

WEEKLY DIGEST

BUREAU OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA, NEW DELHI - 20 July 2015

Special Focus

This year, Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, New Delhi and Tibetan community in Delhi celebrated the 80th Birthday of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama by organizing many special programs to express our profound happiness and gratitude to His Holiness for his visionary and compassionate leadership and his contribution to humanity.

In collaboration with India International Centre, Bureau organized a week-long Exhibition on His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a panel discussion, 'His Holiness the Dalai Lama and His Contribution to Humanity' on 4 July 2015.

Since 6 July 2015 is celebrated as the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama by Tibetans and friends all over the world, this weekly digest focuses on the sharing columns, interviews, resolution, press release and event reports written in tribute to His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama.

INSIDE THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

2	When the Dalai Lama turns 80 by Vinod Saighal
3	As the Dalai Lama Turns 80, Tibet Still Suffers By Richard Gere and Nancy Pelosi
4	Dalai Lama, Anything But "A Simple Buddhist Monk" by Shashi Tharoor
5	Tibet's Tough Road Ahead by Carl Gershman
6	Happy Birthday To Your Holiness by Richard Moore
7	Saving Tibet's Unique Heritage by Brahma Chellaney
9	Tribute to KUNDUN by Jamyang Dorjee
11	From the Editor-in-Chief by Aroon Purie
12	Dalai Lama @ 80: Praying For The Cause by Vijay Kranti
14	Kundun: The Presence of an Absence by Dechen Pemba
15	The Monk In The Middle by Jyoti Malhotra
17	Dalai Lama gets mischievous by Nicholas Kristof
18-21	Interviews
21-26	Statements
26	Resolution
27-30	News
30	Press Release

COLUMNS

When the Dalai Lama turns 80

By Vinod Saighal
The Statesman, May 26, 2015

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.

Source: [The Statesman](#)

As the Dalai Lama Turns 80, Tibet Still Suffers

By Richard Gere and Nancy Pelosi
The Wall Street Journal, July 6, 2015

On July 6 the Dalai Lama, whose spiritual wisdom and friendship have been touchstones for both of our lives, is turning 80 years old.

Since his harrowing escape from Chinese-occupied Tibet into exile on horseback through the high Himalayas into India in 1959, the Dalai Lama has become a towering figure on the world. He is a religious leader and a man whose message of peace and the universal values of love, compassion and respect has never mattered more.

Reaching one's 80th birthday is a significant milestone in any culture, none more so than in Tibet. It is a moment to celebrate.

It is also a moment for reflection. In the Dalai Lama's homeland, more than 140 Tibetans have set themselves on fire since 2009, giving their lives to protest oppression by the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party's vitriolic campaign against the exiled Tibetan religious leader. Two years ago Chinese troops opened fire on Tibetans peacefully gathered to celebrate the Dalai Lama's birthday. News has emerged recently of tightened restrictions in advance of his birthday this year, with a ban on celebrations to mark the occasion.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable achievements of the leader known to his people as “Kundun,” meaning “presence,” is his profound and unbreakable connection with the people of Tibet. They sometimes offer a simple greeting to visitors: “Listen to him.” It is too dangerous to say his name, but they mean the Dalai Lama. Many young Tibetans use a phrase in Chinese on their social-media profiles that means “I learn to be strong in waiting for the great teacher to return from afar.”

Chinese people are also increasingly drawn to the Dalai Lama's teachings, Tibetan culture and especially its Buddhist religion. Making it absolutely clear that he is not anti-Chinese, the Dalai Lama has always distinguished between the Chinese government's policies and the Chinese people. Wherever he travels, he engages in dialogue with the Chinese he encounters, from state media journalists sent to monitor his news conferences to Buddhist devotees from across China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, many of whom have traveled on pilgrimage to Tibet and witnessed the hardships, including the constant threat



of arrest and torture, imposed on Tibetans.

The quest by many Chinese for a new understanding of Tibet, inspired mainly by the Dalai Lama, is a development of great significance for China's future. For many of these Chinese, it is not an empty attempt to reach a mythical Shangri-La on the roof of the world. Often it is a painstaking and intellectually rigorous inner journey in which the realization of a shared struggle becomes apparent. At this critical moment, Tibetans and Chinese share a yearning for freedom and a determination for their voices to be heard beyond the darkness imposed by an authoritarian state.

The nonviolent nature of the Tibetan struggle should serve as an inspiration for a world riven by conflict and shattering acts of violence. Inside Tibet today, a younger generation now leads the nonviolent struggle to protect Tibetan freedom, religion and culture. Schoolchildren link hands and march to government education offices to protest when textbooks use Chinese and not Tibetan language. Teenagers write poetry in their own language in literary journals, expressing pride in their Tibetan identity. Young monks study the precepts of their religion in monasteries rigidly controlled by Chinese government cadres, even though the monks know that if they fail to denounce the Dalai Lama, they could be dragged away in the middle of the night and imprisoned.

At a time when China has increasing diplomatic heft, other nations grant too much accommodation to a government that imprisons its artists, free thinkers, lawyers, poets and human-rights activists. Indulging such a government undermines the values and interests of all democracies. We need to develop a more honest and clearheaded relationship with the current Chinese leadership—one that encourages China to become a better and more responsible global citizen.

During his long life, the Dalai Lama has shown that harmony between peoples is based on freedom of expression, the ability to speak the truth and mutual respect. Realizing the bold vision and goals of the Dalai Lama would not only make China more stable but also more genuinely secure, allowing greater strides toward modernization and responsible leadership in the world. There is no better way to honor the Dalai Lama on his 80th birthday than by standing with him and the Tibetan people, vowing to keep their cause alive.

Mr. Gere, an actor, is chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet. Mrs. Pelosi is the Democratic leader of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Source: [ICT](#)

Dalai Lama, Anything But “A Simple Buddhist Monk”

By Shashi Tharoor
NDTV, July 6, 2015



When the United Nations convened a Millennium World Peace Summit of religious leaders at its headquarters in 2000, one major religious figure was conspicuous by his absence. The Dalai Lama, the spiritual and political leader of Tibetan Buddhism, had not been asked to come. The implacable hostility of a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China, has

made it impossible for him to set foot in a UN building anywhere, or to be received by any official of the UN, let alone its Secretary-General. Where millions see a revered seeker of peace and an admired advocate of love and reconciliation, the Government in Beijing sees only a “splittist,” a secessionist rebel who threatens Chinese sovereignty over his homeland.

This dichotomy has always been inherent in the role of the Dalai Lama. He is simultaneously the most visible spiritual leader of a worldwide community of believers, and (till a few years ago) the political head of a government in exile. As a Buddhist, he preaches non-attachment, self-realization, inner actualization and non-violence; as a Tibetan, he is looked up to by a people fiercely attached to their homeland, most seeking its independence from China, many determined to fight for it.

The Dalai Lama has been a refugee for five decades, but is the most recognized worldwide symbol of a country he has not seen in half a century. His message of peace, love and reconciliation has found adherents amongst Hollywood movie stars and pony-tailed hippies, Irish rock musicians and Indian politicians, but he has made no headway at all with the regime that rules his homeland, and has been unable to prevent Tibet's inexorable transformation into one more Chinese province. His sermons fill football stadiums and he has won a Nobel Prize, but political leaders around the world shirk from meeting him openly for fear of causing costly offence to the Chinese.

As the Dalai Lama turns 80 today, the world sees him as a public figure, viewed, heard and admired at religious gatherings and official meetings; as a private person, usually through the accounts of others, reflecting in conversations with various prominent people on the values and concerns that animate his life; and, somewhat less, as a politician on the global stage. The last is a role the Dalai Lama has officially

relinquished, by giving up the leadership of the Tibetan Government in exile and permitting the election, by the Tibetan diaspora, of Lobsang Sangay to that responsibility. But though formally the Dalai Lama is out of politics, it is impossible for him to escape the burden of symbolizing the political aspirations of the Tibetan people. These he describes now as autonomy, cultural and administrative rather than political, and within the Chinese state, rather than the independence he acknowledges to be impossible to attain.

I first met the Dalai Lama in 1979 or 1980 in Geneva, when he had come to address the Diplomatic Club there. I was a young UN official in the early years of my career – no one of any consequence whatsoever. As he came down the aisle, he shook my hand and we exchanged a few words. I was overwhelmed by the gesture: here was a man whose followers would cherish the mere grazing of the hem of his robe, and he was holding my hand and talking to me! My admiration began then, and has been reinforced by many encounters over the years, mostly on public occasions or from a distance, though I have been privileged to enjoy two private audiences with him as well. The Dalai Lama's easy grace upon entering a room, his infectiously loud laughter, his profound compassion and humanity all leap forth from his presence. So does his sense of being anchored in the present, and in "reality".

To one author, Pico Iyer, even the Dalai Lama's polishing his glasses suggests "a metaphor for what he's encouraging all of us to do" – to polish our mental glasses and see the world around us, and beyond us, more clearly.

The Dalai Lama calls himself "a simple Buddhist monk" bound by 253 different vows, but he has proven himself to be anything but simple and so much more than a monk. To most Tibetans, he incarnates their homeland, as well as their faith, and even their sense of selfhood. His fame, too, is a worldly asset. To quote Iyer again: "in a world where celebrity is ever more a global currency, the spiritual celebrity is the one who can actually change the coin of the realm into something more precious or sustaining."

The Dalai Lama does not pretend to have all the answers; but he has an astonishing talent for raising the right questions, and forcing us to interrogate ourselves in the same way. His spiritual message — to build one's home within oneself — is all the more relevant when one can no longer rebuild the external home that one has been forced to flee. Some impatient young Tibetans want freedom in this world rather than freedom from this world, but the Dalai Lama has long realized that the only transformation that is possible for his people is within themselves. Beijing does not seem to realize that the reviled secessionist is more

interested in sovereignty over the self than in the sovereignty of his now-vanished state.

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.

As he turns 80, one cannot but marvel at all he has done to make that future possible, and to wish him health and peace as he continues his tireless journey towards a better world for all who listen to his wisdom.

(Dr Shashi Tharoor is a two-time MP from Thiruvananthapuram, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, the former Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Human Resource Development and the former UN Under-Secretary-General.)

Source: [NDTV](#)

Tibet's tough road ahead

By Carl Gershman

The Washington Post, July 5, 2015

The 80th birthday Monday of the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader, is an occasion to celebrate the life of an extraordinary individual. Since his flight from Tibet to India in 1959, the Dalai Lama has built religious, educational and political institutions to serve and unite the Tibetan community in exile. He has travelled the world to promote the Tibetan cause and expound the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism. And he has formulated a conciliatory "Middle Way Approach" to resolving the Sino-Tibetan conflict that respects China's sovereignty and territorial integrity even as it seeks to preserve Tibet's culture, religion and identity. These accomplishments, and the Dalai Lama's infectious laugh and warmth, explain why he is such a beloved and respected figure throughout the world.

As joyful as the occasion of his 80th birthday is, however, it comes at a grim time for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan freedom movement. The Chinese government has broken off negotiations on Tibet's status, accusing the Dalai Lama of deceitfully trying to split China and of inciting the 2008 Lhasa uprising, charges that are offensive in addition to being entirely untrue. In April, it issued a white paper saying that talks would not be reopened until the Dalai Lama acknowledged that "Tibet has been an integral part of China since antiquity," something he cannot agree to since it is contradicted by the historical record and overlooks the fact that Communist China invaded Tibet and illegally annexed it in 1959.

Having rejected compromise and dialogue as the way to end Tibetan resistance to its rule, the Chinese government has opted for harsh repression, forced assimilation and the systematic effort to destroy the Tibetan religion, language and distinct national identity. Tibet has been flooded with Han Chinese settlers; monasteries have been placed under direct government control; writers have been arrested and tortured; and more than 2 million nomads have been forcibly resettled in urban areas, destroying their traditional way of life and disrupting the fragile ecosystem of the Tibet Plateau.

