrisman from England, if you can identify yourself, there is a question from Tracy... yes go ahead...

**Tracy:** My question was regarding the selection process of future Dalai Lamas. Do you think that the traditional process will still continue given that what is happening in China about the Panchen Lama?

**NDTV:** Given that you appointed the Panchen Lama and the Chinese appointed someone else, what will happen to your succession and what if China appoints somebody as the next Dalai Lama?

**The Dalai Lama:** Unfortunately those Chinese Communist hardliners, they are quite expert in creating unnecessary problems. Look now there are two Panchen Lamas, one official Panchen Lama, and the other Panchen Lama of Tibetan heart. So all these things create more complications, more resentment with Chinese government. They still seem to have not learnt these things. Say if I die within this year, the Chinese would most probably appoint one boy as a Lama whose parents are more loyal to Chinese Communists. So that's one official Dalai Lama. And

then if Tibetans and other concerned people from the Himalayan region and also Mongolians, if they really want to have another Dalai Lama reincarnation then they will choose.

**NDTV:** What is in your mind your Holiness about choosing a successor, I know I am taking the same risk as the New York Times reporter but please don't get angry, what is your mind? Would you like to see someone appointed in your life time?

**The Dalai Lama:** I am not much concerned about these things. And it seems that the Chinese Communists are more concerned about the Dalai Lama institution than me ... political reason of course, silly thinking. And at a practical level, no hurry. I am quite healthy. If I don't commit suicide then otherwise my body is very healthy, another 10 -20 years I can... no problem, maybe 30 years.

**NDTV:** One of our last questions now, Katherine Schwitz, Catherine are you there? Yes?

**Katherine:** Just to let you know, your Holiness, first of all Happy Birthday. Not just 10-20 years... please stay for another 75 years.

**NDTV:** Not just 10-20 years, stay with us for another 75 years.

**The Dalai Lama:** Oh that's too long I think, unrealistic. Maybe a 100 years.

**NDTV:** A century mark.

**The Dalai Lama:** Recently I met the former President of India, a great scientist...

**NDTV:** Abdul Kalaam.

**The Dalai Lama:** He mentioned that his father, when he passed away was 103. Also I found in Tibetan settlements, two years back I think, I met these Tibetans who said their ages were 103, 104, like that, so it is possible now, so up to 105, 110 may be possible, some people say.

Some prediction by some Tibetan masters about 200 years ago, in a

prediction related to me it mentioned that the person's longevity was 113. And in the early 60s I had a dream which indicated that my life span was 113. So two years ago I received that 200 year old prediction and it goes same. So then I thought, maybe. And according to my beautiful sort of story which I usually tell big audiences that in the audience some people believe that Dalai Lama has some healing power. So as far as that is concerned 2008 I think in October, I went through surgery. So that scientifically proves that Dalai Lama has no healing power, I think it's quite clear.

**NDTV:** I think you are the only spiritual leader who is honest enough to say that otherwise many godmen parade that they have healing powers.

**The Dalai Lama:** So you see, after they checked my body post the surgery, one specialist described as me as a young patient, so I told him that I am not a young patient, I was 73. Then he said that he knew my age but my body condition was in the 60s, that's why he called me a young patient.

**NDTV:** Well may it always stay that way. You had to ask a question, go ahead.

**Katherine:** Your Holiness, there has been some discussion about full ordination of nuns in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and there are some obstacles to this which you your Holiness had described in a conference in Hamburg in 2007 as old fashioned thinking in the society that they wouldn't accept this for nuns. Last year your Holiness said that you might be reincarnated as a woman and the next Dalai Lama might be a woman. So how does your Holiness think that the Tibetan society would accept a female Dalai Lama when they are having trouble accepting fully ordained nuns?

**The Dalai Lama:** This question is not that way in meaning. You see the Bhikshunis, the highest ordination of Buddhist nuns, there is some hesitation, not due to public reluctance. No. The Buddha himself gave the same right, to bhikshus and bhikshunis. So everybody has the right to achieve that. The question is now technical. The

vinaya vow should be taken according to the vinaya rules, so there are some problems at the technical level. So the next reincarnation, if the circumstances are such that the female reincarnation more effective and recognised through spiritual traditional way, I have no problems.

**NDTV:** So your successor could be a woman? Okay Swati, next question, if we can get you the mike please...

**Swati:** Happy Birthday your Holiness, I am a psychologist by profession from Dharamshala. My question is how do you deal with the conflicts and confusions of the young Tibetan minds, who are growing up in India with worldly ambitions and desires?

**NDTV:** Because some of them have never even been to Tibet, born in India, rooted there..

**The Dalai Lama:** I think, generally, Tibetan cultural heritage, Tibetan Buddhist teachings, everybody considers it like their dearest mother, so that kind of feeling makes tremendous difference. Some Tibetans including my late physician, and many other companions died through torture, starvation, but most people including him had a mental state that was very calm. At one of our such meetings where we were discussing mental calmness I mentioned these things, so some scientists actually examined these people, and they were surprised. They told me that these people have gone through great risks including risks of life but their mind are very calm. One particular monk, now his age is 93, he had the opportunity to come over here and join this monastery in the 80s. We happened to be talking one day and he mentioned that during those 18-19 years in the Chinese gulags, he faced danger and to which I asked what kind of danger, he said, danger of losing compassion towards the Chinese. So people have that kind of attitude. It's very important to keep compassion towards a perpetrator. So deliberately by keeping it that way, their mental state is calm. Tibetan younger generation who is born in this country with Tibetan atmosphere are still much

more thinking like Tibetan. Those young Tibetans who come from Tibet they grew up in tense situation so much short temper and more violent nature. So generally Tibetan who are brought-up in Tibetan communities here are comparative better but still we need a lot of work.

These are signs of degenerating Tibetan culture heritage inside Tibet, so now here Tibetans who bring up a Tibetan community are comparatively still better, but we still need a lot of work. In the early 60s, with immense help from the Indian government, Pandit Nehru himself took the responsibility of providing proper education to the young Tibetans, with all expenses met by Indian government. The Indian government created a special committee for Tibetan schools to be built separately, all this aiming to preserve Tibetan culture, Tibetan spirituality with of course the education system based on the normal Indian education system.

Some people have questions whether the existing education system, Indian education system is really suitable or not. Some question marks there. India's own traditional education system was may be more like monastic but the present education system was introduced by British colonists. More and more people are now questioning the modern education system. It's not adequate regarding warm heartedness or moral principles because 1000 years ago when this education systems started, then these moral ethics were taken care of by the Church. Now as time passes, the church influence has reduced, the family values also reduced so the education system alone has to take both education for brain and for warm heartedness. So now you see even in India it is questionable. In fact during Indira Gandhi ji, I had some lengthy discussions and I mentioned that the Himalayan range, this area, the education system should have more of research work. So then Indira Gandhi ji appointed three professors from some university in Delhi but then soon after she was assassinated. So we need some research work, hope to introduce in



Tibetan and Indian school also, education about moral ethics, without touching religion. Then moreover India is a multi-religious country. So one religion is difficult. So a common sort of practice, love, compassion, forgiveness - these are common to every religion. And for non believers also. Now through scientific findings and also common sense, warm heartedness is the key factor for a happy family, happy community. After all we are social animal. So there must be some force emotionally to bring us together. By hating each other, how can we develop general cooperation. So social animal must cooperate. So general principle is based on trust, friendship. Friendship is based on trust. So trust is very much related to warm-heartedness. If you have extreme self-centered attitude there is possibility of developing the thinking of how to exploit, how to bully, how to cheat. If you have warm heartedness, all members of society respect their rights, develop a sense of concern for their well being, so there is no room for cheating, for exploitation like that. So these are the secular ethics without attaching religion. That way I think this country can easily develop. So we are working on it and discussing with a number of scientists and educationists.

The younger people in India have more desire for money. So there is corruption also. Although this country is comparatively better. But still corruption exists. So these are the signs of lack of moral principles. So few religious leaders are talking about moral principles that it may not have reached the masses. Now we must introduce in education beginning from kindergarten about moral principle without touching religion. That's a secular sort of moral ethics.

**NDTV:** I want to end with one of your friends Professor Chaman Lal Gupta, will like to share a personal story with us like Mr Sharma, we want to know things that we don't know already.

**Chaman Lal Gupta:** I came in contact with his Holiness in 1999 for the first time. It was his birthday, and we came to him from Bharat-Tibbat Sahyog Manch and

after having talks with him, I asked him how is it that you are a Buddhist and a firm believer in ahimsa or non violence, yet you consume meat like others, how do you compromise this situation? And secondly I asked him what are your shortcomings? He mentioned two - my love for watches and second meat eating. When we were going out he caught hold of my arm and asked the photographer to photograph us, and I have that photograph with me in my study and it is the most precious treasure that I ever will have in my life.

