



# TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 19 - ISSUE 3

MAY - JUNE 2015

FOCUS

Dharamshala Road Named Potala Road by HP Chief Minister

p - 9

FEATURE

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Mega 80th Birthday Celebration

p - 14

WORLD PRESS

Trust Deficit in Tibet

p - 24

INTERVIEW

It's in Our Interest to be Within China, says Dalai Lama

p - 29



His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Chief Minister Shri. Virbhadra Singh and Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay sharing a lighter moment during the second day of the two day celebrations on 22 June 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and guests, along with thousands attending the program, enjoying lunch served at the conclusion of celebrations honoring His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 21, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

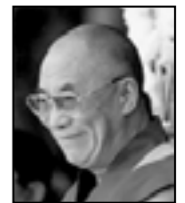


Artists from the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts perform during His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 21, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL



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Vol. 19, Issue 3  
MAY- JUNE 2015

## FOCUS

- 9. Dharamshala Road Named Potala Road by HP Chief Minister
- 10. Mundgod FC Clinches GCM Gold Cup Football Tournament
- 12. Tenzin Damdhul Scores 95.8% in CBSE, Bags Prestigious Sikyong Scholarship
- 13. Kashag Sanctions Additional NPR 30 Million for Tibetans in Nepal

## FEATURE

- 14. Mega Celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th Birthday

## DOCUMENTATION

- 20. Speech of Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State for Culture, Tourism & MoS for Ministry of Civil Aviation
- 20. Speech of Mr. Kiren Rijju, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs
- 21. Speech of Shri. Virbhadra Singh, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh
- 21. Speech of Mr. Nabam Tuki, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh
- 23. Speech of Ms. Viplove Thakur, MP from Himachal Pradesh
- 23. Speech of Mr. Marco Pannello, President of Italian Radical Party

## WORLD PRESS

- 24. Trust Deficit in Tibet - India Today
- 26. China Denying Passports to Restrict Critics, Minorities
- 27. Dalai Lama Says Inter-Religious Dialogue Key to Ending Terrorism
- 28. When the Dalai Lama Turns 80

## INTERVIEW

- 29. It is in our interest to be within China, Says Dalai Lama

## REGULARS

- News From Tibet & Exile .....4
- Contact ..... 31
- Quotes .....32

## Two Self-Immolations in May

Showing no respite from the spate of self-immolation protests that swept Tibet since 2009, two more Tibetans set themselves on fire in protest against the repressive policies of the Chinese government.

Tenzin Gyatso, a father of four children in his mid thirties, died after setting himself on fire on 20 May while Sangye Tso, a mother of two, died after self-immolating on 27 May.

Tenzin Gyatso's self-immolation took place in Khangsar township of Tawu (Ch: Daofu) County, Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province). Sangye Tso set herself ablaze in front of the local Chinese police headquarters in Chone County, Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (Incorporated into China's Gansu Province).

With the self-immolation of these two, the total self-immolation protests inside Tibet since 2009 reached 140. At least 121 out of the 140 have died while the status and whereabouts of the rest remain unknown.

## Empathy with Compassion Makes a Good Leader: Sikyong

“When an ordinary person achieves an extraordinary thing, that is when a leader is born”, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay told participants of a leadership training for students in Gangchen Kyishong, stirring excitement and hope among the 95 participants from 35 colleges and Universities across India and Nepal.

The leadership training was organised by the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration, to nurture leadership qualities from a tender age among Tibetan students.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay was one

of the speakers during the training and interacted with the students for over two hours speaking about the key elements of good leadership through a power-point presentation.

Sikyong highlighted the types of leadership and the essential characteristics of a good leader. He said that a leader doesn't only lead people but also sits back and coordinates the work. He outlined the core traits of leadership characteristics as empathy and a blend of 4C's; Compassion, Courage, Conviction and Curiosity.

Sikyong also talked about public narrative. He passionately engaged the young students, extolling the importance of narrative in describing the issue of Tibet to the world.

“To convince public and make their heart move, we must identify our audience and then talk in such a way that would connect the public and inform them about the urgency and come up with a solution,” he said, speaking about the I, We, Urgency and Action formula.

During the question and answer session, Sikyong was asked to name a few inspirational leaders. Sikyong mentioned His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela among his favorites.

## Parliament Appoints Two Additional Election Commissioners for Upcoming Election

Mr. Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, announced on 29 May the names of the two new Additional Election Commissioners, appointed by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile for the upcoming 2016 general elections for Sikyong of the 15th Kashag and members of the 16th Tibetan Parliament.

The two Additional Election Commissioners – Ven. Geshe Tenpa Tashi and Mr. Tenzin Choephel – have been elect-

ed by the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile from the candidates proposed by a committee formed by Chief Justice Commissioner, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament and Sikyong.

The committee comprised of former Kalon Kirti Rinpoche, former Chief Justice Commissioner Ngawang Phelgyal Gyechen and former Election Commissioner Mr. Jampel Choesang.

“The two additional election commissioners have been appointed in view of the upcoming general election in 2016,” Speaker Penpa Tsering told mediapersons.

Ven. Geshe Tenpa Tashi is born in Shardang village in Domey, eastern Tibet. He is a Tibetan scholar from Gomang monastery and a former religious teacher appointed by the Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration.

Mr. Tenzin Choephel is born in Kardze in eastern Tibet, currently based in Dharamshala. He is the former chairman of the association for Tibetan voluntary contribution, McLeod Ganj. He also served as the chairman of the local Dotoe Association and the head of Indo-Tibetan McLeod Development Society.

## Tibetan Communities are Vital for Tibetan Culture

“We all are political refugees” living in different parts of the world, said Kalon Tsering Dhundup during his address to the Tibetan Communities in Belgium and Holland in May.

The Tibetan Communities have important responsibilities in the preservation and promotion of the Tibetan culture.

Kalon Tsering Dhundup addressed the members of the Tibetan Community in Holland in Amsterdam, the last leg of his visit to Switzerland, Belgium and Holland. He is Central Tibetan Administra-

tion's head of the Finance Department. All the three countries have well-established Tibetan Communities. They have also set up Tibetan language schools classes for the young Tibetans.

“The Tibetan language schools are of tremendous importance in ensuring our Tibetan Buddhist culture and language are taught to the younger generation,” said Kalon Tsering Dhundup.

He urged the Tibetan Communities to strengthen their activities, which contribute towards the survival of the Tibetan people both culturally and politically. The Central Tibetan Administration recognizes the vital role of the Tibetan communities.

Tibetans are scattered across the world. Wherever there are Tibetans, the Tibetan Communities look after the welfare of the Tibetan people and support the work of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Kalon Tsering Dhundup gave motivational talk about the importance of the Dhanglang Chatrel – the voluntary contribution by Tibetans to the Central Tibetan Administration to all the three Tibetan Communities in Switzerland, Belgium (Antwerp and Brussels) and Holland.

“Dhanglang Chatrel contribution is not only a financial contribution but is it one's political expression of solidarity to the preservation and survival of the Tibetan identity – both culturally and politically,” he said.

He spoke of the political situation in Tibet at present and 139 Tibetans who have self-immolated since February 2009.

## 2015 Class 12 Result Impressive

This year 443 Tibetan students scored above 75% as against 321 in 2014, which is an increase of 38%, and if compared to 2010 of 127 students with 75%, it is an increase of 250% in five years.

16 students scored more than 90% this

year compared to 10 students last year and 4 in 2010, which is a 300% increase in the last five years.

The awardees for Gaden Phadrang award this year are: A) Science Stream: Michiko Yamasaki (93%) from TCV Selakui, Tenzin Kunsang (92.6%) from TCV Selakui and Tenzin Dolma (91.8%) from SOS TCV Bylakuppe. B) Commerce Stream: Tenzin Senge (91.4%) from CST Mundgod, Tenzing Dechen (91.2%) from TCV Upper Dharamshala, and Karma Tseten (90.4%) from CST Mussoorie C) Arts Stream: Shawo Choeten (93.2%), Rinchen Youdon (92%) and Gongyal (91.2%), all from SOS TCV Suja.

Out of the 1431 Tibetan students who appeared in the All India Secondary School Certificate Examination (AISSCE) conducted by CBSE, 1306 have passed, 25 students failed and 100 students were placed under compartment category (failed in one subject). The overall pass percentage of Tibetan schools is 91.26 which is a marked improvement from last year's 86.7%.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) declared class XII board examination results on 25 May 2015. Among 17 Tibetan Senior Secondary schools in India, four schools namely TCV Selakui, TCV Suja, CST Dalhousie and TCV Gopalpur have achieved 100% result this year, whose average pass percentage stand as TCV Selakui (81.67%), TCV SOS Suja (74.07%), CST Dalhousie (71.43%) and TCV Gopalpur (67.64%).

This year also girls of Tibetan schools have outshined boys in the Board examination. Out of 691 boys who appeared in the examination, 603 (87.26%) have passed whereas 703 girls (95%) out of 740 have cleared the examination.

The Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration, congratulate the students, teachers, staff and schools for the excellent performance in the examination.

## US-based Tibetan Youths Form Middle Way Approach Campaign Group

A group of Tibetan youths in Minnesota, United States, have voluntarily formed a Middle Way Approach advocacy group, Youth for Umaylam (Y4U) to raise awareness on Umaylam – The Middle Way Approach, the official policy of the Central Tibetan Administration to resolve the Tibet issue.

The advocacy group was launched formally on 23 May 2015 at the community hall of Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota based in St. Paul. The keynote speaker at the launch was Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, former Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to North America.

“We established Y4U in order to raise awareness about Umaylam – The Middle Way Approach because we saw the need to educate and clearly present a comprehensive understanding of Umaylam among the youth,” the group said on its official website.

“Using a bottom-up approach, we will create opportunities to learn more about Umaylam and its importance to form a more peaceful state of self-governance in Tibet. Ultimately, this allows the Tibetan people to meet their basic needs and preserve the unique Tibetan culture and identity. We strongly believe Umaylam is the most pragmatic solution that protects the vital interests of both China and Tibet,” it said.

The founding members of the group consists of Tenzin Choerap, Ngawang Dolkor, Tenzin Choedhen Dongchung, Tenzin Lekphel, Tenzin Tsetan Lobsang, Dorjee Phuntsok Norbu, Tendor Norbu, Tenzin Nordon, Jigme Ritzeckura, Tenzin Chendhen Waleag, Tenzin Norzin Waleag and Norzin Wangpo.

Most of the founding members of the group have been involved in the Tibetan movement for a long time. They have



been inoculated in the Middle Way Approach through the various awareness campaigns carried out by the Central Tibetan Administration. Several of the founding members have also been to Gangchen Kyishong, the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration as part of the CTA's various voluntary service programs like Tibet Corps, internships, etc. Hence, the group have pledged to work in solidarity with the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in its effort to create awareness through education, political advocacy, community engagement, youth empowerment and peaceful conflict resolution.

The Middle Way Approach for Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People ('Umaylam' in Tibetan) is a policy conceived by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1974, in an effort to engage the Chinese government in dialogue and find a peaceful way to protect the unique Tibetan culture and identity. It is a policy adopted democratically through a series of discussions held over many decades by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and the Tibetan people. It is a win-win proposition, which straddles the middle path between the status quo and independence – one that categorically rejects the present repressive and colonial policies of the Chinese government towards the Tibetan people while not seeking separation from the People's Republic of China.

## Tibetan Association of Boston adopts Tezu Dhargyeling Settlement

On May 23, 2015, the Tibetan Association of Boston organized a formal gathering of its community member to adopt Tezu Dhargyeling Tibetan Settlement based in Arunachal Pradesh. The executive members of the Association did the selection by drawing one name from the pool of all listed Tibetan settlements prescribed by the Department of Home, Dharamsala.

Mr. Ngawang Yonten from the Office of Tibet attended the formal gathering in Boston, and spoke on the importance

of Sister Shichak initiative formulated by the 14th Kashag. He also thanked the executive members and the community members of Boston on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration and the Office of Tibet.

The Association also organized a fund raising event that evening with the volunteer performance of Tibetan culture items, and collected donation in which more than 200 people have shown up with enthusiasm. Many people who were not able to attend have sent their donations to the event. The Office of Tibet and the Tibetan Association of Boston will be formally contacting the Department of Home very soon.

The Tibetan Association of Boston is the second Tibetan Association in North America to adopt Tibetan settlements in India after New York & New Jersey adopted the Tibetan settlements in Hunsur and Bandhara last June. The Office of Tibet, Washington DC is also going to encourage other Tibetan Association when they meet for 14th North American Tibetan Association in Portland from June 5-7, 2015.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people, expressed his solidarity with the sufferings of the Tibetan people inside Tibet and urged the Chinese government to address the genuine grievances of the Tibetan people at a prayer service held to mourn the demise of the two latest self-immolators.

## His Holiness Conducts 4-day Teaching at Gyuto Monastery

His Holiness the Dalai Lama conducted a four-day teaching on 'The Three Principal Aspects of the Path, The Concise Stages of the Path and Praise to Dependent Arising by Je Tsongkhapa at Gyuto tantric monastery in Sidhpur, near Dharamshala from 10 – 13 May.