In response to these and other harsh measures, which the Dalai Lama has called “cultural genocide,” more than 140 Tibetans have immolated themselves in desperate protest against Chinese oppression. This further enraged the regime, which called upon local security forces to “smash disorder, in order to maintain general harmony and stability.” But as 29 dissident Chinese intellectuals said in a call for dialogue with the Dalai Lama, “A country that wishes to avoid the partition of its territory must first avoid divisions among its nationalities.”

With the Dalai Lama turning 80, a contest is already developing over his succession. In Tibetan Buddhism, reincarnation is a fundamental tenet, and only the Dalai Lama has the authority to choose whether and through whom he will reincarnate. Yet Beijing has already approved guidelines giving the communist government control of the process. This contest takes place against the background of Chinese authorities having kidnapped in 1995 the 6-year-old boy identified by the Dalai Lama as the incarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second most important figure in Tibetan Buddhism, and replaced him with another boy.

The fact that the Chinese-imposed Panchen Lama continues to be categorically rejected by Tibetans should indicate how inflammatory it would be if Beijing tried to impose its choice for the next Dalai Lama. But that’s exactly what it intends to do, except that the Dalai Lama has hinted that he might not reincarnate at all. Zhu Weiqun, a top Communist Party official dealing with Tibet, angrily called the Dalai Lama’s statement “a

betrayal” of Tibetan Buddhism and accused him of taking “a frivolous attitude toward his own succession.” Such shameless impudence by a spokesman for an atheistic party would be laughable were his words not the official policy of the Chinese government.

The Dalai Lama has said that he will consult with the high Lamas of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as with the Tibetan public and other concerned people, before

taking a decision on “whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not.” These words reflect a spirit of democratic inclusiveness that has characterized his leadership, including his decision to devolve political authority to a democratically elected exile government.

It is ironic that at a time of

democratic malaise in the West, this “simple Buddhist monk,” as he calls himself, from a remote non-Western civilization has emerged as a fervent defender of democratic values and arguably the world’s leading exponent of nonviolence and religious freedom.

As we celebrate the Dalai Lama’s 80th birthday, let us remember the suffering of the Tibetan people and pray that it will come to an end.

Carl Gershman is president of the National Endowment for Democracy based in Washington D.C.

Source: [The Washington Post](#)

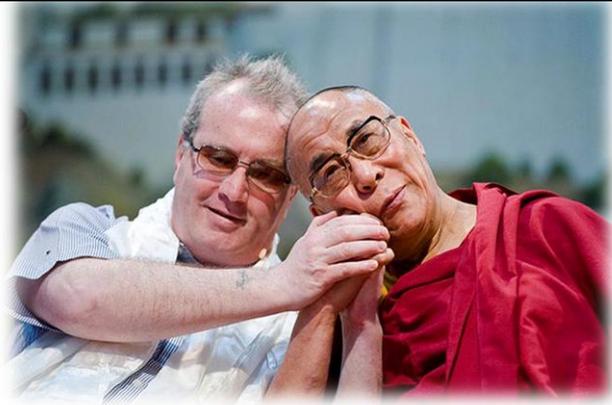
Happy Birthday to Your Holiness

By Richard Moore

The Huffington Post, 8 July 2015

I am delighted and honoured to say I have met His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet on a number of occasions both in Ireland and when I visited him in India. I have had the wonderful privilege of hosting His Holiness in Ireland quite a few times now. However, the first time I met His Holiness was in 2000 when I attended an event in my home town of Derry, Northern Ireland where he spoke to a group of people from across the political and religious divide who had been





directly affected by the conflict here. Like many of those in the room that day I bore the physical scars of the so called “troubles”, having lost my eyesight as a result of being shot by a British soldier when I was 10 years old in 1972 whilst on my way home from school. His message of compassion and forgiveness was very moving, extremely powerful and the impact on me of what he said that day was enormous.

His Holiness has an incredible ability to speak to everyone and manages to communicate some very profound messages in a very ordinary and sometimes humorous way. He helped me and I am sure many others not only in Northern Ireland but throughout the world to realise that forgiveness is a gift you can give to yourself. Forgiveness is not about the other person or in my case the British soldier who blinded me but is a way in which you can find peace and reconciliation within your own heart and mind. I realised after listening to His Holiness that my ability to accept blindness and my sense of contentment was because I didn't harbour any feelings of anger or hatred. In fact, I always wanted to meet the British Soldier who blinded me and in 2006, almost 34 years after the incident, Charles and I met for the first time and have remained good friends ever since. I was also delighted to receive an invitation from His Holiness to visit him and in May 2010 Charles and I travelled to his residence in Dharamsala for a special audience with His Holiness. It was during this trip that His Holiness agreed to become Patron of Children in Crossfire, which was a great honour for me personally and the entire organisation. Children in Crossfire is an international NGO, committed to the promotion and protection of the rights of vulnerable children caught in the crossfire of poverty. Children in Crossfire works in partnership with local organisations in Tanzania and Ethiopia to deliver projects on the ground, protect the rights of vulnerable children and provide access to improved health and education.

In celebrating His Holiness's 80th birthday we should celebrate the positive example he has continued to be in the world. There is perhaps no greater advocate for peace and compassion as respected worldwide as the Dalai Lama. He is a man of great warmth, depth,

knowledge and insight. As a refugee from his native Tibet he has suffered a great deal alongside his people. His extraordinary work for peace has been recognised by his Nobel Peace prize in 1989. However, it is the great admiration and esteem The Dalai Lama is held in, by people from all walks of life and all faiths, that makes him such an important figure in a world that is deeply grappling with complex economic, ecological and social problems, and the need to cultivate human understanding, connection and collective action.

On this occasion of his 80th birthday I would like to take this opportunity to thank His Holiness for his courage and incredible example of compassion.

Source: [The Huffington Post](#)

Saving Tibet's unique heritage

By Brahma Chellaney
Japan Times, July 7, 2015



BERLIN – The Dalai Lama is the Tibetans' god-king and also the embodiment of India's leverage on the core issue with China — Tibet. But with the longest-living Dalai Lama having turned 80 this month, the future of both Tibet, and the leverage that India has shied away from exercising, looks more uncertain than ever. Beijing is waiting for the exiled Tibetan leader to pass away to install a puppet as his successor, in the way it has captured the Panchen Lama institution.

The Dalai Lama's 80th birthday came just weeks after the 20th anniversary of China's abduction of the Tibetan-appointed Panchen Lama, one of the world's youngest and longest-serving political prisoners. And it will be followed by the 50th anniversary of the founding of what China deceptively calls the “Tibet Autonomous Region.”

This, in reality, is a gerrymandered and directly ruled Tibet, half of whose traditional areas have been taken away and incorporated in Chinese provinces. Tibet was almost the size of Western Europe before it came under Chinese rule. China's conquest of the sprawling, resource-rich Tibet enlarged its landmass by more than 35 percent, turned it into India's neighbor, armed it with control over Asia's major river systems, and gave it access to a treasure trove of mineral resources.

The Chinese name for Tibet since the Qing Dynasty — Xizang, or “Western Treasure Land” — underscores

the great value that this restive region, strategically located in the heart of Asia, holds for China. With its galloping, often-improvident style of economic growth, China has depleted its own natural resources and now is avariciously draining resources from Tibet. Tibet — holding China's biggest reserves of 10 different metals and serving as the world's largest lithium producer — is now the focal point of China's mining and damming activities, which threaten the fragile ecosystems and endemic species of the Tibetan plateau.

The world's highest plateau, Tibet is one of the world's most biologically diverse regions, with the rarest medicinal plants, the highest-living primates on Earth, and scores of bird, mammal, amphibian, reptile, fish, and plant species not found anywhere else. As a land that includes ecological zones from the arctic to subtropical, this plateau has a range of landscapes extending from tundra to tropical jungles, besides boasting the world's steepest and longest canyon as well as its tallest peak, Mount Everest.

As Asia's main freshwater repository, largest water supplier, and principal rainmaker, Tibet plays a unique hydrological role. With its vast glaciers and permafrost, Tibet is called the "Third Pole" because it has the Earth's largest perennial ice mass after the Arctic and Antarctica.

No development since India's independence has carried greater implications for its long-term security than the fall of Tibet. Indeed, China's military and resource advantage gained by capturing Tibet — exemplified by the Tibetan plateau's increasing militarization and the damming of its rivers, such as the Mekong, the Salween and the Brahmaputra — is turning into a strategic and environmental nightmare for downstream countries in Southeast and South Asia.

Yet for China, capturing the Dalai Lama institution has become a priority, as if it were the unfinished business of its takeover of Tibet.

The aging 14th Dalai Lama, while coping with bouts of ill health, has publicly discussed a range of reincarnation possibilities that break from tradition, including his successor being a woman or being named while he is still alive.

To avert a Panchen Lama-type abduction, he has even suggested that he be the last Dalai Lama or that the 15th Dalai Lama be found in the "free world" — among Tibetan exiles or in the Tibetan Buddhism citadels of Ladakh and Tawang in India. He, however, has yet to issue clear-cut guidelines on his reincarnation, raising the question whether it is a calculated move or a risky hesitation.

Nevertheless, it is doubtful that things would go China's way in Tibet merely if it installed a marionette

as the next Dalai Lama. Given how most Tibetans despise the China-appointed Panchen Lama as a fake, Beijing would be hard pressed to make its Dalai Lama appointee acceptable to them. Its bigger problem, however, would likely be different.

The present Dalai Lama, with his espousal of nonviolence and his conciliatory "Middle Way" approach of seeking Tibet's autonomy without independence, has kept the Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule peaceful. But once he passes away, it is far from certain that the movement would remain peaceful or seek only autonomy. It is likely that his "Middle Way" approach would not survive after his death, thus closing Beijing's window of opportunity to resolve the Tibet issue by conceding meaningful autonomy and beginning a process of reconciliation and healing.

The Tibetan resistance movement, for its part, would become rudderless, fueling greater turbulence in a region that China has tried hard to pacify.

The 15th Dalai Lama chosen by Tibetans to take on Beijing's doppelganger appointee would be a small child. It was such a power vacuum that China exploited to invade and occupy Tibet when the present Dalai Lama was just 15. After the 13th Dalai Lama died in 1933, Tibet remained leaderless and wracked by fierce regent-related intrigues until the present Dalai Lama was hurriedly enthroned when the Chinese invasion started in 1950.

The next power vacuum in the Tibetan hierarchy could be historically momentous in sealing the fate of the Dalai Lama lineage, shaping Tibet's destiny, and having an impact far beyond.

With China's actions in Tibet posing a bigger challenge to India than any other country, New Delhi must not remain a mere spectator. India — home to a large Tibetan exile community, including the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile, and directly bearing the impact of China's activities on the Tibetan plateau — has a legitimate stake in Tibet's future.

Tibet is to India against China what Pakistan is to China against India. But in sharp contrast to India's qualms about playing the Tibet card, Beijing has had no hesitation to employ the Pakistan card against India, including by building Pakistan as a military and nuclear balancer on the subcontinent. Beijing even plays the Kashmir card against an inordinately defensive India.

Even as China politically shields Pakistani terrorism against India — exemplified by its recent step to block United Nations action against the Pakistani release of U.N.-designated terrorist Zaki-ur Rehman Lakhvi — it has stepped up its own engagement with insurgent

groups in India's vulnerable northeast, including funneling arms to them via the Myanmar route and encouraging them to coalesce.

Tibet is India's only important instrument of leverage against a muscular China bent upon altering the territorial, river-waters and geopolitical status quo, and fomenting terrorism in India's northeast, which is sandwiched between Myanmar, Bangladesh, Tibet and Bhutan. Unfortunately, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has resumed doing what his supposedly "weaking" predecessor Manmohan Singh had halted since 2010 — referring to Tibet as part of China in joint statements with Beijing.

Tibet, ever since China eliminated it as a buffer with India, has been at the heart of the Sino-Indian divide. It will remain so until Beijing pursues reconciliation and healing there.