**NDTV:** Your Holiness, do you still think that meat eating and watches are your only two flaws? And as flaws go they are pretty innocent.

**The Dalai Lama:** My fondness of watches, that is one of my weaknesses. My first watch, a present that I got was from President Roosevelt, 1942, I was then 7 years old. Here is a strange story - with that watch and a silver made old ship, and a letter was sent. As a 7 year old boy, no interest in that letter, only interested in that watch. I put the silver made ship on a small pond, it sank. And it was shameful because as soon as I received information about a delegation, when the British mission reached Lhasa, I got the information through foreign ministry officials that they had reached, then I was told about the watch. Then before a formal meeting I already asked 'bring the watch'. How bad, isn't it? That boy too much greed. The letter I never saw till my meeting with Obama this time. He kindly copied that original letter for me. Since 1942, till 2010 - 70 years later, I saw the letter.

**NDTV:** Did Obama give you a watch?

**The Dalai Lama:** No, this watch came recently in a parcel from America. Then about taking meat, there are some contradictions but in vinaya no prohibition in eating meat. So monks in Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, they take both veg and non veg food. One time I discussed this subject with a monk from Sri Lanka many years ago. He mentioned Buddhist monks are

neither vegetarian or non vegetarian, he should accept whatever he gets, so that's the principle. But vinaya clearly mentions that meat which was purposely killed for you is not to be eaten. But in general it is not prohibited.

I think practically in northern part of Tibet, no vegetables. Very difficult. So that's practical reason. However, since I was about 13, 14 years old, all Tibetan official festivals previously offered a lot of meat - I changed all to vegetarian food. Then, in 1959 come to India and around 1965, I became a vegetarian.

**NDTV:** Why?

**The Dalai Lama:** Better. Philosophical reason. 20 months I remained strict vegetarian. At that time I took advice from some of my Indian friends about the substitutes of meat. Lot of milk, cream and ... then in 1967 or 66 I developed gall bladder, hepatitis. So my whole body became yellow. So at that time I become like living Buddha. Whole body yellow. Eyes also yellow. Nails also yellow. It remained I think for about three weeks. So Tibetan physician, as well as allopathic physician advised me to take meat. So back to original diet. Meantime, all our monastic institutions in south India, also Namgyal monastery and my own common kitchen, serve only vegetarian food. Also in foreign countries when I visit Buddhist centers I always ask them. Now it is up to the individual. But as a society, as a institution, when they give some sort of a festival, it must be vegetarian. That business started the gall bladder trouble. Finally, surgery. So that's the background. So my own case, meat once or twice a week, otherwise vegetarian.

**NDTV:** At 75 do you have any regrets?

**The Dalai Lama:** Small small things almost everyday. Like right here, too hot. So this garment, maybe a thinner one maybe nice. Then one occasion in Delhi some business meeting, again same question. I mentioned it. Come to Delhi in a charter plane. I thought Delhi is hot. So thin cloth. But when I reached the hotel, the air conditioning

was so powerful and it was very cold. So I mention this one regret. Major regret - I think during my study period, around 10 years, I was rather lazy. So I used to often tell people the way I studied at young age under threat of whip by my senior tutor, very stern when I was young. He never smiled. And he kept a whip. At that time my elder brother and I used to study together, so two whips there. One normal whip, one yellow whip - holy whip. So for holy student, holy whip is relevant. But then I have quite sufficient sort of brain to realise that holy whip may not bring holy pain, just ordinary pain. Therefore, I fear that whip. So that I feel little bit of regret. So till now 75 years old, whenever I

have time, I read, I study Tibetan scripts, those text written by Nagarjuna. These days I am reading another text by a disciple of Nagarjuna. So otherwise, in the political field, and some other field, since I took responsibility at 16 years of age, since then till now, on any major decision, I have no regrets.

**NDTV:** That in itself is extraordinary. You have lived an extraordinary life.

**The Dalai Lama:** I think one reason is that I am the type of person who always discusses, who always asks for opinions, including from sweepers. Now for example, in the 50's things were difficult, then some major decisions had to be taken. Besides

consulting higher officials, I always asked my sweeper, my close friend, what they would feel? That I always do. So any major decision - firstly, utilise my own brain in the maximum way, look at the problem in a holistic way, and secondly, ask opinion from different people including state oracles, advisers. If I do not reach a final decision and still some dilemma exists, I also, as a Buddhist meditational, use some sort of spiritual method to investigate like the 5th Dalai Lama. So I do that. So until now, all the major decisions, no mistake. So I feel, happy

**NDTV:** May you go from strength to strength. It was an absolute pleasure meeting you. ■

## CTA mourns the demise of Parliamentary Secretary Phurbu Tsering

Mr Phurbu Tsering, after taking ill for the last few months, breathed his last at Delek Hospital on Thursday, July 29, 2010 at Dharamshala. He was 57.

As a mark of deep condolence and respect for Tibetan Parliamentary Secretary Mr Phurbu Tsering, who dedicated 37 years of his life in the Tibetan civil service, the Central Tibetan Administration held a prayer session in the afternoon of July 30 following which the offices remained closed.

Mr Phurbu Tsering joined the Central Tibetan Administration's civil service as an accountant cum junior clerk at the Tibetan settlement in Nepal's Solo Khumbu region on August 16, 1973.

He then served at numerous Tibetan settlements including Lugsung Samdupling Co-operative Society at Bylakuppe, Office of Tibet Affairs at Delhi, acting head of Centre of

Tibetan Religious Artifacts at Dharamshala and accountant at Security Department.

From April 15, 1987 – January 2, 1991, Mr Phurbu Tsering served as manager of the Tibetan Handicraft Centres at Mundgod and Dekyi Larsoe Tibetan settlement in Bylakuppe.

Mr Phurbu Tsering was reposted at the Security Department following his promotion to the under-secretary level

on 1 August 1992 and continued his services at the department following his promotion as deputy secretary.

After being promoted as joint-secretary, Mr Phurbu Tsering served from March 19, 1999 – November 3, 2001 as the joint secretary at the Health Department and the Central Election Commission.

Mr Phurbu Tsering was promoted to the post of additional secretary on June 7, 2007.



At the pinnacle of his civil service career, Mr Phurbu Tsering served as the acting secretary for the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat from May 19, 2008 – August 16, 2008 and was later promoted as the secretariat's secretary general on June 1, 2010.

Mr Phurbu Tsering will be remembered for his life-long service of dedication and inspirational hard work. ■

## Second in the series of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's interactions with Chinese netizens

*Over 1,550 Chinese submitted 317 questions to His Holiness the Dalai Lama through the renowned Chinese writer, Wang Lixiong. 11,705 Chinese netizens then voted for the following 10 questions, to which His Holiness the Dalai Lama responded from his residence in Dharamshala on July 16, 2010.*

*The responses were released on the Chinese-language website of the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 19, 2010. Following is the English translation of the Tibetan original. In case of any discrepancy please treat the Tibetan version as authoritative and final.*

**Question One:** Looking at the current situation, it seems difficult that a reconciliation with the Chinese government will come about in your lifetime. After your passing away, you will have no control over the Tibetan youth organisation which holds on firmly to their ideology [of seeking Tibetan independence]. Is it not possible that they will engage in large-scale terrorist activities then? Are there ways by which they can be prevented from taking such a course?

**Answer:** On the whole, I believe that even after my death the Tibetan exile set-up will continue to make progress, particularly in the field of education. More importantly there are a growing number of young Lamas between the ages of 20 and 30 who are currently pursuing studies in the various religious schools of our community who are capable of taking up greater leadership roles in the spiritual field. In the political field, for the last more than 10 years I have been in a state of semi-retirement. All the important political decisions are being taken by the elected political leadership and this will continue to do so in the future as well. There are forces within our community such as the Tibetan Youth Congress who criticise our Middle-Way policy and demand complete independence [for Tibet]. It seems their voices are growing stronger [these days]. We cannot blame them for this, since our successive efforts to bring about a mutually-beneficial solution [to the issue of Tibet] have failed to produce any positive results and under such a situation, their viewpoint is gaining momentum [in our society]. However, it

is very evident that 99% of the Tibetan people have complete faith in the non-violent path [that we have chosen] and so you should not worry [about their ever resorting to violence].

**Question Two:** Your Holiness, how do you plan to resolve the problem of those areas which form a part of your notion of 'Greater Tibet' but are incorporated into the Chinese provinces as far as the current administrative divisions of these provinces are concerned? Will the autonomous government of your 'Greater Tibet' exercise control over the other ethnic groups living within those areas? If so, how would you safeguard the aspirations of these ethnic groups?