Over 5,000 devotees comprising of monks, nuns and lay people attended the teachings. In his introductory remarks before commencing the teaching, His

Holiness talked about sustaining the essence of Buddhism, non-violence, interdependency and the need to foster kinship among the various religious traditions.

Speaking on the essence of Buddhism, His Holiness emphasised the importance moving with the times and becoming a 21st century Buddhist. "Today, Buddhists are able to come out into the world and interact with people. We need to be more informed about what is going on in such a world," he said. He reaffirmed the need to approach world affairs with the same unbiased attitude with which Buddhists should approach their religion.

His Holiness also talked about the teachings of Buddha as the source of light which helps dispel the darkness of ignorance in sentient beings.

Talking about the scourge of violence that is currently taking place in the world in the name of religion, His Holiness remarked that such violence is very confusing as all religions preach love and compassion and blamed ignorance as the root of all trouble.

His Holiness also blamed human greed and the lack of empathy for the rising violence against each other. He recounted a visit to Hyderabad where he witnessed deers roaming freely in a park with lions. "Won't the lions harm the deer?" His Holiness remembered asking the park attendant – and was told that once the lions are full they won't harm other animals, explaining that lions eat only to survive.

His Holiness then reasoned that, "humans although having a high functioning brain, and far greater critical faculties that allow us to make judgments, instead of using our intelligence to overcome suffering, we often decide to use it to cause pain because of an inability to see another person's point of view. Because of our inappropriate way of looking at things, we develop negative emotions."

The teachings concluded on 13 May with a long life prayer offering for His Holiness the Dalai Lama by the host monastery.

## Tibetan Version of Book 'Authenticating Tibet' Launched

The Tibetan version of the English language book 'Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions' was launched on 6 May at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. The book was originally published in French by Anne-Marie Blondeau and Katia Buffetrille in 2002, in response to a booklet published by the Chinese government in 1989.

The book was later translated into English by a group of 15 Tibet scholars, which included 3 Tibetan scholars, and was published in 2008.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay along with Mr. Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament, graced the book launch. Also present at the occasion were Kalon Mr. Ngodup Tsering, members of the Tibetan Parliament and secretaries of various departments of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Addressing the book launch, Sikyong highlighted the importance of the book and said "One must study the Tibetan issue from various perspectives for better comprehension." He also emphasised the need for rigorous study of such books and the need for more Tibetologists to counter false Chinese propaganda.

Speaker Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan Parliament also called for an immediate response to such false propaganda carried out by the Chinese government.

He lamented the fact that it has been more than twenty years since the Chinese government has published the booklet in 1989. He reiterated that such books should be properly scrutinised to understand the Tibetan issues from the Chinese perspective, western perspective and the Tibetan narrative as well.

The Tibetan version of the book was translated by Mr. Jampa Tenzin, a researcher at the Tibet Policy Institute.

## Girls Outshine Boys in Class X Board

The Central Board Secondary Education (CBSE) on 28 May declared the result of Class X students. 1472 students from 27 various Tibetan schools have participated in the exams held this March.

This year Class X CBSE result indicated the performance of Tibetan schools comparatively less progressive.

Out of the 1472 Tibetan students who appeared in the exam, 1423 students have passed. This year the overall pass percentage of Tibetan schools is 96.67%, which is 2.59% less compared to the last year's over all pass percentage of 99.26%. Among the 27 Tibetan schools, 16 schools have got 100% pass percentages.

Like previous year's results, girls have performed better in the Class X examination this year as well. The overall pass percentage of boys this year was 95.35% whereas the overall pass percentage of girls was 99.60%.

## His Holiness Expresses Appreciation of Project to Recreate Bamiyan Buddhas

On being informed of the recent success of a project to recreate images of the Bamiyan Buddhas in situ, His Holiness the Dalai Lama issued a note of appreciation.

He wrote, "When the Buddha statues in Bamiyan, Afghanistan were destroyed in March 2001, it made me sad. The statues were importance not only to those of us who are Buddhists, but also to the people of the country where they were located, the Afghans, as historical symbols of our shared humanity."

He added that although the statues had been destroyed, he was glad "to learn that recently a couple from China has succeeded in recreating images in their

likeness using three dimensional holographic projection." He was also pleased to hear that the technique has been successfully tested in the statues' original locations in Bamiyan, Afghanistan.

His note concluded: "This is a welcome development. I would like to thank Janson Yu and Liyan Hu and everyone else involved in the project for their admirable work."

## Speaker Penpa Tsering Inaugurates GCM Football Tournament

Gyalum Chenmo Memorial (GCM) Gold Cup, the biggest sporting event in Tibetan exile community began at the TCV grounds on 30 May. The event is an annual football tournament dedicated to the memory of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's late mother.

Mr. Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, inaugurated the tournament. Dignitaries at the opening ceremony include members of the Tibetan Kashag, Secretaries from the Central Tibetan Administration, and representatives from various Tibetan organisations.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the GCM Cup, Speaker Penpa Tsering said that the players fulfill a big responsibility spreading awareness on Tibet through the game of sports.

"Play the game like a game. If the game which is played to make friendship and unity creates disunity or hatred among the players, it does not serve the purpose of the GCM Cup," said Mr. Penpa Tsering.

Twenty-eight teams from Tibetan settlements across India and Nepal as well from Tibetan communities in Europe and North America took part in the tournament.

This year's tournament is dedicated to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in honour of his 80th birth anniversary.

## President of European Council urges China to Resume Dialogue with Tibetans

Mr. Donald Tusk, President of the European Council called on China to resume dialogue with Representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the joint press briefing of the EU-China summit in Brussels on 29 June.

“I expressed our concerns on freedom of expression and association in China, including the situation of the persons belonging to minorities,” said Mr. Tusk.

“I have encouraged China to resume a meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama’s representatives.”

He made the statement in the presence of the Chinese Prime Minister Mr. Li Keqiang and the President of the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker.

The 17th bilateral summit between the European Union and the People’s Republic of China took place in Brussels on 29 June 2015.

Mr. Tusk also spoke about his concern about the human rights in Tibet. The sweeping crackdowns, arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as torture of demonstrators in prison have led to the deterioration of the human rights situation in Tibet. 140 Tibetans have self-immolated since February 2009. Such form of political protest is unprecedented in Tibetan history. It is the clearest illustration of the worsening of the situation in Tibet under Chinese occupation.

To coincide with the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to Brussels, the Tibetan Community in Belgium held a peaceful protest in front of the European External Action Service – EU Foreign Affairs and Security Policy office in Brussels on 29 June.

They called for democracy, dialogue and dignity for all the Tibetan people.

## Health Department Marks International Torture Day

The department of health of the Central Tibetan Administration marked ‘International Day in Support of Victims of Torture’ with a play titled ‘Norbu’ at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts. The day is held annually on 26 June to speak out against the crime of torture and to honour and support victims and survivors of torture throughout the world.

The play was based on a true-story of a Tibetan, who had suffered torture inflicted upon him by the Chinese authorities. The play aimed to shed light on the tortures perpetrated by the Chinese government.

In the introduction to the play, the narrator says, “The play was titled Norbu, meaning Gem in Tibetan. The dual meaning of the play portrays the name of the victim and it also implies the courage of the political prisoners who endured Chinese atrocities. Tibetans consider their bravery like a precious gem.”

The chief guest at the play was Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay. Other dignitaries include Health Kalon, Dr. Tsering Wangchuk, TIPA Director Pesur Wangdue Tsering and Ms. Gang Lhamo, Member of Tibetan Parliament and officials from the health department.

Deputy Secretary Trinley Wangmo from the health department gave the introductory speech, explaining the significance of marking the day to help restore dignity and rehabilitate the victims of torture.

In his address, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay spoke about the dire situation prevailing inside Tibet. He said: “Tibetans who are even remotely connected to a political activity are arrested by Chinese authorities and imprisoned and tortured. We are deeply concerned about these happenings and urge the world community and rights organisations to pressurise the Chinese government to end its repressive policies.”

“How Tibetan victims stand out from the other victims in the world is that they carry no animosity towards their perpetrators,” he added saying that such response demonstrates the spirit of a Buddhist.

A message from a Tibetan torture survivor read, “I bear no anger against my perpetrators for what they did to me as a devout Buddhist. Whenever I feel pain and I struggle with my illnesses, I practice and pray that my illness and pain can be beneficial in relieving the sufferings of all other people in this world. May my suffering take away the pain of others, I pray daily.”

## US House Resolution Calls for Settlement of Tibetan Issue

Representative Eliot L. Engel (NY), the top Democrat on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Representative Matt Salmon (AZ), Chairman of the Asia Pacific Subcommittee, along with co-chairmen of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, Representatives Joseph Pitts (PA) and James McGovern (MA), announced on 24 June that they have introduced a measure calling for meaningful dialogue and a negotiated settlement for the people of Tibet (H.Res. 337). The resolution also acknowledges the contributions of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in advance of his 80th birthday, including his tireless efforts to promote, through peaceful means, genuine autonomy for the people of Tibet.

“Throughout his life, His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, has championed greater understanding, harmony, and respect among all religious faiths. As the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, he has been a model for all of us on the importance of preserving the cultural, religious, historical, and linguistic heritage—not just for the Tibetan people but for all people. His Holiness has done outstanding work to safeguard the environment in the Tibetan plateau, to promote democracy among the Tibetan people, and to champion non-violent conflict resolution,” said Representative Engel.

## Dharamshala Road Named Potala Road by HP Chief Minister



A sign board depicting Potala Road, the road from Mcleod Ganj to Dharamshala.

Shri. Virbhadra Singh, the honourable Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh on 22 June renamed the road from Mcleod Ganj, the official residence town of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Dharamshala via Gangchen Kyishong, the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration, as Potala Road.

The road was renamed in honour of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s 80th birthday on the second day of the two-day celebration.

The idea for renaming the road as Potala Road was initiated by Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people, during his numerous interactions with local authorities. The idea was processed through the Divisional Commissioner’s Office with the unanimous approval of all the local politicians, MLA and finally by the Chief Minister himself.

Extending his gratitude to the Chief Minister and the people of Himachal Pradesh, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay said, “I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for this beautiful gesture on the part of the Chief Minister and the people of Himachal Pradesh.”

Sikyong also wished the octogenarian Chief Minister a happy birthday which

was on 23 June and gratefully recalled the Chief minister’s many other assistance to the Tibetan community.

The renaming of the road as Potala road was widely welcomed by the Tibetan people, expressing their gratitude to the Indian government and the state government of Himachal Pradesh. It was shared extensively on social media as well becoming one of the most widely read news in the Tibetan diaspora community.

The new ‘Potala Road’ has a powerful symbolism of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s return to the Potala Palace in Tibet from this Potala Road in Dharamshala, reflecting the fervent prayers of all the Tibetan people residing inside and outside Tibet to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama return to Tibet with dignity.

It was also a landmark moment in exile Tibetan history as it was the first time that a road in India has been named in honour of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or to recognise the existence of Tibetan diaspora community in India.

However, the government signboard explained that the road is named after Mount Potalaka, a sacred hill in South India meaning abode of Avalokiteswara (Buddha of compassion).

Earlier known as Jogiwara Road, the Potala road is a widely used road by the people especially the Tibetans as the stretch of the road encompasses the entire political and cultural hub of the Tibetan community.

The road laid in dire need of construction for the past several years. It was reconstructed recently with a generous financial assistance from the state government. The road is now widened and completely renovated with 7-inch concrete to withstand the long monsoon of Dharamshala, notorious for its high-density rainfall.

The road stretches all the way from Mcleod Ganj in upper Dharamshala via Gangchen Kyishong to TCV School in Lower Dharamshala.

Local Tibetans and Indians have also expressed their joy at the reconstruction of the road.

“With the reconstruction of the road, His Holiness the Dalai Lama who journeys regularly through this road during his numerous out-station visits would surely have a smoother experience,” a local Tibetan resident exclaimed.

For a local taxi driver, it was the prospect of a boom in tourism that caught his appeal. “The road is smooth and I hope more tourists will flock to the town,” he said.

The thousands of domestic and international tourists who regularly visit Dharamshala to attend the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or to enjoy the scenic beauty of the place, would breathe a sigh of relief. The nightmarish traffic jams and the pot holes that had been the bane of the town for so long would cease to exist or would reduce tremendously.

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



## Mundgod FC Clinches 2015 GCM Gold Cup



Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay presenting the cup to Mundgod FC, the winning team of GCM Gold Cup 2015 on 10 June 2015

At a time when world football is going through a series of controversies and scandals, Tibetan football witnessed its much-anticipated annual event, the GCM Gold cup tournament, played out at the Upper TCV football ground in Dharamshala from 30 May – 10 June 2015.

Twenty-eight teams from Tibetan communities across the world vied for the coveted title, providing twelve days of uninterrupted quality football to the thousands of Tibetan football lovers.

The final match of the tournament was played out between Mundgod FC and Tashiling Pokhara on 10 June. Living up to its expectation, the two teams gave an inspired performance, much to the joy of the 4000-strong spectators who have come to witness the single biggest sporting event in exile Tibetan community.

After almost one and a half hour of football, Mundgod FC, one of the youngest teams in the tournament, came out victorious with two goals against Tashiling Pokhara's one.

The winning team received cash prize of one lakh Rupees and the runner up got seventy thousand Rupees.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people, graced the final as the chief guest, accompanied by dignitaries and officials from the Central Tibetan

Administration.