Modi, given his dynamic, forward-looking foreign policy, must work to gradually reclaim India's Tibet leverage against a China that openly challenges India's territorial integrity by claiming Indian areas on the basis of their alleged ecclesial or tutelary links with annexed Tibet. China's attempt at expanding annexation in this manner draws encouragement from India's imprudent acceptance since the 1950s of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.

The Dalai Lama is India's strategic asset and ultimate trump card. If India is to safeguard its Tibet leverage for use, it must plan to act as a pivot in the Tibetan process to find, appoint and shield the next Dalai Lama.

With China's mega-dams, mines and military activities in Tibet set to increasingly affect Asia's environment and security, the world's leading democracies must consider playing a discreet role to help save the Tibetan plateau's unique heritage from becoming extinct.

Brahma Chellaney, a geostrategist and author, is a Richard von Weizsacker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

Source: [Japan Times](#)

Tribute to KUNDUN

By Jamyang Dorjee
July 1, 2015

6th July is the official birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama referred to as Kundun, by Tibetans. The Mega celebration of the 80th birthday already begun and continues right across the continents in different forms including offering long life prayers 'Tenshug' both by Tibetans and non Tibetans. The Himalayan Buddhist

Culture Association, representing people from different Himalayan regions will offer Tenshug on 20th July in Dharamsla. This year, during one of the Tenshug ceremony in Dharamsala, Kundun again re-confirmed that he will live another 20 plus years, which is great news for his followers.

On March 16th, 2011, Dharamsala, after his morning sermon to Buddhists from Thailand, China, South Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma, Kundun granted an hour long interview to Suthichai Yoon and said "Forty years ago there, I was predicted to live to 113. One Tibetan writing dating back 100 years describes a person in today's world who will live through 113 years. That person is thought to be me because I share his qualities. In my dreams, I am 113 years old. I'm quite sure of my age. You can extend your life. I'll live long enough to see a free Tibet in my lifetime. If I'm still alive then, I'll choose the next Dalai Lama on my own."

Can Communist party of China survive another 30-35 years to continue to stop Kundun from visiting China and Tibet? This is a real challenge to the Communist leadership. China today is considered a middle-income country, and its rapid growth over the decades has pulled hundreds of millions of its citizens out of poverty which also means from Communism to their traditional root, Buddhism. These days already 80% to 90% of Chinese identify with Buddhism as one of the several faith traditions they observe. Some recent studies indicate that as much as 98% of Chinese consider themselves as Buddhists, but indicate that they also subscribe to several other Chinese spiritual traditions.

Irrespective of whether China wants or not, Kundun will reincarnate and China has to wait. It will be too naive to think that Chinese Communist autocracy will survive the winds of democracy that long. Nowhere in the world Leninist had party retained its power after the economy ceased to be state-directed. One of the greatest spectacles that the world will witness, sooner or later, be when Kundun actually sets foot on the Chinese soil and meets one billion(1,70,893,447) Buddhists in China including 6 million Tibetans. This then will be the real greatest show on earth, the "Brilliant Civilization" and "Glorious Era" a slogan, used during the 2008 Beijing Olympic celebration. Buddhist philosophy of impermanence is an eternal truth and cannot be wished away however powerful one may be. Who would have thought, 30 years ago, that we'd only be talking about five states that have any official adherence to communism? Who would have thought, 30 years ago, that China will take trade and commerce to the world outside and not Marxism? — it's all happened so very, very quickly.

While mentioning achievement of Kundun, we often take things for guaranteed and forget to mention some contribution that actually changed the course of

history. They are many but one of the greatest achievements of Kundun, I believe, is the unifying factor, practically implementing the great Indian philosophy 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', the whole world is one family, sharing and loving, which he coined, is 'universal responsibility.'

Hindusim and Buddhism

The visit to Kumbhmela by Kundun in 2001 in a way was the beginning of coming together of the India's two great indigenous spiritual traditions so that both Buddhism and Hinduism can flourish side by side in the land of its birth. In fact during the Kumbhmela, according to sources, for the first time in the history of Hinduism three Shankracharyas met physically for they all came to see Kundun. Following that visit there are regular interactions in private and publicly sharing the platform with many respected Hindu spiritual leaders such as Sri Sri Ravi Shankar ji , Swami Prakasananda of Sree Narayan Dharma Sanghom trust, Dada J.P,Vaswani and paying respect to 105 year old Swami Shivakumara ji and many other spiritual masters. Never before, in the history of Buddhism such gatherings happened.

Science and Buddhism

Bringing out Nalanda tradition of Buddhism from the cocoons of the four walls of the Tibetan monasteries and initiating a dialogue with cognitive scientists of the west in 1987, was a major challenge especially when religion itself then was branded by some westerner as unscientific and by communists as poison. While both the wisdom of Buddha and science aspire to understand the true reality of nature, the former believes in training of mind and the later believes in providing mankind with material comfort. After 28 years of constant engagement and discussions with physicists, psychologists, brain scientists and clinicians, and philosophers, today Buddhism is getting accepted, the world over, as the way of life of intelligent people in the third millennium. Today both Buddhist and scientist believe that their knowledge is necessary for the wellbeing of human being. Kundun brought them together.

Leader of Tibetan people

As a political leader of Tibetan people, when Kundun came to exile, one of the first things he did was to unite the people three regions of Tibet. The inconvenient truth is that prior to the occupation of Tibet by China in 1949, Tibet was not a united country. Some writers make a difference between the political Tibet (today's so called TAR) being the area under administration of the Gaden Phodrang and ethnographic Tibet consisting of the areas of frontier between China and Tibet , the east side of Drichu river, dominated by chieftains and warlords, sometimes in a zone of conflicting interests.

On 3rd February 1960, high ranking personnel and spiritual masters from across the Tibetan areas, civil servants of the Tibetan government and leaders of Chushi Gangdruk who had fled into exile assembled at Bodh Gaya, India and took the Oath of Allegiance called "Na-gan Thuwoche" affirming the unity of all the Tibetans under the leadership of Kundun. This was historic moment and today's spirit of Middle way approach policy of the exile administration is a reflection of that affirmation and the pragmatic policy. The Middle way approach towards dealing with Tibet's issue has brought the Chinese and the Tibetan people closer and put the CPC rulers on the defensive side.

Different schools of Tibetan Buddhism including Bonpo Another inconvenient truth, prior to the occupation of Tibet by China, was the factionalism between different schools of Buddhism. Kundun's singular effort to bring all the schools of Buddhism together including pre Buddhist tradition of Bonpo is a historic achievement. The 12th Conference of all the heads of Tibetan Buddhism including Bonpo, held in Dharamsala, this year, with great success is a living testimony of this century. The unanimous condemnation of the Dogyal worship, often seen leading anti Dalai Lama protests in the west, as a main cause of disunity amongst the Tibetan Buddhism, by all the heads of the Tibetan Buddhism, during the 12th Conference is a historic step.

Conclusion

Sidhartha Gautama Buddha, in his lifetime extended his influence within the four kingdoms of Kapilavastu, Magadha, Vesali and Kosala and Guru Padmasambhava, the second Buddha, as is generally known in Tibetan Buddhism, extended his influence within borders of northern India, then kingdoms of Sikkim, Nepal and Tibet and today's kingdom of Bhutan. There are number of holy site historically connected with Guru Rinpoche throughout the Himalayan region including several here in Sikkim. Occupation of Tibet by China has created Kundun a global leader with influences in 65 countries and awarded with honorary doctorate from almost all the major universities, citizenship and peace awards totaling to about 153 numbers from the first 'Doctor of letter' by the Banaras Hindu University in 1957 to 'Doctor Honoris Causa Mongolian Academy of Science in March 25, 2015 and the traditions of honoring Kundun has not stopped. Kundun will soon set a new world record in the Guinness world book for highest number of awards/honors received by an individual in his life time, if he has not already set so. His influence transcends all geographical borders and is today the true messenger of Buddha, a living Buddha, a 'Yug Purush' of this millennium.

The writer is a former senior civil servant of the Government of Sikkim and Regional coordinator of the Conservancy for Trans Himalayan Arts and Culture.

From the Editor-in-Chief

The Dalai Lama has mellowed over the years and his views about China have also moderated.

By Aron Purie
India Today, July 3, 2015



That the Dalai Lama spooks China is no secret but how much I realised when we invited him to be the inaugural speaker at the India Today Conclave in 2009. The reaction of the Chinese embassy was totally unexpected. The Chinese ambassador got in touch with me and said we should disinvite the Dalai Lama. He tried to browbeat me and said our programme would hamper relations between India and China. He asked why we were giving a platform to a divisive force, and when I didn't relent, suggested we get him to speak via video conference instead. "I can't sleep at night," the ambassador said, trying to convince me how tormented he was. We didn't give in and went ahead with the event. But the episode gave me a sense of the Buddhist monk's power over China despite living in exile in India.

Ever since he fled Tibet in 1959 after a failed uprising against Chinese occupation and took refuge in India, the spiritual and former temporal leader of the Tibetans has loomed large over India's ties with China. Beijing has never reconciled to the fact that the monk they accuse of being a "splittist" has found a comfortable home in India with tens of thousands of his followers. What makes that pill more bitter is the fact that India's political, cultural and religious freedoms have allowed the Dalai Lama and his followers to preserve their traditions and also campaign for genuine autonomy for Tibetans.

He continues to hold that kind of sway in spite of the changes on the ground in the last half a century. China has become the factory of the world and is being seen as the successor of the former Soviet Union as the other global superpower. Its iron fist has ensured a tight grip on Tibet even as infrastructure and development have changed the face of the Roof of the World. The 1962 war and the border dispute notwithstanding, China is India's largest trading partner and successive governments in Delhi have only tried to ensure cordial ties with Beijing. The presence and position of the Dalai Lama becomes particularly relevant as PM Narendra Modi builds a strong bridge between India and China by trying to address the border row and partner Beijing in ventures such as the

New Development Bank by BRICS and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The Dalai Lama, however, has mellowed over the years and his views about China have also moderated. The Nobel Peace Prize-winner seems to have reconciled to the idea of Tibet being a part of the People's Republic and is seeking a solution to the Tibet issue within the framework of the Chinese constitution. In an exclusive interview to INDIA TODAY, he says he would happily hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and sees hope in the fact that millions of Chinese are turning to Buddhism.

Our cover story this week seeks to examine the phenomenon of the Dalai Lama as he turns 80 on July 6. Senior Writer Jyoti Malhotra travelled to Dharamsala, where the Dalai Lama lives, to get a sense of how Tibetans in exile regard their god-king in his twilight years. Our Beijing correspondent Ananth Krishnan visited Lhasa for the first time and was struck by the amount of development activity underway there. But he also found that Beijing's development efforts have not convinced many Tibetans, with the unresolved question of the Dalai Lama continuing to cast a long shadow.

This, perhaps, is the reason for the Chinese leadership to regard the Dalai Lama with suspicion and fear that he can still become a rallying point for angry, young Tibetans fighting for a free Tibet. However, the only way forward is for the Chinese also to reconcile to the Dalai Lama's religious status and take advantage of his calming presence to clinch a deal. Vocal and radical Tibetans could become much tougher to handle after him. That's a problem neither China nor the world wants. There's already an excess supply of militants.

Source: [India Today](http://indiatoday.com)



DALAI LAMA @ 80: PRAYING FOR THE CAUSE

By Vijay Kranti
Organizer, July 4, 2015

Since he left his home to gain knowledge at the age of 6 years, his life has been a hard fought struggle for sustaining and defending the cause. As per the Lunar calendar, Tibetans celebrated his 80th birthday at Dharmashala on June 21, 2015, as a tribute to his Never Give Up attitude. As per the Solar calendar his birthday will be celebrated all over the world on July 6, 2015. As all Indians have always been supportive of the cause and the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Organiser recounts the difficult journey of this great Buddhist Monk.

The life journey of present Dalai Lama, who celebrates his 80th birthday on 6th July, has been quite unique in so many ways. He was only four year old in 1939 when a search party of Tibetan monks from Lhasa arrived in his remote village and identified him as the new reincarnate ruler and supreme religious leader of Tibet. Their tests showed that Lhamo Thondup was the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama who had passed away in 1935 just before this little boy was born in a poor farmer's family of Taktser in the North-Eastern Amdo province of Tibet.