**Answer:** We have not used the term 'Greater Tibet'. It is [actually] a term employed by the United Front Work Department of the Chinese government [to refer to our demand]. What we say is that all those Tibetans who speak and write the same language of Tibet should have equal right to preserve and promote their religion and culture as well as to work for their collective economic development. Now this is, in principle, agreed upon by the Chinese government. In the Fifth Work Forum on Tibet, the Chinese central government has recommended a uniform policy for overseeing all Tibetans living in the Tibet Autonomous Region and in other Tibetan autonomous areas under the four Chinese provinces. Premier Wen Jiabao has, particularly, mentioned this in his work report to the National People's Congress. This, I believe, is really in keeping with the actual prevailing situation. Otherwise, when the word

"Xizang" is mentioned, it is taken to be as referring only to the Tibet Autonomous Region. This is not right. There are only a little over two million Tibetans living in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the remaining approximately four million Tibetans live in the neighbouring four Chinese provinces. As such, we are saying that all of these Tibetan people should be given the same rights. For example, I do not belong to the Tibet Autonomous Region; I hail from Tso-ngon [Ch: Qinghai] province. Likewise should you care to look at Tibetan history, you will see that many of the highly-realised Lamas/Tulkus have come from these four provinces. Even today, most of the [respected] teachers teaching in the monastic institutions of all the religious traditions of our community have come from these provinces; very few of them belong to the Tibet Autonomous Region. Therefore, we are saying that a uniform policy should be adopted for all of these areas since they share the same religion and culture.

It is altogether a different matter if we are seeking separation or independence but we are not. We are simply saying that we be granted the freedom to preserve our own religion, culture and language within the larger framework of the People's Republic of China. If, in due course of time, we get an opportunity to discuss about it in detail, then the Tibetans inside Tibet should take the main responsibility. Once they are able to engage in extensive discussions [with the Chinese government] without any fear in their minds, I do not think we will face any problems [in resolving the issue of Tibet].

In the case of the Tibet Autonomous Region, a few Chinese lived there prior to the 1950s. [The number grew later.] A considerable number of Chinese, however, have been living in Kham and Amdo regions, particularly in the area of my birth [Xining], since early times. Tibetans are not saying, and will never say, that Tibet should be occupied by exclusively Tibetans to the exclusion of all other nationalities, which includes [even] the Han Chinese. What is important is that since it carries the name 'Tibetan Autonomous Region' or 'Tibetan Autonomous Areas', the natives of these very places should constitute the majority -and the rest of the nationalities the minority of the total population. It is for this very purpose that the name has been given. If, otherwise, the number of Chinese or other minority nationalities living in these places is more than the Tibetans, then there is no way such names as mentioned above could be given. We are hoping that we are able to establish a big family of friendship between the Chinese and Tibetan peoples based on over thousand years of relations with each other. We also hope -and even pray that the People's Republic of China flourishes with all its nationalities enjoying equality in a spirit of one big family.

**Question Three:** Last year, a television channel in France broadcast a documentary titled *The Dalai Lama's Demons*, in which Shugden-worshipping Tibetan monks were shown to be thrown out of the Tibetan settlements in India. The situation has come to such a pass for these monks that they could not even visit shops and hospitals as well as enter their monasteries at the time. In the documentary, you were also shown to be issuing a strict order that these Shugden-propitiating monks must be expelled from their monasteries. Moreover, one of the monks interviewed said: 'On the one hand the Dalai Lama talks about the freedom of religious belief and compassion, but on the other hand he restricts our religious freedom and shows us out of our monasteries.' What do you have to say about it?

**Answer:** Gyalpo Shugden came into existence during the time of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. The Fifth Dalai Lama saw

Dorjee Shugden as 'a vow-breaking demon/evil spirit born into such a state as a result of his wrong aspiration/negative prayer'. This is mentioned in the *Collected Works of the Great Fifth, Volume K*, - an earlier edition block-printed in Tibet. So 'wrong aspiration/negative prayer' is what caused Dorjee Shugden whose nature is but a 'vow-breaking demon/evil spirit' and whose actions are to 'harm the Dharma and humanity'. This is admitted by the Dolgyal himself in his autobiography.

Earlier I too propitiated Shugden. Later on as I studied the words of the Great Fifth, I came across the document cited above. I have, from my side also, conducted a series of investigations about it and found that it is not good to worship the spirit. Consequently I gave up the propitiation completely but did not, at that point of time, place any restrictions on the section of the Tibetan community who were practising it. Then the problem surfaced at the Jangtse College of the Gaden Monastery. Through my examinations, it became very clear to me that the problem at the Jangtse College was caused by its new initiative of propitiating Gyalpo Shugden. I communicated this to the concerned. When the issue became more public later on, some people began to spread the rumour that I was trying to curry favour with the Nyingma Tradition [of Tibetan Buddhism] and that I had not actually imposed any restrictions but simply pretended to do so. Under these circumstances, I had to come out in the open to express my strong objections to, and make things clear about, the worshipping of this evil spirit.

No children of the Dolgyal followers have been expelled from the schools. If in the monasteries the worshippers and non-worshippers of Dolgyal assemble together, it does not go very well with the sanctity of the spiritual bond [that is so very essential in matters of spirituality]. Those who do not worship Dolgyal have all received spiritual teachings from me and those who worship it are the ones who have some problem or disagreement with the Lama from whom they receive teachings. Therefore we are saying that we feel very uncomfortable to be associated with the Dolgyal followers.

Apart from that, we have done nothing to throw them out of the Tibetan settlements. I urge all of you to come to India and visit the Tibetan settlements in South India to see for yourselves what the reality is. The Dolgyal followers have established their own separate monastery there and lead their lives like any other Tibetan. Nobody is creating problems for them.

In short, what I am saying is that it is one's freedom, in general, to practise or not to practise any religion. How one chooses to practise one's religion is also one's freedom. Therefore, whichever deity or demon one may worship, one may decide as one pleases. To say that the practice of the spirit in question is disadvantageous and it has no advantages whatsoever is my duty. Therefore, I have highlighted the negatives. Now it is up to the people to think over or decide for themselves whether they want to listen or not. A Chinese friend has raised this question. If you are interested in the subject, it is [really] your freedom [to worship or not to worship the spirit]. But you must carry out a proper investigation [before plunging into it]. Usually, our religious practitioners say that 'one must develop a pure perception of one's teacher and investigate [thoroughly] the religion one practises'. So religion must be subjected to investigation. For instance, Nagarjuna and other scholars [of the ancient Nalanda University] have shown through their example that even if they were the words of the Lord Buddha, they must be subjected to investigation for ascertaining their truthfulness. [The Buddhist concept of 'Four Reliances' says, among other things, that] one must 'rely on the doctrine than on individuals'. So it is very important for all of you to investigate.

**Question Four:** During the 2008 Tibet incident, why did many monks and lay Tibetans raise their hands against the ordinary Chinese citizens? We must understand that it is the Chinese government which you are against [and not the ordinary Chinese citizens].

**Answer:** As far as I know, the first protest of 2008 in Tibet occurred in the afternoon of 10 March. This was then followed by more protest demonstrations on 11, 12 and 13 March of that year. The Chinese

security people, from the very beginning, learned about these demonstrations as a result of which they blocked the road of the monk protestors arriving from Drepung Monastery. On the morning of 14 March, the incident of setting shops on fire, hurling stones and destroying properties occurred. One foreign journalist, who had been an eye-witness to this incident, came to meet me [at Dharamshala] and told me: ‘Apart from video-taping the entire happening, the Chinese security personnel at the scene did nothing to stop them.’ The Chinese government’s propaganda about the 3-14 incident disregards the fact that the first protest broke out on 10 March. Moreover, according to reports they deliberately hired some mischievous people on the morning of 14 March to indulge in rioting, which they video-shot for later use in shifting the blame of the entire incident on the Tibetans. Tibetans arriving from Tibet after the March incident informed us that ‘Tibetans’ whom they had never seen earlier had been brought to Lhasa at that time. They further said that ‘these people were the main culprits who created the disturbances’. [I believe] this [unfortunate] incident should actually be investigated independently. This is one thing I want to say.

[Another thing I want to say is that] in the monasteries of the Kham and Amdo regions, there is an ancient custom of keeping old swords, spears and rifles in the shrines of the guardian deities. I was informed that these weapons were forcefully taken out in order to blame the monasteries for using weapons to stir violence [in the country]. It is, in a way, very probable that a few people -in their fits of anger may have unwittingly caused some inconveniences to the Chinese people [during that time]. If such a thing really happened, then I stand ready to apologise [on their behalf]. It is very likely indeed that some enraged Tibetans may have caused such a situation because at that time, the Chinese government tried [its level best] to create the false impression of the Tibetans as being anti-Chinese. Majority of the Tibetans would never do such a thing.