Congratulating the 28 participating teams, Sikyong expressed his appreciation of the Tibetan National Sports Association for their successful efforts in creating awareness on health and fitness through sports.

“In a society, health plays a vital role of physical and mental development. Administration also becomes much easier when people are physically fit which ultimately affects our Tibetan struggle in a positive way,” Sikyong said.

He also talked about sports as one of the key factors that can bring about unity, one of the three guiding principles of the present Kashag. As a matter of fact, the present Kashag has allocated monetary grants of 8 Lacs each for the construction of new as well as renovation of existing playgrounds in Tibetan settlements to achieve a dual objective of public health awareness and sustenance of the Tibetan settlements.

The Gyalyum Chenmo (GCM) Gold Cup is an annual football tournament dedicated to the memory of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's late mother. The tournament is organised by Tibetan National Sports Association (TNSA).

### Tibet and The Beautiful Game

Football, commonly referred to as the Beautiful Game, began its association

with Tibet in the early 20th century during His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama's reign. It was introduced to Tibet during the Younghusband military expedition to counter Russia's growing clout in central Asia at the height of the Great Game era.

The British and their Indian soldiers played football at the British Trade Agency at Gyantse. The introduction of the British military training at Lhasa in 1913, the subsequent increase in the Army and introduction of a modern Police Force in the early 1920's saw more football in Tibet. The game continued to be played throughout the period before China's occupation in 1949.

In the 1950's a few popular teams emerged, like the Lhasa, the Potala, the Drapchi and Bodyguard Regiment football teams. There were frequent matches among themselves as well as with the Chinese military.

After the Chinese occupation of Tibet and the subsequent flight of His Holiness the Dalai Lama into exile in 1959, the Central Tibetan Administration was established to look after the exile Tibetans.

With the establishment of the Tibetan administration came schools for Tibetan children, where football was one of the most loved activities. Tibetan children's passion for football helped keep the children engaged, diverting their attention away from the memory of the tragic loss of their country.

Since then, regular inter-school tournaments were hosted and these initiated much interest and passion among spectators of all ages.

In 1981, the first club level tournament was organised in memory of the late Great Mother of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. It has since then come to be known as the Gyalyum Chenmo Memorial (GCM) Gold Cup, the most popular tournament in the Tibetan exile community.

## North American Tibetan Association Condemns Dolgyal Protesters

The 14th North American Tibetan Associations (NATA) Conference held in Portland, Oregon, from June 5-7, 2015, has unanimously agreed and prepared this press release to affirm our utmost respect, faith, and commitment to follow His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's unbiased advice concerning Dolgyal alias Shugden issue for reasons including protecting the authenticity of the Nalanda Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, promoting unity and harmony among Tibetan Buddhist Traditions, ensuring the safety of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and safeguarding the well-being of Tibet and Tibetans.

Most unfortunately, sectarian followers and activists of Dolgyal have stalked His Holiness the Dalai Lama across the globe including in the United States of America and Europe, and shouted hostile and false slogans to tarnish the image of His Holiness. Under the disguise of religious freedom, which they enjoy completely, they have verbally attacked the very person of His Holiness the Da-

lai Lama, leader of millions of Tibetans and Buddhists around the globe. His Holiness had simply advised Tibetans and followers of Tibetan Buddhism about the demerits of cultivating Dolgyal as protector, but has never forbidden to follow it. His Holiness has clearly said that it is up to the individual Tibetans whether or not they follow his advice about Dolgyal and if they do they should not come to his spiritual teachings especially commitment empowerments. Dolgyal advocates and protesters have hurt the feelings of Tibetans and admirers of His Holiness with their hostility and most disrespectful activism towards His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness will be visiting the United States of America in July during which his auspicious 80th Birthday will be celebrated by Tibetans and admirers in Texas, California and New York. NATA has organized Tibetan Gratitude Event in NY on July 9 and 10, 2015 to offer Long Life Prayer Ceremony to His Holiness and also thank him for dedicating

his life to global peace, inter-religious harmony and Tibet. His Holiness is not only the undisputed leader of Tibetans but he is also a Nobel Peace Laureate and unparalleled global moral leader. Falsely accusing him of banning religious freedom amounts to undermining global peace and harmony. Dolgyal protesters and activists have accused His Holiness the Dalai Lama as “Fake Dalai Lama” an allegation that even the Chinese government, their master, has not done. Therefore, NATA issues this press release to condemn the false propaganda and accusation of His Holiness and also inform the world that most Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet stand with His Holiness and his advice on Dolgyal issue. To clarify Dolgyal alias Shugden question, we recommend interested individuals to visit [www.tibet.net](http://www.tibet.net).

By North American Tibetan Association

Dated: June 7, 2015

## 12th Religious Conference Passes Resolution to Condemn Dolgyal Cult

The 12th Religious Conference of the Four Schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition was held for three days from 18 June in Dharamshala.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay and Kalon Pema Chhinjor attended the opening ceremony of the conference. The conclusion of the conference was graced by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The three-day conference was attended by over 66 representatives from 58 monasteries and Buddhist institutes including H.E Gaden Tripa Rinzong Rinpoche, H.E Sakya Trizin, H.E Karmapa Rinpoche, H.E Menri Trizin, Shabdrung Rinpoche, H.E Drukchen Rinpoche's Representative Khenpo Tenzin and H.E Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche's representative Kathok Gezey Rinpoche. Representatives from Jonang tradition of Tibetan

Buddhism also took part in the conference.

The conference reviewed the resolutions passed in the previous conference and discussed ways to develop Buddhist learning, co-ordination with other Buddhist nations, organising introductory Buddhist teachings, and developing the capability of respective monks and scholars of the four schools Tibetan Buddhism and Bon tradition.

The conference also issued a press release, strongly condemning the false allegations and the continued hate campaign carried out by the Dolgyal cult group against His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

“His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a global icon, known for his immense contribu-

tion towards world peace and particularly for his service in the promotion of Tibetan Buddhism and culture,” the press release said.

“We are deeply grateful and appreciate His Holiness the Dalai Lama's concern for the Tibetan people and Buddhists worldwide, and for truthfully explaining the harmful effects of propitiating Dolgyal”.

“Therefore, we, the participants of the 12th Religious Conference of the Four Schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition, under the leadership of our respective spiritual heads, wholeheartedly pledge to follow His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice and urge others to do the same,” it said.

The conference concluded on 20 June.



## Tenzin Damdhul Scores 95.8%, Bags Prestigious Sikyong Scholarship



Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay with Tenzin Damdhul, the recipient of the 2015 Sikyong Scholarship.

Tenzin Damdhul, a student from TCV Suja, received the prestigious Sikyong Scholarship, the highest academic honour for a Tibetan student in exile after securing 95.8% in the recently concluded class 12 CBSE examinations. He is the second Tibetan student and the first boy to bag the award since the announcement of the scholarship in 2012.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay met the boy at his official chambers on 1 June to personally congratulate him for his stupendous achievement.

“I congratulate Tenzin Damdhul for his remarkable achievement and appreciate the hard work that he put in to succeed in the class XII board examination,” Sikyong said.

Sikyong also complimented the principals, teachers, parents, and staff members of Tibetan schools for their role in delivering an impressive academic result this year. He further sent his best wishes to all the students and urged them to continue their efforts in achieving excellence in college.

Sikyong Scholarship, worth one lac rupees, is the most prestigious scholarship

for Tibetan students awarded by the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration. It was introduced in 2012 during Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay's stint as the education Kalon to encourage Tibetan students in exile to pursue academic excellence.

The scholarship is awarded to those who scores more than 95% in class 12 CBSE board examinations. The last recipient of the scholarship was Tenzin Chokyi, a girl from THF Mussoorie, who scored 95.4% in 2013.

Tenzin Damdhul, this year's recipient of the scholarship, is from TCV School, Suja, about two hours drive from Dharamshala. Coming from a humble background, Tenzin Damdhul's father is an ex-army man and his mother runs a small shop in Ooty, south India.

Tenzin Damdhul claims he slogged for 8-10 hours every day under the guidance of his respective teachers. He dedicated his achievement to his teachers and parents, as well as His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Kasur Jetsun Pema.

Speaking to the media, Tenzin Damdhul said, “I always think that we are not or-

dinary students, for we are Tibetan students, students of a lost nation. We live in a century where our countrymen are languishing under Chinese brutality and intensive political measures.”

“Time has come for us to materialise our dreams and do something for our country. I believe that hard work always gets paid off,” he said.

This year's performance in the class 12-board examinations indicated impressive results, continuing the trend of improvement in the last five years.

443 Tibetan students scored above 75% as against 321 in 2014, showing an increase of 38%, and if compared to 2010 of 127 students with 75%, it was an increase of 250% in five years.

1431 Tibetan students have appeared in the class 12 CBSE exams, 1306 have passed, 25 students failed and 100 students were placed under compartment category (failed in one subject).

The overall pass percentage of Tibetan schools is 91.26 which is a marked improvement from last year's 86.7%.

## Kashag Sanctions Additional NPR 30 Million for Tibetans in Nepal



From Left: DIIR Secretary Tashi Phuntsok, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Education Kalon Ngodup Tsering and SARD Secretary Ngodup Dorjee at the press conference.

Following Kalon Ngodup Tsering and SARD Secretary Ngodup Dorjee's damage assessment visit to quake affected areas in Nepal, the Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration led by Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, took the step to provide an additional NPR 30 Million (3 Crores) as relief for Tibetans in Nepal.

The funds are raised through the Central Tibetan Administration's emergency relief and rehabilitation fund-raising campaign in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. 50% of the fund is raised from within the Tibetan community in India and abroad through its offices of Tibet and settlement officers. The other half of the fund is raised from the CTA's network of donors and supporters across the world.

As in any natural calamity, the CTA's response towards the earthquake was based on the three-phased approach: rescue, relief and reconstruction.

In the first phase, the Central Tibetan Administration sanctioned NPR 5.6 Million for the Tibetans in Nepal through the earthquake relief committee based in Kathmandu.

16 Lacs from the amount had been utilised for rescuing as well as treatment of those injured in the quake including NPR 50,000 for each of the 13 victims. Almost 40 Lacs from the fund were distributed in cash to Tibetans for basic amenities and contingency.

The second phase of Interim Relief is currently undergoing. Interim relief is imperative at the moment due to the onset of monsoon, which could result in outbreaks of serious illness and other unforeseen issues.

The third and final phase would be the reconstruction of the buildings, houses and other social and economic facilities damaged by the quake. The reconstruction is expected to begin between the next 3 – 6 months depending on the availability of funds.

The NPR 30 Million relief money is allocated as below:

i) Ex gratia payment of NPR 2 Lac for each member of a family who has died in the earthquake, with a total allocation of NPR 26,00,00.

ii) An additional allowance of NPR 3000 per person for six months for those categorised as Below Poverty Line (Nyamthak), with a total allocation of NPR 25,02,000.

iii) Temporary shelter of GI sheets for those whose houses have been destroyed, with a total allocation of NPR 14,80,000.

iv) Renovation of minor damages to homes, offices, and community buildings as per the list provided by the settlement officers and assessed by the two-member Kashag's delegation. Total amount allocated 46,00,000.

v) Special ex gratia payments to Bakhang and Thupten Choeling nunneries with a total allocation of NPR 30,00,000

vi) Renovation of Schools Buildings: Namgyal High School; Namgyal Middle School; Songtsen High School; Atisha School; Lekshed Tsal; Mt. Kailash School and Shar Khumbu School; and for arranging temporary classrooms with a total allocation of NRs. 87,00,000/-

vii) A total of NPR 25,50,000 has been provided for health care including medicines, and sanitation as per the list with a total allocation of NPR 25,50,000.

viii) NPR 45,68,000 has been allocated for administration and contingency including logistics.

The Kashag has directed the offices of Tibet and settlement officers to send the money to Nepal and some have already initiated the process. It is hoped that the entire amount would be sent before the onset of monsoon.

Expressing his profound sympathies with the suffering and situation in Nepal, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically-elected political head of the Tibetan people, said: “ Sadly, there have been some Tibetan deaths both in Nepal and across the border in Tibet. Severe damages to life and property have also been caused as a result of the earthquake. We pray for them and urge them to maintain their perseverance and resilience in facing this tragedy.”

The Central Tibetan Administration also applauded the Tibetan community across Nepal led by Buddhist monks and nuns for their relentless relief efforts in helping the victims of the earthquake in remote places and terrain in Nepal.

“It is a reflection of the inherent kindness and gratitude of Tibetans towards Nepali people as advised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama,” Sikyong Dr. Sangay said, lauding the determination of those relief workers.



## His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th Birthday Celebration



Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh playfully offering His Holiness the Dalai Lama a piece of birthday cake during celebrations honoring His Holiness's 80th birthday at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 22, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

A mega two-day celebration and a *Tenshug*, a long life prayer offering was organised by the Central Tibetan Administration, the Domay Community and the Gelug International Foundation for His Holiness the Dalai Lama in honour of his 80th birthday on 21 and 22 June.

The premises of the Tsuglagkhang and the yard before it were packed with people since early morning on the first of two days celebrations. The Tibetans included many monks and nuns, as well as laypeople in their best clothes and students from Tibetan schools.