Renamed as 'Tenzin Gyatso' and enthroned as the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet by his sixth birthday, this little boy of Taktser has today grown into one of the most popular and respected men of present human history. Decorated with almost every best known international award and honour (154 by the last count) including the Nobel Peace Prize, Templeton Award, Magsaysay Award, Congressional Gold Medal of USA and a host of Doctorates from some of the most reputed universities, he attracts a rock star like reception across the world. In countries like the USA, Germany, Australia, Canada, France, Spain, Japan (you just name it) his public lecture tickets are sold out months in advance whereas thousands of his admirers wait outside jam-packed Olympic stadiums just to have a glimpse of him.

His popularity looks still more phenomenal when Beijing government, his most ardent hater, calls him "a wolf in monk's garbs" to vent out its helplessness over the thunderous standing ovations he receives in one after other Parliaments across the world. Or when a business tycoon of Rupert Murdoch's reputation scoffs out personal frustration on his popularity by referring him as "...a political old monk shuffling around in Gucci shoes...". But as expected, all such sarcasm and caustic comments from such quarters only add glamour to this robbed statesman's popularity graphs. It's different that the Dalai Lama still prefers to call himself 'a humble monk'.

Not a Comfortable Journey

But a closer and critical look at the 80 year long journey of this little boy from Taktser would show that it has not been so comfortable that everyone would love to opt for. Soon after he was enthroned as the supreme religious leader of his country amidst a colourful, musical and noisy ceremony, the six year old Tenzin Gyatso discovered that he had already outlived his childhood. He was now destined to live, grow up and study with much older monks, many of them being much older than his father. His family life too was going to be limited to weekly meetings with his parents and siblings.

It was a theocratic system which gave him as much respect and public following, if not more, as any Pope or a Shankaracharya or an Ayatollah would have ever received in the prime of their times in their respective countries. On attaining adulthood, he was going to wield far more political powers and authority in the national government of Tibet than a monarch like the Queen of England; a President of the USA ; a Prime Minister of India and; a Pakistani dictator—all rolled into one—could have ever enjoyed.

Life in Isolation

But he had to grow up in a system which neither encouraged (read 'banned') relations with the international community of nations; nor allowed any direct exposure to foreign cultures; or permitted any modern educational institution to set foot onto Tibetan land. It was only when two fugitive Austrian prisoners of war landed into Lhasa near the end of second World War that the 12 year old Dalai Lama could take some lessons in English and had some friendly briefing about the modern world from one of them (Heinrich Harrer). In a country where practically no wheel, other than the 'Mani' prayer wheel rotated, the young inquisitive Dalai Lama took upon himself the privilege of cannibalising one of the three vintage Dodge cars with the help of an India returned Tibetan driver to drive it within the lawns of his summer palace Norbulingka. These cars were imported by the 13th Dalai Lama on yak backs in unassembled form from India decades ago.

Palace Intrigues

And, above all, the young Dalai Lama had to be lucky enough to physically survive through a delicate web of palace intrigues which had already seen six of his predecessors dying before celebrating their 30th birthday. Three of them died as minors. The unique Tibetan system of power transfer through reincarnation has helped Tibet enormously in protecting the system from concentration of power in a single family or a group. The tradition of dual appointment of a monk and a nobleman on almost every senior position also helped in keeping the power balance in place. But a two decade long holiday between the death of a Dalai

Lama and handing over of the political and administrative powers to his successor also leaves ample space for a perpetual power struggle to seep in among high ranking Lamas, powerful noblemen and a host of regional chieftains.

The Buck Stop Here

It is no less interesting that while all privileges and powers of the Tibetan system are liberally shared and enjoyed by the religious and lay nobility, it is always the poor Dalai Lama as an individual who is practically left alone to handle the situation when things go wrong. Tibetan people's deep faith in Dalai Lama's spiritual powers and wisdom only helps the nobility to abdicate its responsibilities on most delicate moments.

For example, on a summer day of 1950 when the news of imminent Chinese attack on Tibet arrived Lhasa through a radio telegram from the Governor of Kham, the Regents, ministers and other seniors officials were out on an official picnic. The telegram was left on hold lest the picnic was disturbed. Later, instead of taking a clear stand to handle the national crisis the committee of Regents pushed the 15 year old Dalai Lama to replace the Governor with Ngapo, a known pro-China young official-- simply on the ground that he was suave, could speak Chinese and hence could convince the Chinese not to attack.

A few months later same year, Ngapo surrendered his garrison and town to the Chinese army without a fight. When Beijing threatened to 'liberate' the rest of Tibet too, the Regents called for the services of the 'Kuten', the national fortune-teller, who only advised the boy Dalai Lama to take over the political and administrative charge of Tibet. The Regents agreed despite the fact that the Dalai Lama was still a minor and three years too young to take up this responsibility. That explains how a 15 year old boy was left to find his own way to handle one of the most powerful and a rogue enemy. What followed in the coming decade was what even a novice political scientist could have predicted.

The nobles once again pushed the Dalai Lama to depute Ngapo for a dialogue with Beijing. However, Ngapo simply signed on dotted lines on what China called a "17-Point Agreement" between China and Tibet which made Tibet 'return' to the 'great motherland China' in 1951. Thanks to the Tibetan leaders' policy of isolation and insulation, the world community simply watched this Himalayan game as an indifferent spectator. No government offered to intervene. Dalai Lama's only hope was Chairman Mao's assurance through the 'Agreement' that China will respect its autonomy and will not disturb its culture and system.

Freedom in Exile

But by March 1959 the Chinese interference and highhandedness had left no choice with the Dalai

Lama but to run for his life to exile in neighbouring India. Going by the report of the International Commission of Jurists, as submitted to the UNO (1959) at least 80,000 Tibetans were massacred by the PLA and an equal number of Tibetans followed their leader as refugees to India. Interestingly, Ngapo stayed back to collaborate with the Chinese and enjoyed all comforts of life in Beijing till his last breath in 2009. It was the freedom in exile in India which offered the refugee Dalai Lama a chance to show his real capabilities as a community leader.

A Guru Dakshina to India

These institutions also include an impressive chain of replicas of almost every major national monastery and temple that existed in free Tibet of pre-1950 era. There are at least five UGC ranked universities that have come up either on exclusive Tibetan initiative or with active participation of Tibetan scholars. These institutions have taken studies in Tibetology, Buddhist studies and Indology to newer heights in past decades. It is no less achievement of the Dalai Lama and his fellow Tibetan scholars that over a hundred such major Sanskrit manuscripts which were given up as 'lost forever' over past centuries, have been retranslated and revived to their original Sanskrit form in India in recent years from the surviving Tibetan translations that were taken back home by Tibetan scholars at Nalanda University many centuries ago.

From Tibet's point of view too, yet another outstanding contribution of the present Dalai Lama is his success in unifying and organising the Tibetan refugees into one of the best knit refugee communities of the world. It was on his initiative that the 'Central Tibetan Administration' (CTA) was established in Dharamsala soon after he was shifted there. Though no world government has officially recognised the CTA but for all practical purposes it runs like a 'Government-in-Exile' through a democratic constitution, an elected Parliament, a cabinet, an autonomous Justice Commission, an Election Commission and competition based civil service. The CTA controls over a dozen 'Representative Offices' across the globe which operate like Dalai Lama's virtual embassies in countries like USA, UK, Switzerland, South Africa, Australia, Japan, Russia and the European Union.

A Democratic Dalai Lama

Starting with a democratic constitution in early 1960s Dalai Lama has gradually evolved the CTA from a Dalai Lama lead near theocratic system to a democratic one which runs through a popularly elected 'Sikyong' (Prime Minister) and a Parliament. In 2011 he officially transferred his political and administrative powers to the elected representatives through the Prime Minister, the Parliament and the Justice Commission. Through another earlier amendment in the constitution he had already empowered the Parliament to even strip the Dalai Lama of his political

powers 'if majority of its elected members feel that he is guilty of dereliction of his political responsibilities.

Going by his recent statements, the Dalai Lama appears to be thinking seriously of ending the institution of Dalai Lama and be remembered as the 'last' Dalai Lama of Tibet. However, frantic and desperate statements from Beijing show that the communist occupiers of Dalai Lama's Tibet are dead against this idea. They have stopped hiding their eagerness to see the present Dalai Lama passes away so that they could install a puppet in his place to solve their Tibetan headache once for all.

A strong, popular international Tibet support movement too owes a lot to the personal popularity of the present Dalai Lama. It has been to the credit of this movement across the world that many Parliaments passed resolutions in favour of Tibetan people and may Presidents and Prime Ministers were forced to change their decision of not meeting the visiting Dalai Lama for fear of Chinese government. Before the world saw Beijing Olympic torch becoming the focus of pro-Tibet movement in 2008, money super powers like the World Bank were forced by this movement to stop funding China for its development programs in its western colonies like Tibet, East Turkestan (Xinjiang) and Inner Mongolia.

Is China Taking Over?

However, with ever increasing economic and political clout of Beijing, things have started changing slowly and decisively in favour of China in recent years. It speaks for China's increasing diplomatic 'terror' among the community of governments that South Africa refused visa to Dalai Lama in September 2014 as he was preparing to participate in the world conference of Nobel Laureates. When the organisers shifted the venue to Rome a few months later, the Pope refused to meet the Dalai Lama lest his negotiations with Beijing suffer any setback. In February 2014 Beijing even forced the Parliament of Spain to rewrite parts of its constitution overnight so that the Supreme Court of Spain could not implement its judgement on two cases which related to human right excesses in Tibet by China. If implemented, this judgement would have forced the Interpol to arrest five senior Chinese leaders who included Hu Jintao, Li Peng and Jiang Jemin on their next travel to any country. Dalai Lama's 'Middle Way Approach' (MWA) of finding a solution to the Tibetan problem with China met a serious dead end in 2008 after a six year long dialogue collapsed when Beijing rejected his proposal of 'genuine autonomy' for Tibet within the Chinese constitutional frame work as a back door attempt towards Tibetan freedom. Now it is being realised that Beijing leaders used this dialogue period for consolidating its clutch over its Tibetan colony by extending Chinese railway line up to Lhasa; settling millions of Han Chinese in Tibet to permanently change its demographic and cultural character and; by

developing a vast military and civil infrastructure in Tibet.

Dalai Lama's New Dilemma

No wonder that China's increasing international power and its control over Tibet has seriously affected the morale of the Tibetan refugee community, who feel left out of the system following Dalai Lama's decision to give up his political powers to the elected leadership. They appear keen to sign another agreement that is acceptable to Beijing leaders and which can pave way of Dalai Lama's and refugees' 'respectable' return to Tibet. The critics of the MWA policy among Tibetan community are afraid that some influential, suave leaders are keen to barter the Dalai Lama with Beijing in exchange of a secure and comfortable future for themselves.

Realising Beijing leaders' intentions to plant a puppet Dalai Lama after his death, the Dalai Lama has publicly expressed his desire to close the tradition of Dalai Lama institution and leave the Tibetan issue to be settled by the elected leaders and future generations of Tibet. But aggressive announcements from China have already made it clear that the Communist leaders have their own plans about the next Dalai Lama. All this brings an ageing Dalai Lama face to face with a much more aggressive, arrogant and powerful China that is not only bent upon pulling away every platform under his feet, but is also equally keen to take him and his institution of Dalai Lama back as a 'good Chinese citizen.'

Vijay Kranti (The writer is a senior journalist and a keen observer of Tibet for over four decades)

Source: [Observer](#)

Kundun: The Presence of an Absence

By Dechen Pemba

The Huffington Post, July7, 2015

We Tibetans have many terms of respect for His Holiness the Dalai Lama; Yeshe Norbu, Gongsachog, Chenrezig, Gyalwa Rinpoche, Kundun... These are the names we use when we speak amongst ourselves and these were also the names I heard invoked many times when travelling around Tibet on my trips there in 1994, 2004, 2007 and 2008.