Tibetans cannot be blamed for airing their grievances against the Chinese

government policies. The Chinese government strikes hard upon the Tibetan people for the [only] reason that they are loyal to their religion and culture as well as their spiritual leader. This creates a feeling of hurt in the minds of the Tibetan people. This is also the reason why Tibetans are strongly critical of the Chinese government policies. You should not, however, take this as a form of Tibetan people’s animosity to the Chinese people. If what I have heard is indeed true, then Tibetans visiting the Chinese cities and towns seem to be facing a lot of problems after the 2008 March incident. This is because the Chinese hoteliers, shopkeepers and restaurateurs in these places show a cold attitude to the Tibetan customers. Moreover, we have heard that a lone Tibetan member of a Chinese government delegation was stopped at the airport for interrogation. All these developments are a cause of disappointment for the Tibetan people.

**Question Five:** Was the ‘liberation of Tibet’ a deception from the beginning or did it change later?

**Answer:** It is difficult to say. When the People’s Liberation Army arrived in Chamdo, they fought with the Tibetan army and killed about seven to eight thousand Tibetan soldiers. Khenchung Thupten Dhonyoe, who was a staff of the Governor General of Eastern Tibet at that time, told me that Wang Qiming, the PLA general (who ‘liberated’ Chamdo) said to him with tears in his eyes: ‘We, fraternal nationalities, have killed each other.’ I feel that some of them may have been genuine. Likewise, when the road from Kham to Central Tibet and Amdo to Central Tibet were being built, some people used their bodies to block water when floods took place. They worked hard. Those things, I feel, were genuine. For others I cannot say what their intentions were from the beginning. The best thing would be for historians to thoroughly study classified government documents, which will make things clear. That is the most important thing.

In terms of overall policies, in 1954, I went to China and spent about five to six months in Beijing. At that time I met most of the Chinese leaders, including Mao Zedong, who I had met many times. I

especially went to visit many Chinese provinces, during which I met many Chinese leaders, who were members of the Communist Party and had real revolutionary outlook and were genuinely working to serve the working class and the country. I saw many who had no desire for personal gain and were working for the common good. They impressed me. Mao, for instance, made many promises to me. However, from 1956-57 onwards, I felt that things were moving towards ultra-leftism.

**Question Six:** If in the future China has a genuine democratic system, what would Tibet’s relations be with that government? What is your opinion?

**Answer:** Right now many of the unwanted problems, whether it is PRC’s external relations or issues within the country, I think, are created by suspicion and lack of mutual trust. For the last 51 years, I have lived outside Tibet. From my many friends in the US, Europe, Japan and in India, I know that China has the desire to build good relations. But its failure to build genuine relationships is due to the lack of mutual trust. This, in turn, is the result of lack of transparency in China which, though, it outwardly pretends to have so. Hence many problems arise. Whether it is the issue of Tibet or Xinjiang, there is clearly a huge difference between the external impression that China gives and the real feelings that the people in these regions harbour. Therefore, once a time comes when China will have transparent, honest and just policies, many of the problems will naturally be solved.

Regarding the Tibetan issue, if there is transparency and sincerity on the part of the Chinese government, we on our part are not seeking separation. We have a long history, but I am not thinking about it. If we think about the future, materially Tibet is behind others and therefore if we stay within the PRC, it will be beneficial for Tibet’s development. Because of this we are not seeking separation. The most important thing is that Tibet has a unique culture, language and religion. Amongst the Buddhist traditions, many of the world’s scholars today say that Tibetan Buddhism is the most extensive and profound. Tibetan language has become the best medium to articulate/express this

profound and extensive philosophy. The translations – both in terms of literal translation (dra gyur) and contextual translation (don gyur) – of the texts from the Sanskrit language are of the highest standard. Therefore, if we are able to maintain this religion and culture, it will also benefit the overall culture of the PRC. Generally speaking, China is also a Buddhist country. As the number of Chinese Buddhists is increasing these days, we will surely be able to contribute in this field. I think this is of mutual benefit.

**Question Seven:** If Tibet achieves genuine autonomy or wins independence, do you have plans to transform the system of governance in Tibet into a democratic one? How will religion and politics be separated?

**Answer:** I do not think this question needs a special answer. If you are interested, you can come to India. You will then actually see how we have carried out democratisation during our stay in exile, how we have set up a political system during the last 51 years and our future programmes. For me personally, since 1969, I have been saying that the people should decide whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. I have no worry. The most important thing is that we need to preserve and maintain the unique Tibetan religion and culture. In terms of Tibet's development, it is very important not to harm the natural environment. Tibet's environment is fragile and susceptible to damage. Because of the high altitude and dry wind, it is said that once damage occurs, it will take a long period to restore the ecological balance. This is a special issue that you must pay attention to. The glaciers in the high Tibetan Plateau are the main source of many of the great rivers in Asia. That is why we should take special care of them.

**Question Eight:** What do you think will happen to Tibetan unity once you are no longer in the scene? Will the charisma of your successors be able to control the Tibetan nationalists to retain the non-violent and peaceful nature of your struggle?

**Answer:** It will make no difference. For over 30 years I have been saying that

Tibetan religious and political leaders must take responsibility as if I am no longer with them. They have been doing it and that is how they acquire experience. There is a new leadership after every five years. There will be a new political leader next year directly elected by the people. In the religious field, there are heads of each Buddhist school to take responsibility. There is no difference whether I am with them or not.

**Question Nine:** You say that there should be a democratic system for Tibet. However, when you and your predecessors ruled Tibet did you rule democratically? If not, what confidence do you have to rule Tibet more democratically than Communist China?

**Answer:** The First to the Fourth Dalai Lamas did not take part in politics. The Fifth Dalai Lama became the temporal and religious leader of Tibet. At that time there were no such thing as democratic system in Tibet's neighbours like China, India and Russia. They were all largely feudal societies. However Tibet had a strong Buddhist tradition and the principle of developing compassion for all sentient beings. That is why, in 1959, when the 'landlords' were put under struggle sessions following the 'Democratic Reforms', there were many 'serfs' who came forward to save the lives of their 'landlords'. Many of the 'landlords' were also able to escape into exile in India with the help of their 'serfs'. Therefore, 'serfs' may be a common phenomenon in all these feudal countries, but the treatment of Tibetan 'serfs' was different.

At the end of 1955, 'Democratic Reforms' were carried out in Tibet starting from Sichuan. As elsewhere in China, 'Democratic Reforms' were carried out in Tibet, which did not suit the Tibetan situation. Such things happened. It is important to investigate these things. You do not have to believe these things because I said them. If you have the freedom later to investigate it is important to do so thoroughly.

In the later stages of his life, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama thought about introducing a democratic system in Tibet, but he was unable to carry it out. In 1952, when I was in Lhasa we formed the Reform

Committee to make a number of changes to our taxation and loan systems. But we were only able to carry out some of them. Since I already had thoughts about carrying out reforms from the time I was in Tibet, we established a democratic system immediately after we came into exile in India. I have no intention of holding any post when Tibetans in and outside are reunited. I made this clear in 1992 that when there will be autonomy or a considerable degree of freedom for Tibet, we will return. However, I said, from that time onwards I will not take any responsibility and will hand over all my historical responsibility to the local government. Even now that is my thinking and I will never take any political roles.

**Question Ten:** What is your view on the Chinese who are settled in Tibet and the second-generation of Chinese living there? It is possible that your 'High Level of Autonomy' may end up marginalising them, which is the concern of those Chinese inside Tibet who are opposing you and the Tibetan administration in exile.

**Answer:** Tibet is an autonomous region. In that region Tibetans cannot become a minority. Otherwise, we will applaud however many Chinese brothers and sisters decide to stay there. Particularly, we will appreciate those Chinese brothers and sisters who are interested in Tibetan religion and culture. I normally say that Chinese brothers and sisters can cook us delicious food and we Tibetans can provide spiritual food to them through Buddhism. That is why there is absolutely no reason to worry. Then there are those Chinese who look down upon Tibetans by considering Tibetan Buddhism as bad and the Tibetans as dirty. For them, there is no reason to live in such a filthy place; it is better for them to return to cleaner places. Tibet predominantly practises Buddhism and in Buddhism there is totally no reference to racial discrimination. Earlier in Tibet, many of the abbots in monasteries were Mongolians and there were Chinese studying Buddhist scriptures as well. We were of different races but there was no discrimination whatsoever. Likewise, if there are religious scholars amongst Chinese, they too can become abbots and Lamas in Tibet. There is no difference at all. ■

## State-run tour of foreign journalists to Tibet

A group of foreign journalists were *escorted* on a five-day government sanctioned tour of Central Tibet this year. The well-scripted show of openness and freedom once again failed to make the desired impressions for the Chinese government as the reports that came out of the trip presented unbiased assessments of the overwhelming Tibetan resentment of Chinese rule, the increasing marginalisation of ethnic Tibetans and the draconian grip with which China holds on to Tibet.