At 8 o'clock His Holiness was escorted from the gates of his residence up to the Tsuglagkhang, where he greeted the assembled guests and took his seat on the throne. Seated before him on a line of thrones were the leaders of the Tibetan spiritual traditions: to the right, Sakya Daktri Rinpoche, Menri Khen Rinpoche, Gyalwang Karmapa, Drikung Chetsang Rinpoche, Taglung Shabdrung Rinpoche, and to the left Ganden

Tri Rinpoche, Katok Getse Rinpoche and a representative of the Drukchen Rinpoche. Behind them sat abbots and retired abbots of the great monasteries.

Several prayers, among them Praises to the Buddha, the 'Invocation of the Seventeen Sagacious Adepts of Glorious Nalanda' and an invocation of the Series of Reincarnations of the Dalai Lamas, preceded the long-life offering.

During the long life prayer ceremony, the Tse-ring Che-nga and Nechung Oracles appeared separately in trance. They each paid their respects to His Holiness and gathered spiritual and political leaders together in front of him to say prayers. H.E Sakya Trizin proclaimed the long Eulogy and request to live long in conjunction with the offering of the mandala of the universe. H.E Sakya Trizin, the Sikyong and the Speaker of the TPiE together offered the mandala to His Holiness. Symbolic offerings of the 8 auspicious symbols, the 7 emblems of royalty and the 8 auspicious substances

were presented, while a procession of other offerings was carried through the temple.

The 'Song Accomplishing Longevity' composed by His Holiness's two Tutors, another long-life prayer by Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodro and a prayer to Guru Rinpoche for the fulfilment of wishes were recited to complete the ceremony.

His Holiness briefly addressed the congregation. He explained that according to the Tibetan reckoning his birthday was the 5th of the 5th month, which falls today. Because of the variations of the Tibetan lunar calendar 6th July had been accepted as his birthday according to the regular conventional calendar. He continued:

"The CTA, Domay Community and Gelug International Foundation initiated this offering. My living siblings, Gyallo Thondup, Jetsun Pema and Tenzin Choegyul have gathered here along with

many of my nieces and nephews. Sakya Daktri Rinpoche has presided over the ceremony in the presence of the leaders of Tibet's spiritual traditions. You've all made fervent prayers and I'd like to thank you.

"As far as the Gelug Foundation is concerned, monks, abbots and retired abbots are here in addition to the Ganden Tri Rinpoche who has been conducting a week long rite in conjunction with this Long-Life Ceremony. It follows instructions contained in the 5th Dalai Lama's 'Secret Visions'. The 5th Dalai Lama had two statues made of Chenresig, one of which remained in Lhasa, while the other was in Kyirong. They were regarded like brothers. He conducted meditation retreats in their presence and experienced a series of visions. The cycle of teachings deriving from them has been a practice of all the Dalai Lamas since and the text for this Longevity Ritual is taken from them.

"I received the empowerments and transmission of these teachings from Tagdrag Rinpoche in Tibet. While I was receiving them I experienced dreams that I didn't pay much attention to at the time. However, I've since realised they were propitious. Today, the people and deities of Tibet have made prayers for my long life. Doctors also suggest I could live another 20 years or so. I'm 80 now; let's plan to celebrate again when I'm 90."

"Although there is no freedom in Tibet, people there too are praying for my long life, even if they can't do so openly, but they have faith, devotion and a special connection with me. I'd like to thank you all."

His Holiness said that he has been asked what he'd like as a birthday gift and he has replied that as a Buddhist monk he has no particular wishes. However, he urged people to try and engage in spiritual transformation. He said we all have the potential to do good in the world, but that we need to take action rather than just talk about it.

Once the Long-Life ceremony was complete, an official function to celebrate the



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with special guests Dr Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, and Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs after attending celebrations honoring His Holiness's 80th birthday in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 21, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

birthday was held at the courtyard of the Tsuglagkhang. Artists from the Tibetan Institute for Performing Arts sang as His Holiness came down to take his seat.

The function was attended by a host of top Indian leaders including Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State for Culture, Tourism & MoS of Ministry of Civil Aviation; Hon. Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs; Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP from Himachal Pradesh; Shri. Nabam Tuki, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Mr. Pema Khandu, Tourism Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, among others. All the guests were invited by Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration.

In his address, Minister Shri Mahesh Sharma said, "I came here with the best wishes and prayers of 125 Crore Indians. We pray before god today for your long life and to give you more strength, to give you health, to give you courage, to show the path of life and the path of wisdom to the world and to humanity."

"This world has recognised those who have given back to humanity, and those who have given back to the world. And one of the most powerful leaders, one of the most highly revered spiritual leaders to emerge in the last so many years

is His Holiness the Dalai lama in this great democratic country of India. His Holiness has brought us the values of the great Mahatma Gandhi and I think in today's world, the message of peace and kindness is recognised as his greatest achievement.

"We will remember your contribution to peace and for using Satyagarha as a weapon in your struggle for freedom. You have taught your people and all the mankind that losers are those who refuse to rise up after falling down and not those who continue to rise up even after falling down. We salute you for this strength and wisdom."

Greeting His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the occasion, Shri. Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, said: "Being an Indian and a devotee of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I would like to extend my prayers for the long life of His Holiness so that he can continue to bless us with his messages of love and compassion. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a global icon. The messages and the values that he espouses guide humanity to peace and harmony."

Speaking on the historical bond shared by the Tibetan people with India, he said: "The bond shared by Tibet and India is centuries old. The people liv-





The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, the Hon. Nabam Tuki, accompanied by Mr. Pema Khandu, minister of his cabinet presenting His Holiness the Dalai Lama with a Buddha statue during celebrations honoring his 80th birthday at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala, HP, India on June 21, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

ing on the two opposite sides of Kailash Mansarover have traveled through time together. This time tested relationship is based on culture, mutual trust and affection. Hence, this historic relationship shared by these two peoples can never be set apart.”

Referring to His Holiness as the representative of the entire humanity, he said, “You don’t represent one religion or one community; you represent the entire humanity. And it is our bonded duty to ensure that we practice your message of love and kindness in words and in spirit.”

Calling His Holiness the Dalai Lama an apostle of peace, ocean of wisdom, Nobel laureate and a champion of liberty and humanism, Mr. Nabam Tuki, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, said, “I am deeply honoured to be a part of the 80th birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama along with the devotees from all over the world. I pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama who is the most revered spiritual leader of our times.

The chief minister assured his government’s continued support to the Tibetan cause and affirmed that he will formulate the Tibetan Rehabilitation Policy 2014

announced by the central government of India in Arunachal Pradesh. He said, “I have visited all the Tibetan settlements in the state. I consider it my solemn duty to provide the necessary facilities and solve the problems faced by the Tibetan people residing in Arunachal Pradesh.”

The chief minister invited His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit Arunachal Pradesh at a date of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s own convenience to bless the state with his teachings and presence. The chief minister also presented His Holiness the Dalai Lama a memento and a citation to express his government’s deep devotion. The citation was read out by Mr. Pema Khandu, Minister of Arunachal Pradesh.

A representative from Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Chamling’s office read out the chief minister’s greeting message.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in his address, thanked the gathering for coming to celebrate his birthday. “You all have come here today to greet this old man. Most of you who have come here are also quite old and the fact that you still came here, taking time from your busy schedule, reflects your deep conviction. I am truly thankful to you all,” His Holiness said.

His Holiness went on to add that he is no super human and explained that whatever he has learned and achieved in this life is due to his enthusiasm to learn and practice what he preached. “You all praised me a lot today. But I am just a simple Buddhist monk. I try to do my best all the time. I am 80 years old now and I have lived my entire life practicing the knowledge that I have gained from the Nalanda tradition. And I will continue to practice it till I am physically able,” His Holiness said.

Speaking on his lifelong commitments, His Holiness said that he is just one human being among the seven billion human beings in the world. “Everyone of us desires happiness and doesn’t want suffering. Yet, if we think about it carefully, most of the sufferings that we endure are of our own making. Therefore, if we practice the love and affection that we derived from our mothers to one another, most of the sufferings will surely diminish,” His Holiness explained.

His Holiness also said that just reciting prayers won’t solve the problems of the world. Quoting Lord Buddha himself, His Holiness said that suffering is not something that we can eradicate by our hands, nor can we wash it away with water, the only way we can eradicate suffering is through mental development and by practicing genuine love and compassion to one another.

Lauding India for its diversity, His Holiness said that India is the prime example of interdependency and mutual harmony. “All the major religious traditions exist in India and they have lived peacefully with one another for centuries. This multi-culturism of India is the true beauty of India,” His Holiness said.

His Holiness also urged Tibetans to study and preserve the Tibetan language. “The wealth of ancient Indian knowledge and Tibetan culture is available only in the Tibetan language at present. No other language in the world contains the essence of Buddha’s teachings. Therefore, it is imperative to study it to understand the essence of Buddhism and preserve our unique cultural heritage,” His Holiness said.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, in his birthday greeting, thanked His Holiness for his leadership and for his commitment to human happiness and the promotion of universal responsibility to foster religious harmony and to safeguard Tibet’s culture and environment.

“Nobel laureates call Your Holiness as the super laureate. But lesser known are your other contributions. Your Holiness, you are a true democrat. Deeply loved and respected by your people, you have empowered us with democracy and hope. You are an environmentalist who speaks on global warming, climate change and Tibet as the third pole which is a major source of rivers in Asia. You are an advocate of equality and justice who speaks strongly against the growing gap between rich and the poor,” Sikyong said.

“Your Holiness, you call yourself a simple Buddhist monk. But for people around the world, you are the beacon of hope and light to all the people. For Buddhists, you are the human manifestation of the Bodhisattva of compassion. And above all, for Tibetans, you are the life and soul of Tibet,” Sikyong Dr. Sangay added.

Speaking to the dignitaries, Sikyong said, “My heartfelt appreciation to everyone of you for your valuable presence on this historic moment. All of you being here on this joyous occasion send a powerful and positive message to all Tibetans around the world. Your presence will inspire millions of Tibetans, Buddhist followers and admirers to follow and rededicate themselves to His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s message of peace, non-violence and justice.”

DIIR Secretary Tashi Phuntsok, a member of the organising committee, gave the thank you address of the celebration.

The mega birthday celebration concluded with cultural performances from the three traditional provinces of Tibet and a lunch hosted by the organisers to the public. As per His Holiness’ desire, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the entire guests ate their lunch along with the public at the celebration venue, much to

the merriment of everyone present.

The celebration is also attended by all the heads of four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition who are in Dharamshala to attend the religious conference which concluded on 20 June..

His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s 80th birthday was celebrated on 21 June, as His Holiness was born on this day according to the Tibetan lunar calendar.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh receive a traditional welcome on their arrival at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala, HP, India on June 22, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

## Second Day of the Birthday Celebration

The second of the two-day mega celebrations for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s 80th birthday was organised by Domey Association, one of the organisers of the long life prayer offering ceremony.

It was graced by Shri. Virbhadra Singh, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s old friend.

Extending his heartiest birthday wishes, the chief minister said, “I join with you all to wish a happy long life to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who lead not only the Tibetan people but also humanity at large. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has not only been the leader of Tibet but also a teacher of peace, tranquility, brother-

hood and goodwill among all the nations, for which he is recognised by the world community.”

“We are very happy that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his government in exile are situated at Dharamshala in my state of Himachal Pradesh. We adore him and he is a leading example of tranquility and struggle and also of high thinking even under very adverse conditions”, he added.

The chief minister also added a post on his facebook page later, expressing his admiration for His Holiness and explaining his own personal relationship with Tibet.

“I heartfully wish for long & healthy life to Tibetan Spiritual Leader Dalai Lama on his 80th birthday. Dalai Lama is a living example of peace and struggle. He is known for his non-violent struggle for liberation of Tibet and he consistently advocated policies of non-violence, even in the face of extreme aggression and carried out his humanitarian efforts. My affinity to him is bonded by geographical terrain too due to contiguity of the then Bushahr State with Tibet and now I wish to extend this affinity to spiritual domain too,” he wrote.

Mr. Edward John, a prominent First Nations Canadian political leader, remi-





A Tibetan artist kneels in respect after reciting poetry during celebrations honoring His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday organized by the Dhomey Association at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 22, 2015. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHDDL

nised His Holiness's recent visit to Australia where he met with a group of indigenous people and talked about their culture and language and the importance of keeping these in the family of humanity. He added, "I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart, for our children, grandchildren and over 370 million indigenous people across the world, how important the message is from you". He gifted a pair of slippers and a colourful traditional blanket as a token of profound gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In his address, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed deep concern over the plight of indigenous peoples in various countries. He said that the aboriginals must be educated so that they can learn to blend with modernity. Talking on the preservation of one's culture and tradition, His Holiness said "Script is prerequisite to preserve one's culture and tradition. He said those who do not have script should make one. He said as a Tibetan he is thankful and proud of his ancestors for having a very rich Tibetan script and language.

Talking more on the indigenous people, His Holiness recalled his conversation with a black native who is emotionally and mentally cowed. His Holiness expressed his sadness when that man be-

lieved that a brain of a black man is less able than a brain of a white man. Referring to the inferiority complex of the aboriginals, His Holiness said that Chinese have treated the Tibetans as uncivilized as well. "Had the Tibetans not curbed by limited opportunity, they would have been par with the Chinese people", His Holiness said. The 21st century is the century of equality, he said, adding that one doesn't need to be submissive.