Upon hearing that I was a Tibetan from inji-lungba (literally, the land of English people), the first question would invariably be, have you ever seen or met His Holiness? From Lithang in Kham to Labrang in Amdo through to Lhasa in central Tibet, in all three traditional provinces of Tibet, it was the same question over and over.

I almost felt bad to say that I had, on several occasions. I would never dare to answer truthfully, that I had seen him more times than I could even count. When I was little and growing up in Surrey, just outside of London, a Tibetan audience with His Holiness meant a day off school and a day trip to London, it was always exciting! In those days in the 1980s, there were barely 100 Tibetans in the whole of the UK.

Later when I became a student in Beijing in 2006, I taught English as a volunteer to Tibetan students and had been warned not to make the classes “political” in any way. Imagine how I broke into a sweat when in my first ever class, a young man from Amdo decided to use the self-introduction round as a chance to speak in English about the situation in his home village, describing in detail how Chinese settlers were coming in in large numbers and the lack of religious freedom. One of my other classes was on the topic of “holidays”. When I asked the class, where they’d like to travel to on holiday, one by one they all answered India. I should have seen that one coming really.

The term Kundun in Tibetan literally means “presence” but the Dalai Lama’s absence from Tibet is an all too real pain that is impossible not to feel. Or in a strange way, it could be interpreted as an overall presence in noting the absence.

In contemporary Tibetan songs and writings, themes of missing someone, often a parent, are common, as well as longing for a distant far off place. These poetic expressions are often ambiguous to avoid censorship and political problems, many have been translated into English on my website High Peaks Pure Earth.

In 2011, prominent Tibetan writer, poet and blogger Tsering Woesser wrote about having a Skype audience with His Holiness from her Beijing apartment. Her blogpost became the most read on High Peaks Pure Earth ever and and the third most commented upon.

Woesser movingly wrote:

“I cried and I cried. When I, as Tibetans do, prostrated three times, silently reciting some prayers, holding a khata in my hands and kneeling in front of the computer with tear-dimmed eyes, I saw His Holiness reaching out both of his hands as if he was going to take the Khata, as if he was going to give me his blessings. I am unable to describe with words how I felt: I am really such a fortunate person; in Tibet, many people get into trouble simply for owning a photo of the Dalai Lama.”

It seems fitting on the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s 80th birthday to honour the Tibetans who patiently wait for him.

Dechen Pemba works as Editor of High Peaks Pure Earth

Source: [The Huffington Post](#)

The monk in the middle

By Jyoti Malhotra
India Today, July 2, 2015

The Dalai Lama is making overtures to Beijing even as China seems to be hardening its stand



Sometime in the mid-1950s, Chinese President Xi Jinping’s father, Xi Zhongxun, met the young Dalai Lama of Tibet in Peking, and the two became friends. The Dalai Lama gifted the senior Xi a watch, which he was still wearing in

1980 when an envoy of the by-now middle-aged Dalai Lama, now resident of McLeodganj in Himachal Pradesh, met him in Beijing. In the intervening years, Xi Zhongxun had been purged by Mao’s revolutionaries and his son sent to live in a cave to look after pigs. But Xi Zhongxun survived and his son rose through the ranks of the all-powerful Communist Party of China.

This week, en route to the US to celebrate his 80th birthday on July 6 with the powerful Tibetan community in California, the ageing Dalai Lama told india today in an exclusive interview that he would like to go home to Tibet-as well as meet his friend Xi Zhongxun’s son, President Xi Jinping.

Some would say that the Dalai Lama’s overtures to the Chinese government, through this frank interview, constitutes his most direct statement of interest to reopen talks with Beijing. Certainly, the Tibetan leader is pleading for an honourable settlement for his people, who have been coarsened and brutalised in the decades since the Chinese forcibly took over the province in 1950.

Others would argue that the Dalai Lama is indirectly admitting that he has few cards left. Or that he is laying them all on the table, in the full knowledge that China has become richer and much more powerful since he fled to India in 1959. The strategic set may contend that that is hardly a smart move; on the other hand a spiritual leader is hardly expected to anticipate the chess manoeuvres of a Communist leader who, in the last two years since he became president, has also assumed the six other most important positions in the Chinese military, party, economy and state.

If this were a direct contest between Tenzin Gyatso, Tibetan Buddhism's holiest man, and Xi Jinping, the contest would surely be over before it started. But what is fascinating in this most unusual challenge is that the Dalai Lama has not only refused to treat the Chinese as his bitter adversary, he is in fact counting on the support of the growing numbers of "outwardly atheist but inwardly spiritual" Chinese Buddhists in civilian as well as military circles-400 million, according to him, and growing-to tilt the balance just enough so as to give him and the Tibetans a real chance.

Meanwhile, the Chinese continue to reserve a special anger against this elderly monk in maroon robes. They have called him all kinds of names. They have put pressure on governments bullied civil societies and threatened NGOs with revocation of aid if they host him, or worse, allow him to propagate spectacularly absurd mush like peace and happiness and brotherhood. But the Dalai Lama, even in his 80th year, continues to be treated like a rock star, feted alike by influential people like Barack Obama, Richard Gere and Desmond Tutu.

Truth is, just as the Dalai Lama has virtually single-handedly, transformed a broken movement-in-exile in 1959 to one recognised by the world today as having legitimate aspirations, he is also the only person in the world who can upset the Chinese where it hurts, in its soft underbelly.

"Despite the fact that he left Tibet so many decades ago, the Dalai Lama continues to have a large following inside Tibet. The Communist Party leadership simply cannot accept another organisation or leader beside itself which has such a genuine mass following," says a former Indian ambassador to China who did not want to be identified.

MANN KI BAAT WITH THE MONK

Interestingly, the only major leader in the free world who seems to be as circumspect as the Chinese about the Dalai Lama is Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A meeting between the two on August 20, 2014, ahead of Xi Jinping's September visit to Delhi is believed to have gone off badly. Indian sources told India today that the Dalai Lama was "virtually kidnapped," put into an unmarked car with dark window shades as it drove into 7, Race Course Road, the PM's official residence, that evening.

Asked about the meeting, the Dalai Lama laughed, but refused to say anything. As the sources put it, he was "visibly shaken" by the encounter. It seems Modi didn't come out to receive him-unlike other PMs in the past. Moreover, he spoke to him in Hindi, which was translated into English. The Dalai Lama replied in English. They talked about a variety of things, including China.

It seems the Dalai Lama, his advisers and a Hong Kong-based Chinese businessman friend had been discussing a possible meeting between the Dalai Lama and Xi during the latter's Delhi visit. It is believed the government wasn't too happy with these developments and had made its views known to the Dalai Lama's people.

Certainly, many things have changed in the new New Delhi. For a start, the new PM recognises the need to reconcile the leftovers of history and make good with India's largest neighbour. The PM also knows that a sustainable relationship with China cannot ignore the presence of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan community-in-exile in India. Not because of the so-called "Tibet card" in India's diplomatic arsenal-which has been so watered down by Delhi over the decades since the Dalai Lama arrived- but because the Chinese leadership sees the Tibetan spiritual leader as a veritable red rag to its predominantly Communist Party identity.

It is widely acknowledged that the Dalai Lama's escape in 1959 only aggravated the already deteriorating relationship between India and China, leading to the 1962 border conflict and several consequent decades of tension. But as China rises again, nationalist feeling against the distinctive but dissenting cultures of Tibet and Xinjiang is only growing. "China's main problem with the Dalai Lama is that it wants him to accept that Tibet has always been an integral part of China. No Dalai Lama can accept that, as this is historically debatable," says Nalin Surie, a former envoy to China.

HINDI-CHINI BHAI BHAI 2.0

In his August 2014 meeting with the Dalai Lama, perhaps Modi believed that the beautiful new relationship he was about to forge with Xi would be unnecessarily damaged by an 80-year-old Tibetan leader the Chinese love to hate, who happens to be living in his country. Whatever the truth, Modi's subsequent conversations with the Chinese leadership in Ahmedabad, Delhi, Xi'an and Beijing are said to have given him a proper insider's perspective into the highly complex relationship with his big and powerful neighbour.

The Chinese are certainly keen on ramping up much-needed economic investment in India. But in recent years they have refused to consider a "status quoist, as-is-where-is solution" on the boundary dispute-that is, India and China keep the territories under their present control, Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin respectively, as was twice contemplated in the past by Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping-and insisted that any deal with India must incorporate Tawang, plus some additional territory from Arunachal Pradesh.

Certainly, only a strong government with a large majority can politically afford to cede territory to China. During the Atal Bihari Vajpayee era, talk of a "soft border" between Tawang and Tibet-similar to the proposal to transform the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir into a "soft border"-often surfaced, which soon died a natural death. Since 2003, 18 rounds of border talks between representatives of the two governments have taken place, but to no avail. In the interim, China's economy has grown by leaps and bounds, transforming not only the eastern Chinese seaboard but also the hinterland within. With the train from Beijing to Lhasa beginning its first run in 2006, the Communist Party moved to populate Tibet's towns with Han Chinese.

Then, in August 2013, the Indian Air Force landed the C-130J Hercules aircraft at Daulat Beg Oldi, the highest landing ground in the world, on the frontier with China in the Ladakh sector, near the theatre of the 1962 war. "The move sent shivers down China's spine," a retired Indian diplomat said. Other airstrips not used since the 1962 debacle were resurrected, at Chushul in the western sector and Tezpur in the eastern sector, where a squadron of Sukhoi fighter jets was placed.

"Question is," asked a retired foreign secretary, "how do you play the game with the much more powerful Chinese, with a weak hand? The answer is to put in place a strike capability the Chinese are also aware of."

Former foreign secretary Shyam Saran, also a Mandarin speaker, believes the Dalai Lama has "brought back to India a unique spiritual heritage which had dissipated in the intervening centuries. We cannot calculate the Dalai Lama's value or importance in political gains or losses. After so many years here, I can proudly say that he is now also owned by India".

It seems Modi and BJP President Amit Shah, who cancelled a last-minute meeting with the Dalai Lama on the eve of Modi's visit to China in May, have since rethought their hardline views. For the Tibetan leader's June 21 celebrations in McLeodganj, Modi sent Union Minister for Culture Mahesh Sharma and Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju. "The government would like to reassure His Holiness that it holds him in the highest esteem", Sharma said.

Towards the end of his interview with India Today, the Tibetan leader indicated that he could, indeed, be the last of the Dalai Lamas, the very end or "ceasing" of the line. So much better, he said, to end the 600-year old institution with him ("who is quite popular") than continue "to the 15th Dalai Lama who may turn out to be a disgrace".

The Dalai Lama laughed his childlike laugh following his own remarks, but he seemed dead serious.

Perhaps he was making these remarks with an eye to Beijing, so as to deny them the opportunity to subvert another sacred institution.

In this game of shadow-boxing with China, perhaps the Dalai Lama stands no chance at all. But the fact remains that he is still around at 80, smiling and laughing and exhorting his audience to focus on the messages of the Nalanda philosophers such as Nagarjuna. Perhaps that is the real value of him spending all these years in India, and elsewhere in the free world.

Source: [India Today](#)

Dalai Lama gets mischievous

Nicholas Kristof, July 16, 2015

The Dalai Lama, who may be the only octogenarian spiritual leader with a profoundly mischievous streak, has a suggestion for China's Communist leaders: Take up reincarnation.

I'm interviewing him in his hotel room in New York, at the end of an overseas tour marking his 80th birthday, and we're talking about what happens after he dies. He is the 14th Dalai Lama, each considered a reincarnation of the previous one, and usually after one has died a search is undertaken for an infant to become the next. But he has said that he may be the last of the line, or that the next Dalai Lama might emerge outside Tibet — or might even be a girl.

This talk infuriates Beijing, which is determined to choose the next Dalai Lama (to use as a tool to control Tibet). So, startlingly, the atheists in the Chinese Communist Party have been insisting that Buddhist reincarnation must continue.