Later on July 15, when asked by a journalist for his views on the conflicting reports, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang unabashedly declared that the Tibetan people were 'leading happy lives' and advised the press to base their stories on 'reality rather than their imagination'.

As Tibet continues to remain closed to foreign journalists, the state-run tours are the only way the world can get accurate and impartial information on the ground realities in Tibet, two-years after the peaceful uprising which was brutally suppressed by the Chinese government.

In this edition, *Tibetan Bulletin* is featuring full-length articles by on-ground reporters from Reuters, BBC and the Associated Press.

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## China says can guarantee grip on Tibet "forever"

By Ben Blanchard

**L**HASA | Tue Jun 29, 2010 (Reuters) - China can maintain its grip on Tibet "forever," a senior official said on Tuesday, but conceded that a heavy security presence was still needed to ensure order in Lhasa two years after deadly riots.

Hao Peng, deputy Communist Party boss and deputy governor in mountainous

Tibet, fingered unidentified "anti-Chinese" forces and exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama as the main threat to a region which has been hit by sporadic unrest since 2008.

"We have the ability and confidence to maintain stability in Tibet forever, and we will ultimately achieve long-term order and stability," Hao told

visiting journalists, in a city still tense two years after it was ravaged by deadly ethnic rioting.

"What you see in the streets, including the police and other legal forces, are necessary measures to maintain stability," he said, speaking in an ornate room in the Tibet government offices.

At least 19 people died in the March 2008 riots in Lhasa, which sparked waves of protests across Tibetan areas. Pro-Tibet groups say more than 200 people were killed in a subsequent crackdown.

Protests against Chinese rule, led by Buddhist monks, gave way to torrid violence, with rioters torching shops and turning on residents including Han Chinese and Hui Muslims.

Many Tibetans see Hans as intruders threatening their culture and religion, and say they have been treated harshly by the government since the riots.

Beijing has denied being heavy-handed, and says it has poured billions of dollars



Andy Wong/Associated Press

*In Tibet, the government keeps the people and the press under guard.*

into boosting Tibet's development, money it says benefits mainly Tibetans. Hao said peace had returned and blamed overseas agitators for the continued presence of armed police in Lhasa, especially in the old Tibetan quarter.

"The situation in Tibet is more stable than before the March 14 incident," he said.

"The Dalai clique and some anti-Chinese forces internationally have colluded to make trouble in Tibet. Because of this, we have to take a lot of measures, to ensure the stability of the legal system and the stability of Tibet."

Exiled Tibetans and rights groups say those in Tibet are living under difficult restraints and many are still waiting to hear from relatives and friends who disappeared after the violence.

"Two years down the line there is still no normality across the Tibetan plateau. It's still extremely tense," said Nicholas Bequelin, a researcher on China with Human Rights Watch, a New York-based advocacy group.

"It's still very difficult to get things done, there are still a lot of restrictions, a lot of surveillance, a lot of troops. Certainly tourism and travel is not back to normal."

The area is usually off-limits to foreign reporters, apart from those on rare and tightly-controlled government trips like the one Hao met with, which makes it hard to assess competing accounts.

#### No Dalai Lama portraits

Hao, repeating the government's standard line about on-off talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama, said China was willing to talk if independence was off the table.

"The core of this policy is for the Dalai Lama to abandon Tibet independence, stop separatist activities, and acknowledge that Tibet is an inalienable part of China," he said.

"If he does this then the door to talks is always open."

The Dalai Lama denies China's charges against him, and says he only seeks more meaningful autonomy for Tibet and that he has never advocated violence. China says it does not believe him.

But his image is not allowed to be shown publicly in what is officially called the Tibet Autonomous Region despite the reverence many Tibetan Buddhists have for him. Every year some make the dangerous trek to India and back to see him in person.

The Nobel Peace Prize-winning Dalai Lama fled into exile following an abortive uprising in 1959.

Hao said the prohibition on his image was natural. "The Dalai Lama is not merely a religious figure, he is also a mastermind of separatist activities. No sovereign country in the world would allow the hanging of a portrait of a person like that," he said. ■

*(Writing by Emma Graham-Harrison, editing by Miral Fahmy)*

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## Modernising Tibet masks deep contradictions

*By Ben Blanchard*

**L**hasa | Thursday, July 8, 2010  
(Reuters) Tibet is richer and more developed than it has ever been, its people healthier, more literate, and better dressed and fed.

But the bulging supermarkets, snappy new airports and gleaming restored temples of this remote and mountainous region cannot hide broad contradictions and a deep sense of unhappiness among many Tibetans that China is sweeping away their culture.

Beijing has spent freely to bring development to restless Tibet, part of a grand strategy to win over the proudly Buddhist people by improving their standard of living.

In Gaba village, a half-hour drive down a bumpy road from downtown Lhasa, Tibet's bustling capital, residents have

seen incomes boom after renting out their farmland to Han Chinese businessmen who grow vegetables there for sale in city markets.

Farmer and Communist Party member Suolang Jiancan shrugs when asked if he is worried about Hans taking away land from native Tibetans, who traditionally have grown barley.

"It is hard for the local people to learn how to grow the vegetables wanted in the market. The Han can teach us these skills, and we can earn more," he said in his native Tibetan.

**The influx of Hans, however, is one of the great sources of tension in Tibet. Many Tibetans resent their presence, saying they do not bother to learn the language and dominate the region's economy at the expense of the native population.**

That is a familiar story to one unemployed graduate of a traditional medicine school. While fashionably dressed and able to speak the fluent Mandarin he learned at school, China's largesse in Tibet has not been enough to win him a job.

"Development is no good if I cannot get a job," the man told Reuters in Lhasa's heavily Tibetan old quarter, where patrols of armed paramilitary forces are a constant reminder of China's determination to keep a tight grip on Tibet.

"The Chinese are suspicious of Tibetans, especially since March 14," he said, referring to unrest in 2008 ahead of the Beijing Olympics.

Frustration at Chinese controls, along with the rise of Han Chinese migrants, boiled over in violent protests in 2008 in Lhasa, in which at least 19 people were killed.



The unrest sparked waves of protest across Tibetan areas, which more than two years on has failed to subside despite a heavy military and police presence and harsh punishment for those who question Beijing's authority. The security belies China's claims to have won over Tibetans.

"To this day, two years later, they still need to use military and police forces to control the situation. Does it sound like they've won the hearts of the people?" asked prominent Tibetan blogger Wooser.

### China lauds progress

The physical scars the riot left on Lhasa in the form of burnt out markets and buildings have long ago been expunged. Lhasa is starting to look like any other middle-tier Chinese city, with the same fast food outlets and mobile phone stores, and the same unimaginative architecture.

For China, there is no question that what they are doing in Tibet is right.

Over the past 10 years, the central government has poured a massive 310 billion yuan (30.3 billion pound) into Tibet, or nearly \$15,000 (9,870 pound) per person, building infrastructure and developing mining, agriculture and tourism.

In January, President Hu Jintao said the government would seek "leap-frog" development in Tibet, raising rural incomes to national levels by 2020. The economy is already growing faster than the rest of China.

Large sums have also gone into restoring monasteries and temples, the centre of life for devoutly Buddhist Tibetans, bolstering government claims that China respects religious rights.

"If we did not have the support and embrace of the local people, we could not have dealt with March 14 so well, nor could we have made the achievements we have over the past 60 years," said Hao Peng, one of Tibet's Communist Party deputy bosses.

"We have already won the hearts and minds of the people," Hao told foreign reporters on a rare, tightly-controlled visit.

What China has failed to do is address the alienation many Tibetans feel in the face of breakneck economic progress.

"Tibet is a special country and its people are special," said one middle-aged teacher, speaking quietly in a back room behind a shop in Lhasa's old quarter, centre of the 2008 riots. "We don't think about money like Chinese people. We believe in Buddhism, but the Chinese people believe in nothing," he added, requesting anonymity out of fear for repercussions.

Chinese officials frequently lash out at "distorted" reports in foreign media about Tibet.

Yet there is also a mismatch between the policies China has put in place in trying to modernise a poor and backward region, and Tibet's unique culture.

"It's absolutely true that Chinese policy has always been to win over the people by being generous," said Robbie Barnett, a Tibet scholar at Columbia University in New York.

"They just don't seem to be able to notice that each time, they mess this up by cracking down on the culture, the history or the religion. They make people pay such a huge price."

A Chinese crackdown on dissent following the riots has spread to Tibetan intellectuals and critics see little sign of Beijing changing tack in the current climate of tension.