His Holiness further talked about the sense of unity and interdependency. He said that 'self-centeredness' is the root cause of all the troubles in the world. "Due to the self-centered attitude, the world never ceases to create problems. We live in a community where we cannot stay isolated, thus we have to be dependent on others. Our happiness depends on how healthy our humanity is," His Holiness said.

Sharing his thoughts on universal happiness, he said that the real nature of human kind is being compassionate since the creator of the world himself is an embodiment of love and compassion. He said that love and compassion are innate in every human being because of being nurtured by mother's love.

Attributing the lack of love and compassion to today's education system which

focuses solely on materialism, Holiness underlined the need to bring equal focus on inner values as well.

The head of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon tradition also gave addresses, expressing their profound prayers for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 80th birthday.

H.E Sakya Trizin, the head of the Sakya school of Tibetan Buddhism said, "Speaking about the immense contributions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the world and particularly towards Tibetan Buddhism is akin to speaking about the existence of the sun and moon. It need not be mentioned."

"I am a simple man. However, people continue to respect me. I believe that the respect that people have for me is because of my constant efforts to uphold and abide by the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Therefore, it gives me great pride for being able to fulfill His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advices till now."

"His Holiness the Dalai Lama is my most important teacher. He has repeatedly urged people to try and engage in spiritual transformation. Therefore, it is our spiritual duty to abide by his advice. And if we, as his disciples, can follow his advice, that would be our biggest gift to His Holiness," Sakya Trizin Rinpoche said, expressing prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

H.E Karmapa Rinpoche, the head of Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, in his greeting, expressed his gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for leading the Tibetan people through its most difficult period. "His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, leading Tibet through one of its darkest periods. Therefore, we are eternally grateful for that."

Karmapa Rinpoche also made an emotional appeal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama to take care of his health for the sake of the Tibetan people.

"Even one day of yours is significant for the Tibetan people," he said, expressing his hope to see the good fortune of celebrating His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday inside Tibet.

One of the most significant statements made by his Holiness the Dalai Lama during the two day celebrations in honour of his 80th birthday were his remarks that he would live at least for one hundred years.

"Today, the people and deities of Tibet have made prayers for my long life. Doctors also suggest that I could live another 20 years or more. I'm 80 now; let's plan to celebrate again when I'm 90," His Holiness told the thousands of Tibetans and devotees, who welcomed the statement with a thunderous applause and cheers.

After the statements were made by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to His Holiness for accepting the Tibetan people's fervent prayers to live for more than one hundred years.

"I thank His Holiness the Dalai Lama for this auspicious news on this auspicious occasion. This will hearten the Tibetans worldwide to continue their resolve to work for a peaceful resolution of the Tibet issue," he said.

However, he added that the most important duty of the Tibetan people is to heed the constant advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and continue to pray for his long life.

Sikyong also prayed to the head of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition, requesting them to con-

tinue their efforts of preserving Tibet's religion and culture and pray for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In the afternoon of the second of the two-day celebrations, His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited the Tibetan Children's village in upper Dharamshala along with chief minister Shri. Virbhadra Singh.

At the TCV school, His Holiness the Dalai Lama released a documentary film on the life of Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh.

The documentary was made by a production house based in Shimla and focuses on the life of Shri. Virbhadra Singh, six-time chief minister of the state.

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Teaching Schedule in Sept. - Oct. 2015

**Teaching in Dharamsala, HP, India from September 7 to 10:** His Holiness will give a four-day teaching (topic to be decided) at the request of a group from Asia including Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam at the Main Tibetan Temple.

**Teaching in Dharamsala, HP, India from October 1 to 4:** His Holiness will give teachings at the request of a group of Taiwanese at the Main Tibetan Temple.

**Talk in Salt Lake City, UT, USA from October 17 to 19:** His Holiness will speak at the 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) plenary event Reclaiming The Heart of our Humanity: Working Together for a World of Compassion, Peace, Justice, and Sustainability. His Holiness will also participate at a Golden Luncheon and his 80th birthday celebration organized by PWR at the Salt Palace Convention Center. Contact Website: [www.ParliamentofReligions.org](http://www.ParliamentofReligions.org)

**Public Talk in Salt Lake City, UT, USA on October 18:** His Holiness will give a public talk on Compassion and Universal Responsibility organized by the Utah Tibet Foundation in partnership with the University of Utah at the Huntsman Center. Tickets will be released on July 13 and available at [Utahtickets.com](http://Utahtickets.com)

**Teaching in Boulder, CO, USA on October 21:** His Holiness will give a teaching based on Geshe Langri Thangpa's Eight Verses of Training the Mind (lojong tsik gyema) in the morning at the University of Colorado organized by the Tibetan Association of Colorado and the University of Colorado Boulder. Contact Websites: [www.DalaiLamaColorado.com](http://www.DalaiLamaColorado.com) and [www.colorado.edu](http://www.colorado.edu)

**Public Talk in Boulder, CO, USA on October 21:** His Holiness will give a public talk (Topic to be confirmed) in the afternoon at the University of Colorado organized by the Tibetan Association of Colorado and the University of Colorado Boulder. Contact Websites: [www.DalaiLamaColorado.com](http://www.DalaiLamaColorado.com) and [www.colorado.edu](http://www.colorado.edu)



## Excerpts from the speech of the dignitaries at His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday on 21 & 22 June



**Speech of Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State for Culture, Tourism & MoS for Ministry of Civil Aviation**

Good afternoon, I bow down before His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I came here with best wishes and prayers of all the 125 crores Indians for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long and fruitful life.

I have come with a good wishes of 125 crores of Indians, their good wishes for the long and fruitful life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We seek your blessings for the world, for the humanity and for the people of Tibet. We pray before the god today to give you more strength, to give you health, to give you courage, to show the path of life, the path of wisdom to the world and to the humanity.

I bow down before honourable Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Nabam Tuki ji, honorable His Excellency Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, and Shri Kiren Rijju ji, my friend and colleague in the ministry of the government of India who has been working for as a minister of Home and with Buddhism. Initially he was asked to come here but he said, "I will go there as a devotee rather than as a minister. Honourable Speaker Penpa Tsering ji, honourable tourism minister Pema Khandu ji, and all other Lama ji I pray before you my good wishes from all the Indian people.

This world has recognised those who have given to others rather to oneself, those who have given back to this humanity, and those who have given back to the world. And one of the leaders, one

of the spiritual powers to emerge in the last so many years in this great democratic country of India is Dalai lama ji. We salute your wisdom.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama ji has brought us the part of the great Mahatma Gandhi and I think in today's world, truth and non violence is recognised as his greatest achievement. His non-violent efforts to achieve freedom for the people of Tibet is exemplary.

We will remember your contribution to peace and for using satyagraha as a weapon to fight for Tibet. You have taught your people, all the mankind that losers are not the one who have fallen but the ones who refuse to rise up once falling down.

The words of wisdom you have given to this humanity and to this world and the people of this land of democracy is that the person who has fallen down has not lost until he refuse to stand up again. We salute you for this strength and this wisdom given to the humanity.

You have given us the message of compassion or what we call in other words empathising with the situation. You rightly said that the day we will start recognising this compassionate or empathizing nature in ourselves, the world's problem will be over. What our heroes and warriors or our friends, brothers and sisters of Tibet are facing is a matter of this, that we do not realise the agony, we do not realize the pain, and we do not realise the tragedy of losing a homeland.

We do not understand the pain, the pain when we are called as refugees even though we have our own country.

I salute you from the depth of my heart, Your Holiness the Dalai Lama ji.

Happy 80th Birthday.



**Speech of Shri. Kiren Rijju, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Govt. of India**

We are lucky to be blessed by the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the territory of India. Spiritually we are very lucky because we are blessed by him.

We would like to see that, you remain the greatest shining star forever to guide us and bless us. Your words of love and compassion for the whole world are seen by the global humanity. Whether it's in India or any part of this globe, your message has created a deep and valuable impact on the mind of the humanity. You represent the globe, you don't represent one religion or you don't represent one community, His Holiness the Dalai Lama represents the entire humanity.

We always will be blessed, so it is our bounden duty to pray for your long life and to ensure that your love and message is carried by us in words and spirit.

I would not like to take much time, only to express my solidarity with everybody on this planet today to pray for the longevity of your life. May lord Buddha bless all of us to continue to receive the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

I want to conclude by saying to all our Tibetan friends, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Dolma Gyari ji, Tempa Tsering ji, Penpa Tsering ji, that our friendship will remain, our spiritual connection will remain, our spirituality at the deep core of

heart will remain, nobody can deny that.

And with that, I would like to thank everybody for joining us and once again I pray that may His Holiness the Dalai Lama live long and continue to bless this world and all of us.

Thank you so much.  
Jai Hind.



**Speech of Shri. Virbhadra Singh, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the most revered leader of the world and India in particular, Dr. Lobsang Sangay the prime minister of exile government and all the ministers of the Tibetan govt. in exile, and all ministers of HP, all the dignitaries across the world to pay homage to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his 80th birthday.

I join them in extending heartiest congratulations and wishing happy and long life to Dalai Lama, to lead not only Tibetan people in Tibet and Tibetans in exile, but also the humanity at large.

We revere the Dalai Lama not only as the Tibetan leader in exile but also preacher/teacher of peace, tranquility, brotherhood, goodwill among all the nations for which he has been recognized by the world community. We are very happy that your holiness and his govt. in exile are situated at Dharamshala in my state of Himachal Pradesh.

We adore him; he is a leading example of tranquility and struggle and also of high thinking even under very adverse conditions. Dalai Lama and Tibet and my home state had been very close and

share a cordial relation.

After the emergence of Bushahr state in the Indian union which is now a part of Himachal Pradesh, this friendship has lasted, this reverence for the institute of Dalai Lama and particularly the present Dalai Lama has grown in our mind, in our hearts.

I wish His Holiness all the best of health and again I hope his long life to lead the torch of tranquility for the people of India, the country and the world at large.

On this occasion, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the govt. of Himachal Pradesh and people of Himachal Pradesh and for the long life of Himachal Pradesh.



**Shri Nabam Tuki, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh**

Your Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, reverent Rinpoches and Lamas, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay la, members of Central Tibetan Administration, distinguish dignitaries, media friends, ladies and gentlemen present.

On behalf of the people of Arunachal Pradesh, including thousands of followers of His Holiness, I extend our heartfelt wishes to your holiness on the completion of the important milestone in your inspiring journey of your life.

I am deeply honoured to be part of the 80th birthday celebration with all the devotees, and people from various walks of life present here today. I pray for the long life of His Holiness who is one of the most towering spiritual leaders of our times. As apostle of peace, an ocean of wisdom, and Nobel laureate

and champion of liberty and humanism, the more we describe His Holiness, the more we feel short of words to capture the essence of his wonderful life. I remember one writer who wrote and I quote, "To understand the Dalai Lama, perhaps it's most useful to see him, he is doctor of all soul." Indeed His Holiness who has taught us compassion and kindness are the key to inner peace, its not only meditation of the living Buddha but also a leader who has extended the moral responsibility of millions around this world.

With the progressive approach, since childhood days His Holiness reminded us of the need for facing challenges non-violently in life.

His Holiness strongly believes that all religions have essentially the same goal of happiness and kindness for all human beings. It is science and that His Holiness has taught us that both science and teachings of the Buddha tell us of the fundamental unity of all things and this understanding is crucial for taking positive and decisive action in the global stage. At the times when the world around is filled with conflict, His Holiness and his words inspires us with hope. His teachings resonate across religions and cultures, ethnic lines and his message of peace and non-violence have become all the more relevant in today's world.

Today I take this opportunity to apprise His Holiness about the various measures taken by my government for safeguarding Tibet heritage and also Tibetan guests in Arunachal Pradesh. We are taking steps to strengthen the scope of karmic and academic which was created to preserve and promote the ancient Buddhist sites in our state. Along with other major works, we are also making efforts on Bodhi language by initiating several teachings for teachers and common people. I am glad to inform your Holiness allocation for the department increased to rupees 10 crores for activities of Buddhist culture. As regards to our Tibetan guests in Arunachal Pradesh, I would like to inform your Holiness that I have personally visited all the settlement areas and solemn duty on humani-



tarian ground to provide all facilities in our state. We have been creating settlements as per the government of India's rehabilitation policy of 2014 and taking necessary measure to create a conducive environment for their stay.

Recently Ms. Gyari Dolma, home minister had visited our state and I had the opportunity to interact with her regarding some important issues. There were some grievances related to basic minimum services and utility, which are being sought by my government. As per our commitment, I take this opportunity to declare today that we will have a minister in-charge to look after the affairs of Tibetan issues in the state.

In conclusion, I once again convey my wishes to His Holiness on behalf of people of Arunachal Pradesh. I would like to mention that lots of people were preparing to welcome His Holiness to our state plan in the later parts of this year as part of 80th birthday celebration. I would take this opportunity to invite His Holiness once again to Arunachal Pradesh at any later date as per your convenience so that people are blessed to receive you and your blessing.