"The Chinese Communist Party is pretending that they know more about the reincarnation system than the Dalai Lama," said the Dalai Lama, laughing. "The Chinese Communists should accept the concept of rebirth. Then they should recognize the reincarnation of Chairman Mao Zedong, then Deng Xiaoping. Then they have the right to involve themselves in the Dalai Lama's reincarnation."

The Dalai Lama hinted that he would hold some kind of referendum among Tibetan exiles, and consultations among Tibetans within China, about whether a new Dalai Lama should succeed him. The issue will be formally resolved around his 90th birthday, he said.

One reason to end the line, he suggested, is that a future Dalai Lama might be "naughty" and diminish the position. His biggest concern seems to be that after he dies, China will select a new pet Dalai Lama who may

act as a quisling to help the Chinese control Tibet and to give legitimacy to their policies there.

“Sadly, the precedent has been set,” he said, referring to the Panchen Lama, the second most important reincarnated lama in Tibetan Buddhism. After the 10th Panchen Lama died in 1989, China kidnapped the baby chosen by Tibetans as his successor and helped anoint a different child as the 11th Panchen Lama. Nobody knows what happened to the real Panchen Lama.

I admire the Dalai Lama enormously, and in 2007 he bravely used my column to send an important olive branch to Beijing — only to be criticized by fellow Tibetans as too conciliatory, and rejected as insincere by China. But I told him that I also thought there were times when he had been too cautious and had missed opportunities for rapprochement with Beijing. My examples: In the 1980s, when the leaders Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang sought compromise on Tibet; after the 10th Panchen Lama died; and in the run-up to the Beijing Olympics.

The Dalai Lama was having none of that — he doesn’t think he missed opportunities. But he acknowledged that Zhao had been sympathetic and added that if Zhao and Hu had not been ousted, “the Tibetan issue would already be solved, no question.”

To my surprise, the Dalai Lama was also enthusiastic about Xi Jinping, the current Chinese leader. He spoke admiringly of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign, said Xi’s mother was “very religious, a very devout Buddhist,” and noted Xi himself had spoken positively of Buddhism.

So, President Xi, if you’re reading this, the Dalai Lama would like to visit China. How about an invitation?

I had asked my followers on Twitter and Facebook to suggest questions for the Dalai Lama, and here are his responses to some of the issues they raised:

- On the Myanmar Buddhists who have murdered, raped and oppressed Muslims: As he has before, the Dalai Lama strongly condemned the violence. He added: “If Buddha would come at that moment, he definitely would save or protect those Muslims.”
- On eating meat: The Dalai Lama said he had been a pure vegetarian for 20 months but then developed jaundice, so his doctors told him to start eating meat again. He now eats meat twice a week and is vegetarian the rest of the week, he said, but added that he thinks vegetarianism is preferable.
- On Pope Francis: “I admire his stance,” the Dalai Lama said. “He dismissed one German bishop [for too

luxurious living]. I was so impressed. I wrote a letter to him. I expressed my admiration.”

- On gender: The Dalai Lama says he considers himself a feminist and would like to see more women leaders because he thinks women are often innately more sensitive and peaceful. “I insist that women should carry a more active role,” he said. “If eventually most of the leaders of different nations are female, maybe we’ll be safer.”

Source: [The New York Times](#)

INTERVIEW

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

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.

Jyoti Malhotra, July 2, 2015
India Today

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. Judging 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.)

Source: [India Today](#)



Exclusive: The Dalai Lama Talks About Pope Francis, Aging and Heartbreak With TIME

Elizabeth Dias / Anaheim, Calif.
TIME, July 6, 2015

On Monday, the morning of his 80th birthday, His Holiness the Dalai Lama sat down with TIME in Anaheim, Calif. The Tibetan spiritual leader shared his advice on growing old and mending a broken heart and talked about maybe meeting Pope Francis. Below are excerpts from the conversation, which has been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Q: The gap between the Tibet cause in exile and the situation on the plateau is widening. Some say that your message — which is so cheerful, hopeful, and, as

we see here in Anaheim, appeals to upper-middle-class Westerners — is so counter to the situation on the ground in Tibet, where some feel that the exile government isn't doing enough for Tibetan Buddhists themselves. How do you see that tension, and its future?

A: It seems that regardless of how much censorship they impose, the people in Tibet do seem to be able to get the news ... Inside Tibet, is physically distant ... but there's a few who get some information, then that spreads ... There are organizations, their main responsibility is to look after the Tibetan refugee community, their education, and also the way for preservation of our own culture, mainly, and monastic institutions, to carry our tradition and culture — I think quite sophisticated knowledge about the tradition. So then we are not representing, directly, inside Tibet. We have no direct responsibility like that, so by the way, say in our last, I think, 30 years, many Tibetans have the opportunity to come to India and join our school. ... So then after they get some education level, they return, they carry [that] inside Tibet ... Then these people now carry the main responsibility for teaching ... More of these connections are taking place on the personal, individual level, organic process, not so much through the centralized institution.

Q: You have not yet met Pope Francis, correct? If you could have a meeting with Pope Francis, what would you want to talk with him about?

A: Yes, not yet ... Recently he also has been showing genuine concern about the environment. Wonderful. A spiritual leader should speak — these are global issues. So I admire [him].

Q: How do you find sense of purpose as you age, especially if you live in a Western society that values youth?

A: I believe in also telling people, when you are young is its own special beauty, doing active things. Then, getting older, its own beauty, more experience to share with other people. One time in Sweden, I noticed, one small group of people, they have some kind of program, those retired people should take more active role taking care of young children. I think that is very good. Old people play, mixing with young children, the old people themselves feel something fresh. Sometimes, children see more love with grandparent rather than parent, that also happens. So I think children may do not attraction external beauty, old people, no longer any beauty, but smile, play, make joke, some sort of short stories, then children looked at. So if you age but then still feel bitter because you are not able to lots of things you could do when you were young, that is total, silly, unrealistic. Of course, the wider experience, the young people, youth, cannot do that — not yet.

Q: I don't know if you've ever been in love, but I'm wondering — how do you heal a broken heart?

A: Actually, you see, practice celibacy ... If you look at the nature of strong attachment, underlying that strong attachment is a clinging, grasping, and if you look at other reactive emotions that arise, actually it is strong attachment that underpins hatred, anger, jealousy, and so on, so if you somehow are able to look at this and recognize that a large part of the reception is perception, that could lose some of this strong grasping. I always remember, in a dream, if ... a beautiful woman or something like that, I remember I am a monk. It is very helpful.

Q: And if you aren't a monk?

A: I think the desire for sex goes extreme, always creates some trouble. So that I think, in Western culture, there is a lot of emphasis on sensuality, and sexuality is part of that.

Source: [TIME](#)

STATEMENTS

Speech delivered by the Tibetan Parliament in exile on the Ceremonial Occasion Marking the 80th Birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

On this 20th day of the 5th month of the Wood-Sheep Tibetan calendar year 2142, falling in the 17th Tibetan Royal sexantry and corresponding to the 6th day of July 2015, the 80th birthday in accordance with the universal-calendar year of the omnisciently, greatly considerate His Holiness the Dalai Lama – the supreme protector of all sentient beings, including the gods in the heavens; the master of all the teachings on this earth of the Buddha; a great champion of world peace; and the protector and supreme leader of all Tibetans – is being marked with great solemnity and grandeur. In keeping with the auspiciousness of this momentous occasion, I, with prior offer of prostrations and with happiness, devotion and joy, offer greetings of good wishes on behalf of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile.

Out of a feeling of closeness arising from a sense of affection towards all sentient beings in general and, especially, towards the downtrodden devotees of the Land of Snows, His Holiness the Dalai Lama took a deliberate decision to enter the realm of our cyclic existence. Accordingly he was born on the 5th day of the 5th month of the Wood-Hog Year in the Tibetan calendar's 16th Royal Sexantry, corresponding to the 6th day of July 1935, in Tagtser Village of Kumbum area in Domey Province as a son of father Choekyong

Tsering and mother Tsering Dekyi. The birth was accompanied by numerous auspicious instances of admirably amazing signs. By the universal-calendar year system, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is now 80 years old. And he has not assumed, on any of his three secret body forms, even a tiny bit of an appearance of ill-health. On that basis, the Wheel of Life of his bodily form reveals all the reasons of one that is unwavering in flourishing in excellent health, like the perfections of Mt Meru, the King of all mountains. Not even a fraction of the gratitude we owe to him for all the advantages of the benefits we have derived thereby could be repaid even if we attempt to do so by offering him all the treasures of The Three Thousand World Realms over many great aeons.

It bears no mentioning that by reincarnating in unimaginable range of births as kings, ministers, scholars and yogis, and so on, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has guided infinite numbers of devotees to the noble path of becoming exalted and enlightened beings, with those who follow his all-pervasive, timeless noble deeds being extant across all The Three Realms of existence. His Holiness the Great Fifth Dalai Lama oversaw the realization of the system of governance in Tibet which combined both temporal and spiritual aspects. Under the soothing cover of this unifying and noble canopy of political governance, all sentient beings of the Snowland of Tibet flourished in happiness and the precious teachings of the Buddha were enabled to flourish and develop in an atmosphere of ecumenism. In particular, His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama, being the timely fruition of the prayers of his successive predecessors, made a physical appearance in this world when the sentient beings in general and the religiously endowed Snowland of Tibet was plunged in such critical period as at present. Attaining all the symbolic appearances of a noble being with perfect physical attributes, he became an accomplished bearer of all knowledge in both the general and specialized fields, including in the aspects of hearing, thinking and contemplating, and in the aspects of teaching, debating, and composing. The supremacy of his scholarship in Buddhism reached such level of accomplishment as to render him the apex ornament among all the learned scholars of the Snowland of Tibet and the precious jewel of their hearts.

In particular, when the barbaric communist forces of China invaded Tibet and, as a result, the country's political situation became critical, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, though only 16 years old at the time, took into his hands the golden wheel-emblem of being the temporal ruler of the Snowland of Tibet, with its system of combining in him the temporal and spiritual leadership of the country. And he immediately set out to implement as a new measure his cherished desire to initiate democratic reforms designed to try to bring the system then prevailing in Tibet in conformity with

the general noble trend of democracy spreading across the rest of the world. In keeping with the requirements of the time, therefore, His Holiness the Dalai Lama newly set up a Reform Commission office and initiated other measures to start implementing his plans. Also, at a time when there was a real danger that the invading communist Chinese forces were planning to carry out their leaders' rapacious aim of destroying completely in one swift action the religion, government system and the people of Tibet, with the dangers of realizing it being very ominously real, His Holiness employed such strategy and compassionate tact against them through use of non-violent means as to ensure that for the time being many tens of thousands of Tibetans did not need to take up arms and risk their lives. He therefore ensured in an excellent way the saving and protecting of their lives. Nevertheless, under the brutal policies of the invading Chinese forces, which led to the invasion and occupation of Tibet, he was eventually forced to flee into exile.

Immediately after setting foot on Indian soil, His Holiness the Dalai Lama set out to fulfil his pre-existing plans and in 1960 instituted the setting up of a Tibetan parliament in exile whose deputies fully represented all the three traditional province of Tibet as well as all its different religious traditions. Gradually, over time, and in keeping with the prevailing circumstances, as well in harmony with the evolving genius of the Tibetan masses, His Holiness guided the Tibetan community on a path towards genuine democracy. Including after inviting suggestions from the Tibetan public, His Holiness proclaimed a democratic constitution for a future, free Tibet. And by petitioning the United Nations Organization with communications about the justness of the Tibetan cause, he was able to get its General Assembly to adopt a series of resolutions which demanded respect for the Tibetan people's human rights and recognized their right to self-determination. He established a Tibetan government in exile, including with its head and branch offices. In order to ensure the sustenance of Tibet's religions, culture and traditions, and for the purposes of integrating the potentialities of the Tibetan people, His Holiness ensured that they did not have to scatter to live in indeterminate places everywhere. For this purpose he worked for the establishment of new settlements in different places where exiled Tibetans could live in compact communities. His Holiness also very graciously helped to set up new offices or departments to ensure the provision of both traditional knowledge and modern education to the upcoming generation of Tibetans who are the future seeds of Tibet; to work for the economic well being of the government in exile and the Tibetan people; for the purposes of providing healthcare services, and so on.