"They just had a big national conference on Tibet in Beijing and pretty much nothing came out of it. It's striking that there hasn't been a coherent response," said Nicholas Bequelin, of New York-based advocacy group Human Rights Watch.

### Religion not encouraged

Much of the Chinese government's claim to legitimacy in Tibet rests on its self-proclaimed protection of Buddhism.

And while Tibetans appear generally free to pray at temples and make pilgrimages, religion is not encouraged for the young or Communist Party members.

"This is a socialist college, so what need do the students have of temples?" retorted Gesang Qunpei, chancellor of Tibet University, when asked if his students were free to practice their religion. "We're about science and technology here."

Religious figures who step out of line can be ruthlessly punished. Rights groups say many monks were arrested after the 2008 protests, and some were tortured in jail. Many others had to attend "re-education" classes and denounce the Dalai Lama.

Beijing also keeps a tight grip on key religious positions, saying it has a historical right to appoint top lamas.

China's selection in 1995 of its own Panchen Lama, the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, shortly after the Dalai Lama announced his own choice, has upset many.

The six-year-old boy appointed by the Dalai Lama was taken away by Chinese authorities and has disappeared from public view.

The Beijing-anointed Panchen Lama is spurned by many Tibetans as a fake, especially in Shigatse, a flyblown town several hours drive west of Lhasa that is his traditional seat.

Ask monks in Shigatse's Tashilhunpo monastery whether they believe China's Panchen Lama is the real deal and the response is neutral, despite the millions spent on temple renovations.

"I really don't know," said one monk, with a broad grim on his face and shrugging his shoulders.

Shigatse's people are less willing to mince their words.

"We don't think he is a bad person, but he's a fake," said a wiry Tibetan man selling smuggled cigarettes by the side of a street. "Nobody believes in him. We don't want him." ■

*(Additional reporting by Maxim Duncan; Editing by Benjamin Kang Lim and Ron Popeski)*

## Tibetans' mother tongue faces tide of Chinese

By Ben Blanchard

**S**higatse | Wednesday, July 14, 2010  
(Reuters) Teenager Dawan Dunjhu (Dawa Dhondup) is Tibetan and lives in Tibet, but says that if his friends and classmates can't master Mandarin Chinese, they have little hope of a professional future.

"I want to be a lawyer, and for me Chinese plays a very important role both in my life and my study," Dawan Dunjhu, 16, told Reuters during a government-organised visit for foreign media to Tibet.

"If someone can't speak Chinese then they might as well be mute," added the student at the Shigatse Shanghai Experimental School, built with aid from the Shanghai government in a run-down monastery town several hours drive from Tibetan capital Lhasa.

Tibetan is an official language in Tibet and parts of China where Tibetans have traditionally been the main ethnic group, in what the government calls "autonomous" regions and areas.

Yet Beijing has for decades promoted 'Putonghua,' or standard Mandarin Chinese, as a way of unifying a diverse country.

This makes language choices fraught for groups that are not ethnically Chinese, many of whom chafe under Communist rule.

For Tibetans, the route to jobs and a better income often requires mastering Chinese, leaving many worried they will lose their own ancient tongue and its unique writing system.

While Dawan Dunjhu's school is technically bilingual, the only classes entirely taught in Tibetan are Tibetan language classes.

Teachers say there are no text books in Tibetan for subjects like history,

mathematics or science, and exams have to be written in Chinese - apart from Tibetan language tests.

"It would be hard for the students to translate into Tibetan concepts they have learned about in Chinese," said deputy headmaster Cang Qiong, patiently answering a stream of questions from foreign reporters about why Tibetan is so little used.

Younger grades fall back on Tibetan when new ideas are introduced, but the rest of the teaching is in Mandarin — which parents and education experts say can dent interest in learning among some young children who struggle to keep up.

### Standard language

The government views the promotion of Mandarin as vital to unite a nation with thousands of Chinese dialects and numerous other ethnic languages, from Tibetan and Uighur to the much threatened She, Evenki and Manchu.

Beijing says it supports minority languages, pointing to broadcasting in areas where they are still in widespread daily use, and official signs in Tibet - from shop boards to place names - where the Sanskrit-based Tibetan script is required.

Many Tibetans still speak no Mandarin, especially in the vast open spaces of the Tibetan heartland. Rights groups and exile communities complain it is being gradually marginalized in cities and among the elite.

"Whether you can speak Tibetan has already become a secondary issue, but whether you can speak Chinese has become crucial to your livelihood," said prominent Tibetan blogger Wooser.

"So the Tibetan written language has in reality reached a very serious point."

Only recently has there been any push for bureaucrats from the majority Han Chinese to learn the languages of minority areas where they work, and the new drive has yet to show much fruit.

There are similar issues with the written language: the rule requiring bilingual signs is easily flouted; billboards over stores are sometimes only written in Chinese, or have just a cursory line of Tibetan.

Chinese is already seeping into everyday Tibetan.

Educated young Tibetans play with "Chibetan," mixing in Mandarin words with Tibetan, much in the same way cool Chinese youth mash up English into their speech.

"It's very fashionable," shrugged one government worker.

For words that have no commonly-used Tibetan equivalent, Mandarin is used instead. In the midst of a Tibetan conversation, certain bureaucratic words crop up in Mandarin.

These include "bu tie" (subsidy), "he tong" (contract) and "dang yuan" (Communist Party member).

In Lhasa, some educated Tibetans say they will fight the rising tide of Mandarin — by refusing to speak it.

"It is the language of the Chinese," said one young Tibetan man, speaking in excellent English and out of sight of the police patrols in Lhasa's old quarter. "Please don't speak to me in it." ■

*(Additional reporting by Maxim Duncan, Editing by Emma Graham-Harrison and Sugita Katyal)*

## No room to talk in 'stable' Tibet

By Damian Grammaticas

BBC[Thursday, July 15, 2010] Lhasa  
**T**he Potala Palace, once the seat of the Dalai Lama before he fled into exile, glows in the evening light.

Its huge red and white walls, rising above Lhasa, are spot-lit against the deep blue hues of the Tibetan sky.

Across the road, Chinese tourists throng a huge open square. Patriotic Han Chinese music, about developing the western reaches of China, blares from loudspeakers.

Giant fountains, lit up by neon lights, dance in time to the music.

Facing the Potala Palace is a huge outdoor television screen also blaring out sound. A few Tibetans wander the streets selling trinkets to the tourists.

Through the crowd passes a Tibetan pilgrim.

He has wooden paddles attached to his hands. He uses them to prostrate himself on the ground in front of the Potala Palace, then stands up, takes three paces (the length of his lying body) and lies down again.

It is a traditional Tibetan form of pilgrimage, to travel the length of your journey lying down.

A complaint often voiced by Tibetans is that they believe that their traditional culture is being eroded by Chinese rule. Right in front of the Potala Palace the cultures seem to clash.

### Controlled tour

For two years now Tibet has been largely closed to foreign media.

We were allowed in with a small group of journalists, escorted by Chinese minders.

China's aim was to convince us that things are back to normal after the serious unrest that erupted across the Tibetan

plateau just before the Olympics in 2008, and that the money China is investing to develop Tibet is transforming the place.

But ours was a highly controlled tour.

We had a set programme, minders watching us everywhere, and few opportunities to talk to Tibetans freely.



Adrian Bradshaw/European Pressphoto Agency

*"When we asked Norgye if he worshipped the Dalai Lama the young monk mumbled yes, but the official translator immediately told us he had said no."*

Everywhere we had a police escort, and we passed huge military convoys rumbling along the mountain roads. It gave the impression China is nervous about its hold on Tibet.

We were taken to the Tibet University, a group of modern buildings with the Chinese flag fluttering high above them.

But when we tried to stop some Tibetan students to talk to them security guards came running across, shoved between us, and shooed the students away.

At the Jokhang, Tibet's most important Buddhist temple, I was followed round by at least four plain-clothes security men.

It was near here that the riots broke out in 2008. Just after those riots another group of journalists were brought to the temple.

They were surrounded by monks who began shouting that there was no freedom in Tibet. It was a highly unusual protest against Chinese policies.

We asked what had happened to the monks, so one, a 29-year-old man called Norgye, was brought forward. This was not part of our carefully scripted tour.

His eyes downcast, Norgye looked shame-faced and deeply uncomfortable at our questions. He told us he had been through patriotic re-education and now saw the error of his ways.

When asked what they had meant when they shouted there was no freedom, Norgye whispered in Tibetan to an older monk named Laba, the director of the temple's administrative office: "What should I say?"

The unconvincing answer, given for him, was that he had simply meant he had not had the freedom to go outside the temple during the unrest.

And patriotic re-education clearly had its limits. When we asked Norgye if he worshipped the Dalai Lama the young monk mumbled yes, but the official

translator immediately told us he had said no.