Your Holiness, as we pray for your long life today, we hope that the lessons of your life will inspire us to make our world a better and kinder place. Thank you very much, thank you very much.

#### **Birthday greeting from Chief Minister of Sikkim, read by his representative Pema Wangya Rinpoche**

With the kind permission of His Holiness, I read this message of our honorable chief minister Shri Pawan Chamling.

"Most respected your holiness, it gives me immense pleasure to know that the 80th birth anniversary celebration of your Holiness is being observed on 21 June 2015 as per the Tibetan lunar calendar. I take this opportunity to offer my heartiest best wishes on this holy occasion, may your Holiness have a long healthy life and continue to bless and guide all sentient beings.

The Central Tibetan Administration,

Dharamshala have been kind and gracious to send me an invitation for the birth celebration on 21 June at Dharamshala as chief guest of honor. I am indeed honored and glad to be invited to such an auspicious event.

Well, I would be delighted to be participated in the function I would be honored to do so due to prior engagement in the state. I sincerely offer my apology for the same, however my thoughts as well as the thoughts of the people will be fixed on your Holiness's birth anniversary celebration. Our secretary P.W. Rinzin would represent us in the celebration program.

Your Holiness has always held the people of Sikkim close to your good self. We have been always fortunate to receive your holiness's blessings and presence in the state on several occasions. As we approach your 80th birthday, I on behalf of Sikkimese people, offer greetings, best wishes and prayers to your Holiness. May your light always shine on Sikkim.

With highest regards and reverence,  
Pawan Chamling  
Chief Minister of Sikkim



**Mr. Pema Khandu, Minister of Tourism and Water Resources, and Urban Development in the state government of Arunachal Pradesh**

We in Arunachal Pradesh consider ourselves very truly blessed and we have a reason to feel that way. Centuries ago

His Holiness the 6th Dalai Lama honored our land by taking birth amidst us. And today hundreds of years later we continue to have blessings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama who has always been there for us whenever we needed him.

As I am sure he has been, each one of us present at this event, such as his greatness. We are therefore very fortunate. Your Holiness, I stand here today not just with my own heart greetings but I carry with me the humble prayers, best wishes and devotions of over hundred thousands peoples in Arunachal Pradesh. They could not be here today but even as I speak, they are wishing you on this noble occasion with prayers that you will live a very long life.

As our small token of our love and great respect, the govt. of Arunachal Pradesh would like to make a modest presentation to you a statue of shakyamuni Buddha. His Holiness, we would also like to request you to please accept the humble citation that put on record the great appreciation for what you are symbolized to this world today.

I would like to take this opportunity to read the citation now.

"In heartfelt tribute to his long life stewardship in promoting the values of peace, altruism, non-violence, inter-religious understanding, compassion and for his emphasis on universal responsibility for other people's suffering and for his passionate attention to the global environment and social problems. The govt. of Arunachal Pradesh is proud to honor His Holiness the 14 Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, one of the most venerated teachers of our times. With this citation, on the occasion of his 80th birth anniversary, the citation commemorates a moment in our histories when we are blessed by His Holiness who with his extreme humility and tenderness has been living with the prestigious embodiment of the path of Dharma as preached by lord Buddha. The people of Arunachal Pradesh humbly pray for his long life and for him to continue to lead the millions and continue to bless our lives.



**Ms. Viplove Thakur, Member of Parliament, Himachal Pradesh**

The most respected His Highness honourable Shri Dalai Lama, your excellency Prime minister Sangay, distinguished guests and ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honor to be with you on this auspicious occasion to celebrate the 80th birthday of His Highness the Dalai Lama and may I welcome you all to Himachal Pradesh.

Your highness, your life sends as a shining example of peace and a spiritual love for us in India despite the tragedy of your exile from your birthplace. It has been privilege to have you bless the hills of Himachal Pradesh with your presence.

Over the past decades, your presence and the presence of the Tibetan community have greatly enriched the life and culture of Himachal Pradesh and India. Your spiritual teachings, that have been open to all mankind and have helped millions to find peace and courage to face of the enormous hardships and struggles. It is always very difficult to put in the words the great contribution of your presence in this world.

We are lucky that you have shared with us some of your thoughts and experiences in your writings. They inspire us to make the days of our lives and learn to live in peace and harmony with all our fellow men and women.

Your message which is heard all over the world is the message of hope and love.

May I once again with other people present today to wish you very very happy birthday and pray for many more very years so during which you will continue to guide and bless us. Be an ambassador of world peace, which is the need of the day.



**Mr. Marco Panello, President, Italian Radical party**

I want to thank you very much for everything, and most of all for the joy you bring because joy is very important. Sometime ago, you spoke of right, of freedom not just for Tibetans, not just for us radicals, but also for everybody, also for the Han, the Chinese in China. This is very important to us. Thank you because you unite us, you bring us together and you teach people that the best way to love yourself is to love the others and not just your friends but also your enemy.

You know us well as radicals. Today we are really happy and so full of gratitude and recognition towards you. And I would like to express a thought, what is it that is uniting us all here. What is it that makes even the monkeys happy to be here and walk around and witness everything. This is Satyagraha it is the great satyagraha. This is what brings us together in joy and even in pain but we don't give in to the pain. So we are together in joy and what it makes us to see our enemies not as something we are against but something as we are, and together with. So I believe that the Han, part of the Chinese people and Tibetans can find the force to free the love inside them.

I will try not to be too long which usually happens to me when I have so many things to say. What I really want to tell you today, sometime ago I am not really sure about the exact time, you made some very deliberate choices, very courageous choices and I thank the Tibetans for following you with courage even when at a time when you took it, it seem like may be you were exaggerating like you were exaggerating in showing your love.

When you said, "I am not fighting for independence. I fight for the autonomy and for the sake of everyone, even my enemies." And you have been incredible because after you spoke on this with so much force and love, those who do not love you have told you that you will see many Tibetans opposing you, but you love the Tibetan people and that love is reciprocated by your people by faithfully following you in your every decision. So the mutual trust that you have with your people is amazing. I believed that after you announced your position, there will be a strong opposition but there wasn't.

"We want to be part of your China as history wanted. We want to give our contribution to all of China and all of Asia. Because we have the strength for it," after you spoke these words, it seemed to me that the self-immolations diminish because your word has become hope, even for us. Also for the Chinese and Han people. So thank you, thank you your Holiness. We have to talk of many more things, but I believe today more than yesterday we can be convinced that we will be able to give contribution of freedom, rights and justice to this world, even to the world of our enemies.





## Trust Deficit in Tibet

--Ananth Krishnan, *India Today*

The Deyang Shar courtyard, or the courtyard of eastern happiness, sits right at the heart of the Potala Palace. The palace served as the home of Tibet's Dalai Lamas—from the fifth to the current 14th—for more than 300 years, until the failed uprising of 1959 and the Dalai Lama's exile to India. On a recent morning, the courtyard was full—groups of Chinese tourists posed for photographs under the looming tower of the White Palace, the residential section. Dressed in bright orange uniforms, the Chinese military's firefighters patrolled the square. Standing watch from a corner was a People's Armed Police officer in uniform.

That tourists outnumber worshippers in the halls of the Potala today is a result of China's grand project in Tibet: a project of remaking Tibet in Beijing's image. China says it is investing billions to uplift one of the country's most underdeveloped regions. This investment is indeed evident: newly paved expressways sprout from Lhasa in every direction; roads that run all the way to the Indian border in Sikkim are in immaculate condition, enabling a 600-km journey in less than half a day; and Lhasa is connected to the Chinese hinterland with a geography-defying multibillion-dollar railway that cuts through "the roof of the world"—all unthinkable two decades ago.

Yet, interviews during a recent visit to Lhasa suggest that Beijing's development efforts have not convinced many Tibetans, with the unresolved question of the Dalai Lama continuing to cast a long shadow. While many Tibetans continue to revere the Dalai Lama as their guiding spiritual leader, Beijing, in public statements, continues to vilify him as "a splittist", banning images of a popular figure. By doing so, Beijing appears to be undermining the goodwill it may have otherwise engendered through its ambitious development plans for Tibet.

Underlining the Dalai Lama's continued prominence, in recent days, Tibetans have defied restrictions and threats of

jail to hold quiet celebrations to mark his 80th birthday, which is on July 6 (or June 21 in the Tibetan calendar), in many places in Tibet and nearby Gansu and Sichuan, as photographs made available show. As one Lhasa resident said, "For us, the Dalai Lama is most important." Chinese officials dismiss the following for the Dalai Lama as a vestige of Tibet's old "feudal" past. Yet in interviews, even younger Tibetans appeared just as proud of their religious and cultural history. Two young Tibetans said they planned to hold private commemorations for the birthday "even if we cannot do anything in public".

At the Potala, there will be no commemorations on July 6, even if the 14th Dalai Lama's presence still hangs heavily. As one Tibetan tour guide told a group of tourists one recent morning, "The greatest Dalai Lamas were the fifth, who made the Potala as it stands today, and the 13th." What of his successor? "We think he is just as great," the guide later said quietly with a smile, "but we cannot talk about him." Since February 2009, 141 Tibetans—young and old, students and monks—have set themselves on fire to call for the Dalai Lama's return. The Chinese government has accused exiled Tibetans of plotting the protests.

In the seven years since riots left Lhasa burning in March 2008, China has, with a carrot-and-stick approach, obtained a firmer grip on the city. In the city's main squares, such as at the Jokhang, which was a centre of protest in 2008 and also witnessed two immolation protests in 2012, there is still a police presence: two large black buses for security personnel are parked beside the square. But gone are the snipers that until a few years ago were a permanent presence on overlooking rooftops. As a measure of its newfound confidence, the government for the first time allowed Indian correspondents based in Beijing to travel to Tibet, to witness the opening of a new route for the Kailash yatra. Journalists are still not allowed to travel freely to

Tibet. They can only do so on controlled government-organised groups, where opportunities to speak freely with locals are limited.

Lhasa, the old capital, is today being transformed—from the lofty balconies of the Potala, a relentless sound of hammering and drilling fills the valley below. Outside the palace, the streets are not unlike any tier-two Chinese city. Beyond the ever-shrinking old city of Lhasa, wide avenues carry street signs written in large Mandarin Chinese characters; signage in Tibetan, written in much smaller script, hints at the government's priorities.

"There is not much of the old city," says Zong Kyi, a Tibetan who makes a living as a tour guide taking Han Chinese tourists around the Potala. The centre of Tibetan life in Lhasa is the Barkhor, a neighbourhood of old streets that spreads out around the Jokhang monastery that is at the centre of the city. The Barkhor, Tibetans say, is an ever decreasing speck in a fast-expanding Lhasa: a sprawling "new development zone" of factories is the priority project that is today being built on the city's suburbs.

A government white paper published in April listed Tibet's achievements: double-digit GDP growth; 99.59 per cent enrolment in primary schools; life expectancy reaching 68.2 years, doubling what it was in the early 1950s; ending illiteracy, prevalent in the 1950s, among the young and middle-aged; and providing free education and healthcare. China says since 1952—two years after the PLA occupied Tibet—it has pumped around 544 billion yuan (close to \$90 billion) into the region.

Conversations with half-a-dozen Lhasa residents suggested that beneath the veneer of calm, Lhasa still remains a city divided. While there is agreement that things have improved since the riots of 2008, there are, among Tibetan residents, deep anxieties about the nature

of China's development. A continuing influx of Han Chinese temporary workers and tourists has changed the nature of the city, residents said, with the perception that Tibetans are now a minority in Lhasa.

Zheng Wei, who, like others in this article did not want to be identified by his real name for fear of retribution by authorities, is among the growing number of migrant Chinese who have been encouraged by the government to move to Tibet to "help development". From Sichuan province, Zheng said there was high ethnic distrust when he moved in 2009, a year after riots. "Things are better now," he said. But that wasn't a feeling shared by Drolma, a Tibetan, Lhasa native and mother of one. "More and more Han people are coming here, so many locals feel there are not enough opportunities," she said. "We cannot talk about this issue," she added, covering her mouth with her hands.

Chinese census data shows that 90 per cent of Tibet's 3 million population of permanent residents are Tibetans. It does not, however, reflect the growing floating population of Han Chinese migrants in cities such as Lhasa. The number of Han permanent residents is also growing: between 1990 and 2000, while the total Tibetan population increased by half a million, in percentage terms the population fell by 2.7 per cent. Han people today account for 8 per cent or quarter of a million of the population. The floating population in Tibet is also growing, up from 151,000 to 262,000 between 2000 and 2010 according to census figures. "There are more Han people than Tibetans in Lhasa now," one Lhasa resident said.

Tsering Woesser, a one-time Lhasa resident who is a writer living in Beijing, says the Chinese-led development process is having a deeply negative impact on Lhasa. Woesser highlights the shrinking of the old city—for centuries a centre of Tibetan life—as underlining Lhasa's difficult transition. "The large-scale rebuilding of the old city," Woesser wrote in a recent essay published on her blog, "is killing two birds with one stone"—not only bringing in the Beijing style

of development catered to tourists, but enabling "stability maintenance" by redeveloping old neighbourhoods. A new 150,000 square metre shopping plaza set to come up in the Barkhor area near the old Jokhang temple is one among several new projects that Woesser has campaigned against. "The Barkhor," she argues, "which was originally a place of religious significance, won't turn into a deserted street. On the contrary, it will become a bustling street, existing only for the benefit of tourists."