With regard to the flourishing and spreading of the Buddhist religious faith, His Holiness the Dalai Lama

has provided leadership and guidance by such means as the holding of 12 conferences thus far of the top lamas of all the religious traditions, with the participation also of other major lamas, tulkus, abbots, geshe and so on. As a result, throughout India, Nepal and Bhutan, as well as in other foreign countries, the precious Buddhist religious faith is held in high esteem and flourishes in prosperity. This, in turn, has ensured that followers of the Tibetan form of Buddhism remain ever more true to their religious vows, like the oneness of the admixture of milk and water, with each side basking in the brilliance of the goodness of the other's gem-like radiance. His Holiness has also built a golden bridge of friendship and close relationship with other religious traditions of this world.

In particular, in an effort to ensure a spontaneous resolution of the just cause of the Tibetan people, His Holiness, while adhering to the strategy solely of non-violence as a fundamental basis, adopted a position based on a middle way policy. The essence of this policy is that the ordinary masses of the Tibetan people in Tibet, instead of remaining, as they currently do, in a state of enslavement under the current system of rule of the People's Republic of China, could enjoy self-governance for all the three traditional provinces of Tibet which would be united as a single administrative entity. This would be fully in keeping with the reality of the current situation and circumstances, is mutually beneficial, and is also a most accommodating approach made with the primary aim to resolve the issue. This policy has won admiration and ardent support from the general masses of the Tibetan people as well as from people and governments across the world. Over the years, successive fact-finding and other types of delegations have been sent to all the three traditional provinces of Tibet, while delegations of envoys had been sent to China to hold peaceful dialogues towards settling the Sino-Tibetan dispute.

In this age when practices under the influence of The Five Degenerations keep spreading with rising intensity, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has, with ever increasing vigour, worked to spread knowledge about the noble path towards imbibing the understanding of Emptiness and Compassion, the essence of Buddhism as taught by the Buddha out of kindness towards sentient beings. On that basis, he has at all times, relying solely on the ideology and strategy of practicing a non-violent approach, and in keeping with the peculiarities of places and times, as well as in accordance with the genius and inclinations of the different audiences, assumed multitude of hardship to spread the message of universal responsibility. By this means of showing the way forward, he has, as he continues to, assumed enormous responsibility to bring peace upon the entire humanity. Besides, irrespective of the question whether one believed in any religion or not, he has, through the approach of the idea of secular ethnics, made efforts designed to benefit

humanity in general and also the environmental conditions across the world. Likewise, working towards bringing inter-religious friendship, he has adopted a most liberal approach in going out to meet with leaders of different religious faiths and to hold discussions with them in attempts to dispel doubts and suspicions, and to do away with the causes of contradictions among the followers of the different religious traditions. Including, specifically, with his work for the Tibetan religious and temporal causes, His Holiness has thus adopted three main aims as the purposes of his life. And he has been highly praised for his outstanding efforts and achievements in all these noble areas and has been recognized with a series of hundreds of certificates, honours and awards across the world, including especially the world's most prestigious and famed award, the Nobel Peace Prize; The US Congressional Gold Medal; and the John Templeton Award in Great Britain. His fame as a great champion of peace has thus reached the whole wide world, spreading like a wind across the geographical barriers.

The extent of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's incomparable past and continuing current noble deeds are beyond all estimation. In the past one year alone, he very graciously undertook trips to numerous cities and provinces in a number of countries, including Germany, Canada, the United States of America, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, Australia, and India. During those trips he met with high level religious leaders, irrespective of their faith affiliations; serving as well as former Presidents and Prime Ministers, as well as members of parliaments and so on. They were all highly prominent political leaders, scientists, artists, intellectuals, and so on. He also interacted with students and the public in those countries, spreading among them his message that the fundamental basis for happiness and well being for now and in the future, and which is beneficial to everyone, is peace and compassion, practice of universal responsibility, positive transformation in inner values, and progress in secular ethics. To put it briefly, it remains impossible to repay His Holiness the Dalai Lama, for the nectar of the inestimable range of curative advisories he has given and continues to give in an attempt to direct the whole world to the path of righteousness, given the sheer magnitude of the gratitude owed to him.

That His Holiness the Great Fourteen Dalai Lama has, as wished by all the Tibetan people, whether presently living in all the three traditional provinces of Tibet or in other countries across the world, has ensured the maintenance of their national unity to such level as now, which is unprecedented since after the times of Tibet's ancient religious kings; and for the sake of Tibet's religious traditions and culture; and for the Tibetan race, is a cause for expressing especially high gratitude. Besides, he has also greatly benefited the Tibetan people in various other ways, such as by ensuring the laying down of a strong foundation for

carrying on the current struggle for the realization of Tibet's just cause and its future prospects. To sum up, remembering from the depth of our hearts the gratitude we owe to him for his tirelessly uninterrupted, great, and wide ranging efforts for the purposes of ensuring the freedom, peace, and coexistence for Tibet's religious traditions, culture, governance, and race, and in other areas, we would like to reiterate a hundred times our offer of words of thanks and unlimited gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. At the same time we also pray that His Holiness, without ever abandoning us, continue to maintain his care and concern for us till the very end of the ocean of aeons, as would parents towards their child. Such have been the words of a unanimous resolution of gratitude to His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama that we have been able to adopt recently.

During the past year, a man carried out a gun attack at a war memorial museum in Canada; Singapore's former President Mr. Lee Kuan Yew passed away; floods in the Jammu and Kashmir State of India caused calamitous disasters to people and loss of properties; and this year a devastating earthquake hit Nepal and other territories, resulting in enormous losses of lives and properties. They and other such developments resulted in hardships of various kinds. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in keeping with his Bodhisattva vow of being particularly kind to those who are especially downtrodden offered prayers and messages of condolence, sympathy and solidarity while offering, as he continues to even now, donations whenever seen needed for carrying out relief work.

In the month of April earlier this year, the government of China published a white paper titled "Tibet's Path of Development is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide". Under it China sought to explain how it was developing Tibet by resorting to misinformation, falsification, and distortion of facts in all sorts of manners under five chapters, namely: 1) The End of the Old System Was a Historical Inevitability; 2) New Tibet Follows a Sound Path of Development; 3) The Essential Intent of the "Middle Way" Is to Split China; 4) A Veneer of "Peace" and "Non-violence"; 5) The Central Government's Policy Towards the 14th Dalai Lama.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our position that the leadership of the Government of China should change its hardline policy towards Tibet and the Tibetan people with the hope that a positive transformation which is beneficial to both Tibet and China based on the actual situation in Tibet and the aspirations of the Tibetan people will occur. Likewise, we reiterate our call on the Chinese leadership to immediately release all the innocent Tibetans, including especially the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who continue to be persecuted after being detained or arrested, jailed and in other ways

and enable them to enjoy the happiness and well being that all human beings are entitled to. And we also reiterate our call on the Chinese leadership to take into account with deliberateness the totality of the issue of Tibet to realize as soon as possible a negotiated solution for the purpose not of separation but, rather, coexistence between Tibet and China.

The communist Chinese government had unleashed a fury of destruction on the whole of Tibet and its environment, resources and inhabitants. It has subjected the Tibetan people to unprecedented ill-treatment and torture. These have continued without any interruption. Unable to accept and endure anymore the hardline and repressive policies underlying them, the masses of the Tibetan people in Tibet have continued to carry out protests. In particular, over the past several years, a total of 140 nationally inspired heroic men and women among them have carried out protest self-immolations. One of the hopes and aspirations of utmost concern to the people of Tibet has been that His Holiness the Dalai Lama should be able to return home to his Land of Snows as soon as possible. If the Chinese leaders are genuine in practice what they outwardly claim about being caring and concerned about the well being of the Tibetan people, they should definitely give high consideration, as a matter of their unavoidable duty, to this thirst-for-water like desire of the general masses of Tibetans in Tibet and to the last messages and testaments left behind by the protest self-immolators. At the same time we take this opportunity to also reiterate our appeal to the entirety of those who are of our Tibetan Land of Snows to bear greater responsibility than before towards fulfilling this aspiration with unwavering selflessness and determination.

On the 25th of April this year and over days after that, Nepal's capital Kathmandu and many nearby areas were hit by devastating earthquakes, resulting in catastrophic losses in terms of both people and properties. The Tibetan Parliament in Exile was extremely concerned and saddened by this tragedy and expressed profound condolences to the government and people of Nepal. We prayed with a single-minded devotion to the ocean of victorious beings in the realms of the Three Precious Jewels that not only such destructive earthquakes as those may never recur in future but also that all the sentient beings of Nepal may be able to enjoy a life of utmost happiness for all time to come. Nepal is a country with profound historical relationship with Tibet. In particular, since Tibet came under the military occupation of communist China in 1959, until now, the government and people of Nepal have helped, as they continue to now, more than 20,000 Tibetan people to have a livelihood, and in preserving and promoting their religion and culture and so on. We take this opportunity

to again offer our condolences to the government and people of Nepal.

Recently, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile compiled and printed a book titled "A Brief Compilation for discerning Dolgyal related issues". The book brings together texts of speeches meant for enabling one to discern Dolgyal related issues, resolutions on these issues adopted by religious bodies and the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, announcements issued by the Kashag, besides speeches given by prominent current and former public office holders and others. This book is being released and formally publicized on this occasion. We take this opportunity to make an emphatic appeal to Tibetans both in Tibet and in exile to pay special attention to study its contents and to thereby gain a proper discernment of the issue so as to remain on the right path.

It has been 56 long years since Tibetans first sought refuge in foreign countries, including India. In particular, India has become like a second homeland to us. Both the government and people of India have provided the Tibetan people help, benefits, and friendship on a wide-ranging scale. Being mindful at all times to remember the gratitude we owe to them, we take this opportunity to offer unlimited words of deep appreciation to the people and government of India. All Tibetan living in exile must strive to build profound friendship and good relations and coexist in harmony with the people of their respective local host communities. We take the opportunity to reiterate on this occasion that it is extremely important for everyone to subserve what is beneficial to the reputation of the Tibetans as a people.

Finally, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama live for a hundred aeons, that all his wishes be seen fulfilled with spontaneity, and that the just cause of Tibet be seen prevail with speediness.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile
6th July, 2015

Source: Tibet.net

Kashag's statement on the eightieth birth anniversary of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama

On this joyous occasion of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama's 80th birthday, on behalf of Kashag and Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, I would like to express our deep reverence to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We pray for his long life and reaffirm our unwavering loyalty and devotion to him. Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet, as well as millions of others touched by His Holiness the Dalai Lama's message of

peace and non-violence, observe this special occasion with immense delight.

We take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's loving parents, Choekyong Tsering and Dekyi Tsering, for blessing us with their precious son, Lhamo Dhondup.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was born on July 6, 1935 to a peasant family in Takster village in the Amdo region of Tibet. Enthroned as the 14th Dalai Lama at the age of five, eleven years later, at the tender age of 16, His Holiness had to take over the spiritual and temporal authority of Tibet. Faced with the tragedy of Tibet's illegal occupation by the People's Republic of China, His Holiness the Dalai Lama had to do without any semblance of a normal childhood. The survival of Tibetan identity, and the future of an entire civilization, rested on his young shoulders. When His Holiness' utmost efforts to ensure a peaceful co-existence between the Chinese and Tibetans did not materialize, at the age of 24, His Holiness was compelled to go into exile in India.

In His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetans have a rare and esteemed leader. Single-handedly and fortified by his people's devotion, he prevented Tibet from falling into historical oblivion. In exile, among multiple challenges and hardships, His Holiness' first priority was to establish separate Tibetan schools to impart both modern and traditional education to future generations of Tibetans. Through this education, many Tibetans were nurtured with a strong Tibetan identity, and the new generation born in exile now fills leadership roles in the Tibetan community as well as in the Central Tibetan Administration.