**‘Love’ for China**

Outside the Jokhang, hundreds of Tibetans circled the temple, whirling their prayer wheels and prostrating themselves on the ground.

Chinese policemen, some armed with automatic weapons, marched through the crowds and manned checkpoints.

On the rooftops I could clearly make out marksmen watching the pilgrims and security cameras filming everything. We were hurried on by our minders to meet Hao Peng, the vice chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

He is Chinese and is one of the men entrusted by China’s Communist Party with running Tibet. Tibetans, he insisted, were happy with their lot.

“All ethnic groups including Tibetans have benefited a lot from the progress and development that has happened in the 60 years since the peaceful liberation of Tibet,” he said.

“People here know that they are now enjoying the best conditions they’ve ever had in Tibet. So local people love China, they love the Communist Party.” He claimed the heavy security in Lhasa was only necessary because forces outside Tibet, led by the Dalai Lama, were trying to stir up trouble.”

The Dalai Lama clique and some anti-China forces in the international community colluded to foment unrest in Tibet,” he told us.

“That’s why we have to take lots of measures to ensure there is stability here. So what you see in the streets, the police, the armed forces on duty, they are just what is necessary to maintain stability in Tibet.”

We slipped out of our hotel at night into the darkness of Lhasa’s alleyways, though plain-clothes security tried to follow us.

In the night Tibetans whispered that they were harassed by the security forces, that too many Han Chinese were flooding into Tibet, taking jobs from Tibetans, that they did not like the Chinese presence, and that they wanted

to worship the Dalai Lama but had to do so in secret.

Above all it seemed there was fear, most Tibetans were too afraid to voice any criticism of China openly.

“In the past other people like you have come from outside Tibet and asked about things like politics and religion,” one man told us nervously.

“Some Tibetans talked to them about those things. The police arrested the Tibetans and locked them up. So it’s really not a good idea for me to talk to you on these subjects,” he said.

Other Tibetans told us there were spies everywhere listening to everything.

China is pumping money into the region, hoping that raising Tibetan living standards, what it calls leap-frog development, will win over Tibetan support.

But it seems that fear and repression are at least as important in ensuring China keeps control in Tibet. ■

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## Is development killing Tibet’s way of life?

*By Damian Grammaticas*

BBC[Friday, July 16, 2010] Lhasa

**H**igh in Tibet’s mountains there are fears that an ancient way of life is slowly dying.

China is bringing development to Tibet, changing it, trying to make it modern, but some Tibetans are worried that their region’s unique identity is being eroded.

Our was a rare, Chinese government-controlled trip to Tibet.

Our schedule and our movements were almost entirely controlled by official minders who rarely let us out of their sight.

Almost all the people we spoke to were hand-picked to show us China’s view of Tibet.

**Handsome wages**

One way things are changing in Tibet is evident at the 5,100 Mineral water factory four hours drive outside Lhasa.

Bottles of mineral water fly along production lines imported from Germany. The name comes from the altitude of the glacier that feeds water to the factory, 5,100 m (16,700ft) above sea level.

The water is sold in China’s far-off cities. The factory brings jobs and money to a poor region.

Around 150 Tibetans work here, among them Pubu Zhaxi. He says the work is not hard and he earns 5,000 renminbi (\$735, £491) a month, a handsome wage in Tibet.

But it is not all quite so simple.

The factory, it turns out, is owned by a company registered in Hong Kong, so the profits, and the water, really flow outside Tibet.

And although the factory’s boss says collecting the run-off from the glacier has no environmental impact, the water would have flowed into a wetland in the valley where yak herds graze the mountain grasses.

**Ancient structure**

In Lhasa too there are signs of change all around. The Potala Palace, rising high above the city, was once home to the Dalai Lama before he fled into exile.

It is a symbol of the way, for centuries, Tibet resisted outside influence.

But now the palace courtyard is full of Chinese visitors. They pose in Tibetan cowboy hats. Tourism is another plank in China's plan for development.

Qiangba Gesang, the director of the Potala Palace says that four years ago 370,000 tourists were allowed to visit the palace each year. Now the number has gone up to 600,000. It is a sign of the way China's economy is developing and of the way Tibetans are becoming richer too, he says.

But he is not so clear when asked if the surge in numbers is having any impact on the ancient structure.

### **Comfort?**

The influx of Han Chinese as tourists and migrants is altering Tibet.

So too is China's policy of moving every Tibetan herder and farmer into a new home. We are taken to see one model project just outside Lhasa.

Neat rows of grey stone houses stand in lines with Tibetan prayer flags fluttering from them.

China says it has constructed 230,000 of what it calls these "comfort houses" for 1.3 million Tibetans in the past four years.

It gives grants to help pay the cost. But the Tibetans have to use their own savings too and take out loans, so they end up with debt.

And, we are told, many of the Tibetans in this village have leased their farmland to Chinese migrants to raise money.

The Chinese grow vegetables while the Tibetans now work on construction sites in Lhasa. So Tibet's demographics are shifting.

### **Backwardness**

Inside one house we find Do Bu Jie.

In his seventies, he wears a brown Fedora hat at a jaunty angle.

On his wall, as in every house we see here, there is a poster of China's Communist leaders, from Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao. Below it is a huge television set.

Do Bu Jie is a Communist Party member and supporter of the housing project.

"Our old house was made out of mud, it wasn't this good," he said. "I was just a farmer. But the Communist Party looks after us."

China's government genuinely believes its policies are helping transform Tibet from what officials say was a state of "backwardness".

But while some Tibetans are benefiting, many are not convinced.

They believe the economic gains are largely flowing to Chinese immigrants.

And they say their way of life and their cultural identity are all under threat.

### **Railway boom**

The number of Chinese moving to Tibet is a sensitive topic.

When I asked for figures from officials in Beijing before our trip I was given a stern lecture about the bias foreign journalists have in reporting on Tibet.

Then I was told the statistics are not kept.

But in Lhasa we were taken to the new railway station, a giant, modern building, echoing and empty. Its style vaguely echoes the Potala Palace.

The railway is Beijing's biggest investment in Tibet, costing billions of dollars, and is designed to connect the region with the rest of China.

A train pulls in and passengers fill the platform.

There are Chinese migrant workers, dragging sacks of possessions, Tibetans with bundles of goods, Chinese tour groups all wearing red caps, the tour-leader waving her flag, and a few foreign tourists too.

We are told 3,000 passengers come here everyday, so roughly one million a year, a third of them visitors.

In snatched conversations we managed with Tibetans during our five-day tour it was clear the sheer number of Han Chinese flowing in to Tibet was a cause of resentment.

### **Chinese vs Tibetan**

Another sensitive topic is the survival of Tibetan as a language.

At the Tibet Shanghai Experimental School, so-called because it is built with funds from the Shanghai government, a class full of Tibetan children in red and white track-suits are all having a Chinese lesson. Nine hundred of the students here come from the families of farmers and herdsman, we are told. Many get help from the central government with funding to enjoy this education.

It is another showcase project.

But although the school says teaching Tibetan is a priority, on closer scrutiny, that does not seem to be the case. Half the teachers are Chinese, and only Tibetan language is taught in Tibetan. No other subject is.

All the exams, except for Tibetan language, have to be written in Chinese. Even the signs around the school and the names of the classrooms are all in Chinese.

And the curriculum is all Chinese too. So the children, we are told, are taught that the Dalai Lama is a threat to China.

It is clear China's drive for development is transforming Tibet, improving incomes and changing lives.

But it seems that is not always being welcomed.

For all the benefits China says it is bringing them, the impression left by our visit was that Beijing is struggling to win the consent of ordinary Tibetans.

And in a generation's time their homeland may have changed irrevocably. ■

## China's money and migrants pour into Tibet

By Edward Wong

LHASA, Tibet [July 24, 2010] — They come by new high-altitude trains, four a day, cruising 1,200 miles past snow-capped mountains. And they come by military truck convoy, lumbering across the roof of the world.

China's government invested \$3 billion in Tibet last year.

Han Chinese workers, investors, merchants, teachers and soldiers are pouring into remote Tibet. After the violence that ravaged this region in 2008, China's aim is to make Tibet wealthier — and more Chinese.

Chinese leaders see development, along with an enhanced security presence, as the key to pacifying the Buddhist region.

The central government invested \$3 billion in the Tibet Autonomous Region last year, a 31 percent increase over 2008. Tibet's gross domestic product is growing at a 12 percent annual rate, faster than the robust Chinese national average.

Simple restaurants located in white prefabricated houses and run by ethnic Han businesspeople who take the train have sprung up even at a remote lake north of Lhasa. About 1.2 million rural Tibetans, nearly 40 percent of the region's population, have been moved into new residences under a "comfortable housing" program. And officials promise to increase tourism fourfold by 2020, to 20 million visitors a year.