Beijing holds up Tibetans such as Luo Bu Ci Ren, who manages a sprawling brewery in Lhasa's new development zone, as beneficiaries of its development model. Luo says his factory employs 135 people—"all local Tibetans". Thirty-five per cent of the brewery's start-up investment came from the local development zone. The company produces 250,000 tonne of different beers every year—a symbol, the government says, of the new Lhasa.

Yet it is to the frustration of the Chinese government that there remain grievances about its mode of development. As one official puts it, "However much we do, there will always be people who are dissatisfied." But what is a cause for concern is that there appears little introspection in Beijing about the issues that aggrieve Tibetans, such as the influx of migrant workers. While the Han can travel freely, Tibetans still face numerous restrictions. In interviews, a wide complaint was that authorities do not give Tibetans passports. "Most of us are not given passports," said a monk in the Potala. "We cannot leave."

While Tibetans who work for the government or state companies are expected to speak Chinese, few officials from Beijing who work for the local govern-

ment make the effort to learn Tibetan. The government counters that Tibetans are given other benefits such as jobs on preferential basis. In Tibet, there is little room for protest. Beijing's default reaction to any protest, whether against a development project or a mine, is to crack down on "separatists" supposedly instigated by the "Dalai Lama clique". Beijing's officials appear to hold a worryingly simplistic view of Tibet's problems: dissenters are seen as "separatists" or members of the "Dalai clique".

The Dalai Lama issue continues to cast a long shadow. Lian Xiangmin, an official at the government-run Tibetology Research Centre in Beijing which advises the government, says that the problem for Beijing is essentially twofold: the Dalai Lama internationalising the Tibetan issue and calling for changes that violate China's constitution. "If the Dalai Lama wants to come back," he says, "he can talk directly with the central government. History has proven that things will get worse if he attempts to involve those foreign forces in finding a solution to this problem."

The other issue is the Dalai Lama's call for creating an administration to ensure genuine autonomy in language and religion for all Tibetans—including the three million who live in neighbouring Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan provinces, essentially redrawing China's provincial map. "No Chinese will agree to this as it runs counter to China's constitution. So I always tell people, do not only focus on what the Dalai says he does not want (independence). Focus on what he wants," adds Lian. The result is an enduring stalemate. And as long as it persists, the fact is that Beijing will find it difficult to bring about a lasting resolution to the question of Tibet's future.



## China Denying Passports to Restrict Critics, Minorities

--By Christopher Bodeen, AP

BEIJING (AP) — Hand your passport to police or it will be canceled, read the notice to all 4.4 million residents of far-northwestern China's Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture.

The demand would now seem outrageous to most Chinese, who more than a decade since passport restrictions were eased have become increasingly accustomed to traveling abroad for tourism, study or work.

Yet the story is vastly different for groups targeted by the ruling Communist Party, which has long denied passports to dissidents who might embarrass the party overseas. Now that most Chinese can easily obtain passports, eroding barriers to travel have thrown into relief a new pattern showing that entire ethnic groups deemed potentially risky to the leadership — such as Muslim Uighurs and Buddhist Tibetans — are largely being barred.

By denying them opportunities for jobs, education and overseas connections, the withholding of passports has become one of the party's most potent weapons against dissent, both real and imagined. The notice in Ili, part of the vast Xinjiang region bordering Central Asia, set a May 15 deadline for residents to hand in passports "for safekeeping." It gave no reason for the demand.

The order raised eyebrows because Xinjiang is home to China's minority Uighurs, Turkic Muslims who are culturally and linguistically distinct from the country's Han majority. Uighurs (pronounced WEE-gurs) have come under increasing scrutiny because radicals have waged a low-level campaign of violence against Chinese rule. This has resulted in heightened unofficial barriers on travel even within China, such as difficulty booking air tickets or hotel rooms.

China is eager to avoid the appearance of discrimination against ethnic minorities, including Uighurs and Tibetans, and an officer at police headquarters in the prefectural seat of Yining said the order applied to all ethnic groups. The officer, who like most Chinese bureau-

crats declined to be identified by name, said passport holders would be required to reapply and submit documents stating their reason for traveling and ensuring their good reputations if they wished to get them back.

It's not clear how many Ili residents were complying with the order and only two out of a dozen company workers reached by phone in the prefecture said they had even heard of it.

Uighurs and Tibetans, who together number about 16 million inside China, have increasingly complained about difficulties obtaining passports, including the need for government approvals that members of the majority Han group aren't subject to.

Permission is often limited to those participating in government-backed exchanges, or in the case of Uighurs, Muslims performing the pilgrimage to Mecca. The government-backed Chinese Muslim Association said about 14,500 Chinese Muslims went on the haj last year, but didn't say how many were Uighurs.

While the government says only that the restrictions are to maintain social order, minority activists and critics of the one-party communist system believe politics are the real reason.

"The government fears that Uighurs will return with a better understanding of their conditions and greater determination to throw off Chinese rule," said Germany-based Uighur activist Dilshat Rexit. "Limits on passports reveal the government lack of confidence in facing threats to its rule in Xinjiang."

For Tibetans, already severe restrictions were tightened further in 2012 when hundreds of Buddhist pilgrims were detained and interrogated after attending a religious event in India presided over by the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled religious leader who is reviled in Beijing, say overseas activists.

As with the Uighurs, China is deeply

concerned about the growth of separatist sentiment among Tibetans, as well as their connections to the Tibetan diaspora and the sympathy and support they receive from overseas boosters.

Tibetan writer and rights activist Woesser Tsering says she's consistently been refused a passport since first applying in 1997. During her most recent attempt in 2012, a police officer told her she'd been placed on a list of people banned from leaving the country by the Ministry of State Security, she said.

"Not having a passport has an enormous impact on my life," she said. The inability to travel has made her unable to take up offered writing positions in the U.S. and Germany. "I had no choice but to give them up, all because of not having a passport."

Individual travel overseas for ordinary Chinese was first permitted in the late 1990s, and took a massive leap in 2004, when most European countries were designated as approved destinations and requirements for passports, such as an endorsement letter from an employer, were simplified.

Cheng Fan, a veteran of the 1989 student-led pro-democracy movement, has never been able to obtain a passport. Like many present or former government critics, his applications are answered with a one-page document from police stating that a "relevant Cabinet agency" has ruled that if allowed to travel abroad, he would "pose a threat to national security or cause serious harm to national interests."

"It's extremely frustrating, especially when you have a family and want to show them new things," said Cheng. "It's denying my rights as a citizen."

With a record 107 million Chinese going abroad last year, the inability to travel internationally stigmatizes and deprives. It's not known exactly how many Chinese citizens are denied passports, had them seized or were simply turned away at the airport when attempting to board

international flights. The Public Security Ministry's Entry and Exit Supervision Bureau did not respond to questions from The Associated Press and the Foreign Ministry and Tibetan officials said they had no information on the issue.

Concerns over Uighurs have been heightened by the growth of global jihadi groups, said Dru Gladney, an expert at Pomona College. Yet, travel restrictions will likely only add to the "pressure cooker" of ethnic discontent in Xinjiang, he said.

"I think it's a self-defeating strategy. China is a global country, engaged in the world and trying to become a global player, yet it still has these very medieval rules," Gladney said. While passport denials can theoretically be appealed, it's unclear whether any have ever been successful, although some have managed to receive passports when reapplying later for reasons that remain a mystery.

Human rights lawyer Teng Biao had his passport confiscated at the airport in 2008 when he was trying to go to an overseas conference. Four years later, he reapplied, saying his passport had been lost. A new one was promptly issued. "They said nothing when giving me the new one," said Teng, now a visiting fellow at Harvard Law School.

Others denied the right to travel range from imprisoned Uighur scholar Ilham Tohti to artist Ai Weiwei, whose passport has been confiscated since a 2011 detention even though his works are shown around the world.

A growing number of Chinese overseas putting off returning home for fear of not being allowed out of the country again, said Columbia University China expert Andrew Nathan. Often the criteria for being denied is murky, he said.

"Police being police, and wanting to do their jobs and avoid mistakes, they would use their judgment and deny passports or exit permits for whatever reason made sense to them," Nathan said.

## Dalai Lama says Inter-religious Dialogue Key to Ending Terrorism

--Asahi Shimbun

Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, said terrorism carried out in the name of religion is a "very sad" reality facing the post-Cold War world and urged religious leaders to promote interfaith dialogue to break the chain of violence.

In an exclusive interview with The Asahi Shimbun in Gifu city in early April, the 79-year-old revered Buddhist monk also said that people need to respect other faiths and strive to see that everyone is the product of deities, or the "same son of God," as monotheistic religions would phrase it, no matter the religion.

"The danger of a war, a third world war, including the nuclear threat, I think, is now basically no longer," said the Nobel laureate, who won the Peace Prize in 1989. "Then, one sort of sad thing nowadays is violence also involves religious faith, and that is very, very sad."

He added, "You see the concept of one religion, one truth. I think we Tibetans also sometimes say Buddhism is the only truth. But when we come outside more, make wider contact with different religious people and different religious traditions, then we realize on this planet there are many religious traditions."

The Dalai Lama pointed out that religious conflicts are escalating not only in the Middle East but also in Buddhist countries such as Myanmar and Sri Lanka, where violent assaults targeting Muslim minorities have been reported.

The respected monk said he once discussed the issue with Aung San Suu Kyi, the democracy leader from Myanmar. He said Suu Kyi, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, acknowledged the complexity of the situation.

"Different religious traditions really help humanity, (and have done so) over thousands of years ... giving immense inspiration to millions of people, in the future also," the Dalai Lama said. "So, therefore we have to accept several truths, several

religions, then I think conflicts over religion will automatically reduce."

While he also said there are philosophical differences between Buddhism and monotheistic religions, the Dalai Lama said he understands that the latter's concept of God can be very helpful to boost love for all humanity.

"Enemies today are also created by God—essentially the same sons of God. If you are really angry toward your enemy, then ultimately, you are angry toward God," he said.

The Tibetan monk also emphasized that dialogue is the only way to break the vicious circle of violence that is occurring all over the world.

"Through military or violent ways, you may destroy some pockets, but that will not solve the problem. Violent methods simply control the human body, not the human mind," he said. "It is very difficult, but through a nonviolent way, to meet with these people, talk to these people, then perhaps the majority eventually will change the mental attitude. That is my belief."

He has urged religious leaders around the world to invite religious extremists, and even members of terrorist groups, to interfaith meetings to promote dialogue as part of a long-term strategy and effort to persuade them to turn away from violence.

With that said, he still laments the U.S. response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, which resulted in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and ultimately led to the rise of the Islamic State extremist group.

On the very next day after the 2001 attacks, the Dalai Lama sent a letter to U.S. President George W. Bush urging him and his nation not to retaliate with violence, saying it would only result in more violence.

In addition to his efforts to promote interfaith dialogue, he said, in the long run, education can also play a key role in eradicating inter-religious conflict.



## When the Dalai Lama turns 80

--By Major General (ret.) Vinod Saighal, *The Statesman*

According to the Tibetan calendar he will do so on June 21, while the Gregorian or the universal calendar that is used worldwide puts the date as July 6. Much rests on his longevity for the Tibetans in Tibet and those obliged to flee their land and reside elsewhere, the largest numbers being in India, the country where the Dalai Lama first sought refuge in 1959 after fleeing Lhasa. A lot has been written on his successor. It is not the intention to go into that controversy in this piece. The Dalai Lama has said in one of his statements that he intends to be around for quite a while. Whatever the case, he has discomfited the Chinese leadership no end. They have left no stone unturned to ensure that the Indian government does not give him any latitude to carry out political work from Indian soil. Many other curbs are in place.

Immense pressure is put on countries around the world by the Chinese government to see to it that leaders do not receive him – formally or informally – when he visits their countries. What happened in South Africa because of the denial of a visa to the Dalai Lama that led to the cancellation of an international conference due to the objections of the other delegates should have made the world sit up. It did not. The governments of the world are coming under the sway of the extra-territorial sovereignty exercised by the Chinese by the issuance of ukases of this nature time and again.

The governments to whom threats are issued – and more often than not complied with – are not impoverished and weak nations in dire straits, but some of the mightiest governments on the planet, including the entire gamut of Western governments, the supposed champions of human rights and liberty for citizens.

It is a sad commentary that of the 194 countries in the United Nations well over ninety per cent continue to comply with Chinese demands in this regard. The overwhelming majority among them even deny visas to the spiritual head of the Tibetans. It is tantamount to voluntary diminishment of national sovereignty practically across the globe. Not even the lone super power at the zenith of its power was able to exercise such hegemonic sway

over leaders of the world's nations.

What will be the stance taken by the government of India when the Dalai Lama turns eighty; more so after the recent visit of the Indian prime minister to China. The question becomes relevant because of the succession issue as well as the fact that in many countries where the Dalai Lama has large following celebrations would, in all probability, take place on a grand scale.

The Indian government could either ignore the event in spite of the sentiments of the large majority of people in India who revere him greatly; or it could choose to take a decisive turn towards exercising sovereignty within the country that has been largely abridged over six decades where the northern neighbour is concerned.