But if the influx of money and people has brought new prosperity, it has also deepened the resentment among many Tibetans. Migrant Han entrepreneurs elbow out Tibetan rivals, then return home for the winter after reaping profits. Large Han-owned companies dominate the main industries, from mining to construction to tourism.

"Why did I come here? To make money, of course!" said Xiong Zhahua, a migrant from Sichuan Province who spends five months a year running a restaurant on the shores of chilly Nam Tso, the lake north of Lhasa.

A rare five-day official tour of Tibet, though carefully managed by the Chinese Foreign Ministry, provided a glimpse of life in the region during a period of tight political and military control.

Tibet is more stable after security forces quelled the worst uprising against Chinese rule in five decades. But the increased ethnic Han presence — and the uneven benefits of Han-led investment — have kept the region on edge.

Some Chinese officials acknowledge the disenfranchisement of Tibetans, though they defend the right of Han to migrate here.

"The flow of human resources follows the rule of market economics and is also indispensable for the development of Tibet," Hao Peng, vice chairman and deputy party secretary of the region, said at a news conference with a small group of foreign journalists. But the current system "may have caused an imbalanced distribution," he said. "We are taking measures to solve this problem."

The government bars foreign reporters from traveling independently in Tibet. Journalists on the tour were brought to several development projects by ministry officials, but were occasionally able to interview locals on their own. Tibetans interviewed independently expressed fear of the security forces and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

One high school student complained that Tibetans could not compete for jobs with Han migrants who arrived with high school diplomas. "Tibetans just get low-end jobs," he said.

Chinese officials say Tibetans make up more than 95 percent of the region's 2.9 million people, but refuse to give estimates on Han migrants, who are not registered residents. In the cities of Lhasa and Shigatse, it is clear that Han neighborhoods are dwarfing Tibetan areas.

Resentment of the Han exploded during the March 2008 rioting — Tibetans in Lhasa burned and looted hundreds of Han and ethnic Hui shops; at least 19 people died, most of them Han civilians, the Chinese government said. Han security forces then cracked down on Tibetans across the plateau.

Robert Barnett, a scholar of Tibet at Columbia University, said the goal of maintaining double-digit growth in the region had worsened ethnic tensions.

"Of course, they achieved that, but it was disastrous," he said. "They had no priority on local human resources, so of course they relied on outside labor, and sucked in large migration into the towns."

Now, a heavy security presence is needed to keep control of Lhasa. Around the Barkhor, the city's central market, paramilitary officers in riot gear, all ethnic Han, march counterclockwise around the sacred Jokhang Temple, against the flow of Tibetan pilgrims. Armed men stand on rooftops near the temple.

Limits on religious freedom have been a major cause of discontent. In the Jokhang itself, and in the Potala Palace, the imposing white-walled winter fortress of the Dalai Lamas, images of the exiled 14th Dalai Lama have been banned. Pilgrims carry the Dalai Lama's photograph in hidden lockets or amulets.

As the pilgrims circle the Potala, a loudspeaker in a small park blares Communist Party propaganda: "We are part of a Chinese nation contributing to a great future — we are Chinese people."

Development programs are sometimes well received, and sometimes they create resentment. Since 2006, the Tibetan government has mandated that Tibetan farmers, herders and nomads use government subsidies to build new homes closer to roads. New concrete homes with traditional Tibetan decorations dot the stark brown countryside.

But the base government subsidy for building the new homes is usually \$1,500 per household, far short of the total needed. Families have generally had to take out multiple times that amount in interest-free three-year loans from state banks as well as private loans from relatives or friends.

“Though the government assures that villagers have not borrowed beyond their means, many villagers around Lhasa have expressed pessimism about their ability to repay these loans, suggesting that the degree of debt for the new houses is beyond what they are comfortable with,” said Emily Yeh, a scholar at the University of Colorado at Boulder who has researched the program. “This should become clearer over the next few years as loans start to become due.”

In the model village of Gaba, right outside Lhasa, residents leased out their farmland for eight years to Han migrants to pay back the loans, which mostly ranged from \$3,000 to \$4,500. The migrants grow a wide variety of vegetables to be sold across China. Many of the Tibetan villagers now work in construction; they cannot compete with Han farmers because they generally know how to grow only barley.

“Renting out the farmland was suggested by the bank,” said Suolang Jiancan, the village head. “It would be a guaranteed income to pay back the loans.”

Among the Han, it is not just farmers who are profiting from the land. Large companies from other parts of China are finding ways to tap Tibet’s resources.

On July 19, China National Gold Group, the nation’s largest gold producer, began work at a polymetallic mine whose daily output is expected to reach 15,000 tons. Tibet has more than 3,000 proven mineral reserves, including China’s biggest chromium and copper deposits. China Daily, an official English-language newspaper, quoted a Tibetan official in March saying that mining could make up at least 30 percent of Tibet’s gross domestic product by 2020, up from 3 percent now.

A prominent mineral water company called 5100 that is registered in Hong Kong but managed from Beijing has set up a factory in Damxung, on a grassy plateau three hours north of Lhasa, to collect glacial runoff and bottle it as high-end mineral water. Last year, the company, named after the altitude of the glacier, produced almost two million gallons of water. The water is shipped out on the Qinghai-Tibet railway.

The water that is collected would otherwise flow through wetlands where yak graze. It is unclear how the factory’s work has affected the ecosystem. Jiang Xiaohong, the factory manager, who moved to Tibet three years ago, said the

company did an environmental assessment before starting operations in 2006. “There’s no impact on the wetlands,” she said.

Because the company employs Tibetans, it receives government subsidies, Ms. Jiang said. About 95 percent of the 150 or so workers are Tibetan, and the average salary, including housing subsidies, is about \$740 a month, a small fortune on the Tibetan plateau, she said. But ethnic Han are the company’s managers and owners, and the ones who ultimately profit from it.

Mr. Hao, the regional vice chairman, said the key to making Tibetans more competitive in business “is to enhance Tibetan people’s skills through education and training.”

The government has encouraged wealthier Chinese cities to finance school construction in Tibet. In the city of Shigatse, four hours from Lhasa, the Tibet-Shanghai Experimental School was completed in 2005 with an investment of \$8.6 million from the Shanghai government. The principal, Huang Yongdong, arrived in January from Shanghai for a three-year posting. Nearly 1,500 students, all Tibetan, attend junior and senior high schools here.

A portrait of Mao hangs in the lobby. All classes are taught in Mandarin Chinese, except for Tibetan language classes. Critics of the government’s ethnic policies say the education system in Tibet is destroying Tibetans’ fluency in their own language, but officials insist that students need to master Chinese to be competitive. Some students accept that.

“My favorite class is Tibetan because we speak Tibetan at home,” said Gesang Danda, 13. “But our country’s mother tongue is Chinese, so we study in Chinese.”

On a blackboard in one classroom, someone had drawn in chalk a red flag with a hammer and sickle. Written next to it was a slogan in Chinese and Tibetan: “Without the Communist Party, there would be no new China, and certainly no new Tibet.” ■



Chinese soldiers march in front of the Potala Palace.

Getty Images

## Statement by the Department of Religion and Culture, CTA

July 5, 2010

Recognising the incarnations of Lamas/Trulkus is a unique Tibetan practice related with Buddhism. It has nothing to do with politics. Using religious figures for political purpose, therefore, goes against religion. On 18 July 2007, the State Administration of Religious Affairs of the People's Republic of China issued the Regulation on Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism by transgressing the bounds of both religion and politics. The heads of the four religious schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon religion as well as the Department of Religion and Culture of the Central Tibetan Administration issued a seven-point joint declaration on 2 September 2007, repudiating this regulation. Likewise the Special Meeting of the heads of the four religious schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon religion held on 3 May 2008 passed a resolution, which not only rejected it but also declared that in future no reincarnated Lamas/Trulkus of the Tibetan Buddhist and Bon religions shall be considered as true unless they have the final approval of the heads of the respective religious traditions.

Under the supervision of the Chinese Communist government, the so-called reincarnation of the Gyalong Dedrug Rinpoche, belonging to Loseling of the Drepung Monastery in Tibet has apparently been recognised on 4 July 2010 through the 'golden urn procedure'. As well as going against religion, this action of the Chinese government is a politically-motivated one. Therefore, as mentioned in the above declaration and the resolution, no Tibetan will ever accept this.

The previous Dedrug Rinpoche was a prominent religious figure who had contributed much to the maintenance and promotion of Tibetan religion and culture. Therefore, his reincarnation should be recognised according to tradition with the consent of the Gaden Throne Holder, the head of the Gelug School of Tibetan Buddhism.

**Department of Religion and Culture  
Central Tibetan Administration**