The invitation to Lobsang Sangay, the prime minister of the Tibetan government in exile to take a seat alongside the other SAARC leaders at Prime Minister Modi's swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati was an unexpected bold step. The next logical step would be to use the occasion of the eightieth birthday to felicitate the Dalai Lama at the national level in a manner that the world sits up and takes note. No diffidence need be shown for so-called Chinese sensibilities, because what the government decides would be an internal matter.

In honouring one of the most admired spiritual leaders of the age the government would be honouring the people of India and giving new hope – in the Gandhian way – to the suffering people of Tibet. More importantly, India's prestige in the world would go up by leaps and bounds. The time has come to shed the artificial shackles with which the country has bound itself on internal matters because the country across the Himalayas might frown. The extract below is from a piece, Dalai Lama – The Man and his Vision written by this author when he turned sixty five.

“Time and again the destiny of nations appears to have been moulded by their leaders. Do leaders then encapsulate in their persona the fate of nations, or does destiny mock nations by throwing

up leaders who will follow her dictates? Whatever the truth, the fact remains that destiny, while amenable to change cannot be unmade. Nor can history be unwritten. The believer in the pre-ordained must then pause to wonder whether destiny looked away: from him, his countrymen, or both. A traveler on this perilous path must confront the dilemma of the ages to which no really satisfactory answer has been forthcoming since time immemorial. Nobody, not even perhaps the Dalai Lama himself, knows the answers. But he does know that the very nature of existence posits that the struggle itself is life, karma or the lila of existence.

“This follower of Buddha naturally shuns violence. He has given Gandhi's concept a new dimension. He is willing to adjust to the reality of the situation. He would be satisfied with Tibetan autonomy under Chinese dispensation. The fourteenth Dalai Lama started out as a leader of the Tibetans, as the repository of their hopes and aspirations, for this world and the next. The intervening decades have seen his stature grow to that of a world leader, who remains in the forefront of humanity's march towards a more humane world order; millions more around the world look up to him for inspiration. His cause is no longer just the cause of the preservation of a unique culture of a few million Tibetans. The Tibetan question can perhaps no longer be tackled on the political plane where it has proven intractable and continues to be so. An honest attempt might now have to be made to tackle the issue on a plane where no system or political entity needs to feel alienated or excluded from the process”.

The Prime Minister of India has an historic opportunity to transcend the boundary question by suggesting to his counterpart across the Himalayas to consider the Silk Route that suggested itself while visiting the Wild Goose Pagoda in Xian on the first step of his journey to China. A 21st Century Silk Route that restores the cultural heritage of the two great ancient civilizations by linking New Delhi – Kathmandu – Lhasa – Beijing. He has already sown the seeds by deciding on e-visas for Chinese coming to India.

## It's in our Interest to be within China, says Dalai Lama

-- Jyoti Malhotra, *India Today*

En route to the US, where the Tibetan community is celebrating his 80th birthday, the Dalai Lama met Jyoti Malhotra for an exclusive interview, speaking candidly about issues that have simmered beneath the surface for decades.

The Dalai Lama doesn't give many interviews, dividing his time between his home in McLeodganj, Himachal Pradesh, informally advising the Tibetan government-in-exile located there and travelling the world delivering lectures, giving audiences and sharing his world view with the world's most powerful people, including US President Barack Obama. En route to the US, where the Tibetan community is celebrating his 80th birthday, the Dalai Lama met Senior Writer Jyoti Malhotra for an exclusive interview, speaking candidly about issues that have simmered beneath the surface for decades-his relationship with China, a possible reincarnation and his years in India. Excerpts:

**Q. Your Holiness, you have spent 56 of 80 years of your life in India. What does that mean to you?**

A. One aspect of my life is that I am a refugee, having lost my homeland. I feel sad about that. However, over a thousand years, Tibet and India have had a very unique and close relationship. We have always considered India our guru. I think of myself as a student of the Nalanda tradition. So this is my spiritual home. My (physical) home may be lost, but I live very happily in my spiritual home. Also, because of the freedom India offers, I have the opportunity to meet many spiritual leaders, scholars and scientists.

**Q. Do you still think of yourself as a refugee in India?**

A. No, I am the longest guest of the Indian government!

**Q. Would you like to go home? Back to Tibet?**

A. Yes, because being a Tibetan, more

than 90 per cent people trust me there. They are very eager to see me, and I have full confidence that I can serve the Buddha dharma in Tibet.

**Q. Would you like to assure the Chinese government that Tibet will not split from China?**

A. May I say that many officials, especially hardliners, cannot see the reality. Throughout their lives, they have believed in one-sided information provided by Chinese historians. The reality is that during the 7th-8th centuries, there were three separate empires-Tibetan, Mongolian and Chinese... but that is in the past. I have always admired the spirit of the European Union as well as India. Before India's independence, there were many small kingdoms and rajas. But now that times have changed, it would be quite foolish for one raja to say, I am independent, I want a sovereign state. Similarly, historically, Tibet has been a separate country. But we want to look forward. It is in our interest to remain within the People's Republic of China. At the same time, we should have the full authority to take care of our culture, our rich Buddhist tradition and our environment. This will be to our mutual benefit. (Meanwhile) in China, Buddhism is growing... there are about 400 million Chinese Buddhists today.

**Q. Have you met any of these Chinese Buddhists?**

A. Yes. Many Chinese Buddhists come to Dharamsala. Many of them are scared about the reaction they will face once they meet Tibetans. But once they listen to my teachings, many even begin to cry.

**Q. Your interlocutors have had several rounds of talks with China. Why have they not been successful?**

A. China knows that we are not seeking independence or aiming at separatism. But many hardliners don't want me to return. Therefore they deliberately try to create an impression that the Dalai Lama is a splittist. Some Chinese officials describe me as a demon. When I hear this, I say, yes, I'm a demon with horns (laughs). The hardliners give the impression that the Dalai Lama is a troublemaker and they have every right to keep him away.

**Q. You have met Chinese President Xi Jinping's father. His mother is a devout Buddhist...**

A. Not only him. Many Chinese officials, including those in the military and members of the Communist Party of China who outwardly show that they are atheists, actually believe in Buddhism. Last year, when he visited Europe and India, Xi Jinping publicly said that Buddhism is a part of the Chinese culture. It was quite surprising that a Chinese Communist leader, whose party had once declared that all spirituality is backward, particularly Buddhism, the chief of that very party was saying something positive about Buddhism.

Now, Xi Jinping is carrying out an almost impossible struggle against corruption. The previous two Chinese presidents, Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, also knew about the corruption problem but were too scared to tackle it. But Xi Jinping is boldly dealing with it and I admire his courage.

**Q. So things are changing in China ?**

A. Yes... Xi Jinping is still quite young. I am old but may I say that he is a bit too overweight. He should exercise and lose some weight! But I really admire his courage and his way of thinking. Judg-

ing from his actions, he seems quite realistic. However, the entire system is such that bringing about a change is difficult.

**Q. When Xi Jinping came to Delhi last year, there was speculation that both of you were going to meet.**

A. Yes, my friends, one of them a Chinese (businessman), had that idea, that wish. I also wanted it to happen, but of course it was not easy.

**Q. You wanted to meet him?**

A. Yes. I have always wanted to meet Chinese leaders. One time I was in Texas in southern US, when Hu Jintao was visiting Washington. At that time also I had sent a message that if possible, I would want to meet him.

**Q. So you and Xi Jinping can come together and resolve the problem of Tibet?**

A. I don't know. I don't have a direct responsibility for Tibet. But as I mentioned earlier, all problems can be resolved through talking and meeting. Not through suppression. Now nearly 60 years have passed, and I have said this before-the Chinese system worships the gun. Chairman Mao has himself said that power comes from the barrel of the gun. But only during war, or civil war, this kind of thinking is relevant. When I first met Mao Zedong and other top officials in Peking, I really admired (them) and (was) very much impressed by them. They were truly dedicated, serving people, particularly the working class who suffer the most. I was so impressed that I had even expressed a desire to join the Chinese Communist Party. As far as socio-economic policy is concerned, I am a Marxist. That's no secret. But I'm totally against Leninism, it means too tight a control. China, I'm hopeful, will become an open-minded communist country. It has a population of more than a billion, it can make a significant contribution to world affairs. To do that, respect and trust from the rest of the world is very essential. But a society where everything is a state secret-that is very harmful for developing trust.

**Q. Would you like the Indian government, whose guest you have been for so many years, to assist you in your talks with China?**

A. I think not only India but the free world has some responsibility to solve the problems and suffering of any community. India has a long border with Tibet, so the Tibet issue is also an important issue for India. Our relationship is unique. Sometimes I jokingly say, Tibet is India's first line of defence. This will remain so as long as the Tibetan culture, Tibetan spirituality remain intact. India is our guru, Tibet is the chela; so when the chela has some problems, the guru also has a responsibility of solving them.

**Q. From the time of Jawaharlal Nehru, you've had very close relations with all the prime ministers of India. What about PM Narendra Modi. Have you met him as well?**

A. Yes. When Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat, some old relics were found in the state-they were like the Nalanda temple where monks used to live. It was then that I went to Gujarat and met him. He had also come to my room in the hotel. I was very much impressed. Even after he has become the prime minister, he remains very active.

**Q. But you met him even after he became prime minister, didn't you?**

A. Yes, one very brief (meeting).

**Q. Was it indeed a brief meeting?**

A. It's top secret, so it's better if you ask him (laughs). I don't know, I don't want to elaborate on it.

**Q. Do you think there is growing intolerance in India?**

A. I don't think so. In Delhi, I have been asked the same question, if Muslims feel scared. But I said, no, maybe some individuals are creating some mischief, but overall in India, religious harmony is still being maintained. But at the same time, we need to remind people that it should always be maintained.

**Q. Last year at the World Hindu Congress, where RSS leader Mohan Bhagwat was present, you said the RSS should focus less on building temples and instead build schools.**

A. I say this to Buddhist leaders too. Once they invited me to speak when a statue of Padmasambhava was being installed. I said that I respect Padmasambhava, but for the next thousand years the statue will remain but he will not speak. So what we need is advice, not a statue. The way we pray to statues is old-fashioned. I always tell all Buddhists-Chinese or Vietnamese or Burmese or Sri Lankans-that we should be 21st century Buddhists who are knowledgeable about the Buddha dharma.

**Q. In Dharamsala recently, when we went to attend your 80th birthday celebrations, the monks were praying for your long life, that you live up to 113 years. Why 113?**

A. One of my dreams indicated the distillation of my life at 113 years. But now I doubt that. Increasingly, I feel tired. In Dharamsala also I had said that I'm looking forward to being 90 and then 100 years old but after that, I have my doubts. According to physicians from Taiwan and Tibet, judging my physical condition, it's very possible that I will live to be 100 years.

**Q. So will you decide on who should be the next Dalai lama?**

A. I have said this before, that the decision whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not totally lies with the Tibetan people.

**Q. It is not up to you?**

A. I am not much concerned about the 15th Dalai Lama. Sometimes it seems as if the Chinese government is more concerned than I am. Sometimes, I jokingly say that the ceasing or end of this institution should take place with the 14th Dalai Lama, who is quite popular. If the 15th Dalai Lama comes and he is a disgrace, that will be much worse! (Laughs.)

## TIBETAN MEDIA

Sheja (Official Tibetan monthly)  
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QUOTES ON H.H THE DALAI LAMA'S 80<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY

*"Today, the people and deities of Tibet have made prayers for my long life. Doctors also suggest I could live another 20 years or so. I'm 80 now; let's plan to celebrate again when I'm 90. Although there is no freedom in Tibet, people there too are praying for my long life, even if they can't do so openly, but they have faith, devotion and a special connection with me. I'd like to thank you all."*

*- His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the first of the two-day celebrations in honour of his 80th birthday on 21 June, 2015.*

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*"One of the striking things about the Dalai Lama is that his mind is always focused on the future, which after all can be changed, rather than to the past, which cannot. The fact that, thanks to him, Tibetan Buddhists have created a global networked community to substitute for the indigenous one they are unable to sustain at home might well assure that future."*

*- Dr. Shashi Tharoor, former MoS in the Union Government of India.*

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*"Your Holiness, you call yourself a simple Buddhist monk. But for people around the world, you are the beacon of hope and light to all the people. For Buddhists, you are the human manifestation of the Bodhisattva of compassion. And above all, for Tibetans, you are the life and soul of Tibet,"*

*- Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay in his statement in honour His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday during the two-day grand celebrations on 21 June 2015.*

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*"This world has recognised those who have given back to humanity, and those who have given back to the world. And one of the most powerful leaders, one of the most highly revered spiritual leaders to emerge in the last so many years is His Holiness the Dalai lama in this great democratic country of India. His Holiness has brought us the values of the great Mahatma Gandhi and I think in today's world, the message of peace and kindness is recognised as his greatest achievement"*

*- Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State for Culture, Tourism & MoS for Ministry of Civil Aviation at the grand celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday, 21 June 2015.*

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*"The bond shared by Tibet and India is centuries old. The people living on the two opposite sides of Kailash Mansarover have traveled through time together. This time-tested relationship is based on culture, mutual trust and affection. Hence, this historic relationship shared by these two peoples can never be set apart"*

*- Mr. Kiren Rijju, MoS in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India on 21 June 2015.*