In order to preserve and promote the unique religion and culture of the Tibetan people, the monastic centres of the four religious traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and of Bon were re-established and revived in exile. Since then, the different traditions have thrived in mutual respect and harmony. Similarly, His Holiness also established separate Tibetan settlements to ensure stable livelihoods within compact communities of Tibetan refugees. Also of great importance, His Holiness the Dalai Lama reformed and developed the exile Tibetan Administration, the legitimate and natural successor of the government established by the Great 5th Dalai Lama, into a full-fledged democratic entity capable of representing and uniting all Tibetans. Our gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his supreme sacrifices and tireless endeavors in these 56 years of wise and able leadership knows no bounds.

Among the people of the entire Himalayan region, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has inspired new confidence to take greater pride in our common cultural and religious heritage. In an even wider sphere, for millions

of Buddhists around the world, he is the human manifestation of the Bodhisattva of compassion, the beacon of hope and light for all human kind.

But above all, for Tibetans, His Holiness is the life and soul of Tibet and the Tibetan people. Regardless of the baseless accusations made by the Dholgyal cult, Tibetan unity and harmony under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has never been greater. It is comparable only to Tibet under the reign of the three great dharma kings, more than a thousand years ago.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has exerted tireless efforts to fulfill his three commitments in life: promotion of human values, promotion of religious harmony and increased awareness and preservation of Tibet's Buddhist culture. Because of his unflagging devotion to these goals, millions of people around the globe admire and love him. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has travelled to 67 countries across 6 continents and has received more than 150 awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize, the UN Earth Prize, US Congressional Gold Medal and the John Templeton Prize. Throughout the world, regardless of nationality, race or religion, millions of citizens consider His Holiness to be a beacon of peace and justice.

This global stature of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has provided a firm and steady support for the Tibet issue.

Tibetans inside Tibet sustain infinite hope and courage. They stand strong with patriotic fervor and look to His Holiness the Dalai Lama with utmost reverence and faith. The 140 Tibetans who self immolated have made the universal demand for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and for freedom for Tibetans. It is our hope that the Chinese leadership will soon understand and accept the Middle Way Approach as a mutually beneficial solution and continue the dialogue process with the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the only way to resolve the issue of Tibet.

By the grace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and support and solidarity of Tibetans in and outside Tibet, the 14th Kashag has largely been able to carry out its responsibilities. The Kashag would like to compliment and thank all those who participated in observing 2014 as the "Year of the Great 14th Dalai Lama."

Throughout this past year, many Tibetan-managed institutions and organizations based in India, Europe, USA and around the world voluntarily initiated numerous activities to express their deepest gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. It is also of great joy that the Central Tibetan Administration celebrated His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday as per Tibetan calendar on 21st June, along with Dhoday Association and International Gelug Association in Dharamshala. Despite restrictions, Tibetans inside Tibet enthusiastically participated in celebrating the 80th

birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama through prayers, recitations, and the rescue of live animals, among other meritorious acts which will undoubtedly help in the accumulation of good karma and unity of the Tibetan people.

The Kashag would like to urge all Tibetans to engage in acts that are consistent with the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and at the same time endeavor ceaselessly in preserving, promoting and acting upon traditional Tibetan values.

Also on this most special occasion, we are happy to have the chance to express our gratitude to the central government and state governments of India, and to all peace-loving people around the world who support the cause of Tibet in countless ways for these many years.

Finally, we ceaselessly pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. May all his wishes be fulfilled! May the non-violent cause of Tibet prevail!

KASHAG
July 6, 2015

Note: This is an English translation. Should discrepancies arise, the Tibetan version should be treated as final and authoritative.

Source: Tibet.net

RESOLUTION

US House of Representatives adopts Resolution criticizing China's policy in Tibet and honoring the Dalai Lama

International Campaign for Tibet on July 8, 2015

The United States House of Representatives today held a debate on the situation in Tibet discussing Resolution 337 "Calling for substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people." The Resolution was introduced on June 24, 2015 by Congressmen Eliot Engels, Matt Salmon, Jim McGovern and Joe Pitts and had 29 original cosponsors.

Several Members of Congress spoke eloquently on the House floor today about the misguided policies of the Chinese Government in Tibet and called on China to resume dialogue with Tibetans, without preconditions.

Members of Congress Chris Smith (R), Eliot Engel (D), Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Congressman McGovern (D) and Dana Rohrabacher (R), all spoke in support of the Resolution, which was agreed without objections.

While initiating the debate Congressman Smith said: "This week, when so many voices around the world are joined in wishing His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, a happy 80th birthday, it is a fitting time to re-commit ourselves to Congress's longstanding support for the fundamental rights of the people of Tibet, because the situation in Tibet has never been more bleak.

"(..)The Tibetan people want to be free to practice their unique faith, to live by the dictates of the faith, this freedom is also denied them. The Chinese government expanded its efforts last year to transform Tibetan Buddhism into a state-managed institution. They sought to undermine the devotion of the Tibetan people to the Dalai Lama and control the process of selecting Buddhist leaders. The Chinese government wants a Tibetan Buddhism that is attractive to tourists and which allows the Communist Party to manage its affairs." Congressman Smith continued.

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi in her remarks on the House floor said: "Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of that resolution, and in celebration of the 80th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whose spiritual wisdom and friendship have been uplifting to many Tibetans, Americans and people throughout the world. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a transcendent figure and presence on the international stage."

"(...) Again, the situation in Tibet is a challenge to the conscience of the world. If freedom-loving people do not speak out against oppression in Tibet, then we have lost all moral authority to speak out on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world. If [because] it's a big country, with whom we have big commercial interests like China, deters us from using our voices in support of human rights, how then can we turn to smaller, less economically significant countries and say: 'For you, the standard is different.' So, the Congress must continue to stand with the Tibetan people and stand with His Holiness The Dalai Lama to ensure that Tibetan children are free to learn their language, practice their faith and honor their culture as they live in peace." Leader Pelosi continued.

Congressman Jim McGovern, who is also Co-Chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission said in his remarks: "We are all here because we care about the fundamental human rights of Tibetans, including the right to worship as they choose and to enjoy and protect their culture. But we may be running out of time to guarantee those rights. As we celebrate the 80th birthday of Tenzin Gyatso,

the 14th Dalai Lama, the Chinese government has recently asserted its right to approve his successor. The very continuation of the ancient line of Tibetan spiritual leadership and reincarnation is in question. Next Tuesday, on July 14th, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission will hold a hearing on the situation in Tibet with the aim of identifying new, creative ideas to advance the basic human rights of Tibetans and ensure Tibetan autonomy."

Matteo Mecacci, President of the International Campaign for Tibet commenting on today's debate said: "The resolution approved today by the US House of Representative sends a very important signal both to the Tibetan people and to the Chinese Government: the United States continues to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people for a better future and will continue to denounce the serious human rights violations committed by the Chinese Government in Tibet. This Resolution reflects the growing concern about the worsening of the human rights situation in China and in Tibet; it will be in the Chinese Government's interest to radically change its policy towards Tibetans and to uphold its international human rights obligations. Legislators and Governments all over the world should take note of this debate and question China's human rights record in Tibet." -

Source: [ICT](#)

NEWS

Tibetan Monasteries in Qinghai, Gansu Observe Dalai Lama's Birthday

RFA, June 24, 2015

Hundreds of Tibetans gathered at monasteries in western China's Qinghai and Gansu provinces this week in defiance of Chinese bans to celebrate the birthday of the Dalai Lama, burning incense and offering prayers in honor of the exiled spiritual leader, sources said.

The celebrations were held despite widespread efforts by officials across Tibetan-populated regions to warn against observances of the politically sensitive event and to block public gatherings that could be linked to it.

On June 23, over a thousand Tibetans assembled at Jonang Chamda monastery in Qinghai's Golog (in Chinese, Guoluo) prefecture to honor both the Dalai Lama and senior Jonang monk Khenchen Sherab Salje, whose birth dates fall within the same month, a local Tibetan source told RFA.

"A portrait of the Dalai Lama was brought to the monastery and placed on a throne, and offerings were set out in front of it," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"More than 500 monks of the monastery then began a three-day recitation of prayers of blessings for [the Dalai Lama's] long life," he said.

Offerings, performances

Two days before, the monks of Khagya Toe monastery in Gansu's Kanlho (Gannan) prefecture also paid respect to a portrait of the Dalai Lama, standing in two lines to offer incense and ceremonial scarves, a Tibetan source said.

"They also saved the lives of numerous birds" that had earlier been captured, returning them to freedom, the source said.

On June 21 and 22, local Tibetans meanwhile staged plays about eighth-century Tibetan emperor Trisong Detsen, and about Ling Gesar, an early Tibetan national hero, he said.

Though Chinese police came out to watch the festivities, they made no attempt to close them down, and later left to attend meetings of their own, the source said, adding, "The Tibetans were able to carry on their activities without obstruction."

The Dalai Lama, who turns 80 this year, fled Tibet into exile in India in the midst of a failed 1959 national uprising against Chinese rule, and displays by Tibetans of the Dalai Lama's photo or public celebrations of his birthday have been met with harsh punishment in the past.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Chinese rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 141 Tibetans to date setting themselves ablaze to oppose Beijing's rule and call for the Dalai Lama's return.

Source: [RFA](#)



New postage stamp in Germany recognizes Dalai Lama's 80th birthday

ICT, July 2, 2015

A postage stamp celebrating the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday and created by the International Campaign for Tibet, will be available in Germany. The postage stamp, valued at 62 cents, is a product of the German Postal Services. ICT-Germany Executive Director Kai Müller: "This postage stamp is a rare recognition of the popularity of the Dalai Lama in Germany; it is sure to become a collector's item. It is our way of honoring the world's most famous Buddhist, the exiled religious leader of Tibet."

Source: [ICT](#)

India lucky to be home to Dalai

IANS, New Delhi, 05 July, 2015

Three former Indian foreign secretaries, one of whom was also the National Security Advisor, and a former union minister came together on stage on Saturday here to pay warm tributes to the Dalai Lama on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Former foreign secretaries Shyam Saran, Lalit Mansingh and Shivshankar Menon, who is also a former NSA, and former union minister Arun Shourie shared anecdotes from their many interactions with the Tibetan spiritual leader, highlighting his great sense of humour and his humaneness, at a talk at the India International Centre.

"We are singularly fortunate that he has chosen our country as his home. We take this as a blessing. The Dalai Lama is a living symbol of universal brotherhood," said Shyam Saran, who was moderating a panel discussion on "His holiness the Dalai Lama and his contribution to humanity".

Saran said the Dalai Lama -- who birthday is on July 6 -- "has become one of us", and while he represents the ancient heritage of Tibet, the spiritual leader has "always said he is only bringing back to India what India has given (Buddhism)".

"He has rekindled the spirituality that is in our heritage," said Saran, adding that the Dalai Lama always "puts across his message with humour; he is always in a good mood".

Lalit Mansingh said that among the Dalai Lama's missions was to promote human values in the world so that people can live a better life; as a Buddhist leader promote the message of the Buddha of non-violence

and peace; and as the Dalai Lama, be the spiritual leader of six million Tibetans living in China, "whose culture and human rights continue to be denied under a brutal regime".

Mansingh said the Dalai Lama "is the face of Tibet and the international face of the tragedy of Tibet".

Shyam Saran recounted the Dalai Lama telling him how he had escaped from Lhasa on horseback in 1959, praying all the while that the tinkling of the horse bells should not be heard by the searching Peoples' Liberation Army.

When he crossed into India, it was Shivshankar Menon's father P.N. Menon, a diplomat, who received him.

Shivshankar Menon said the Chinese media had run a story then headlined "Menon kidnaps Dalai Lama".

Menon said the Dalai Lama was a "true example of a leader" who despite having no government of his own, and being a refugee, has profound global influence.

He said the Dalai Lama has steadfast belief in peace and non-violence "even in the face of the suffering of his people".

Shourie said the Dalai Lama was an "exemplar of converting the great suffering of his people into benediction".

He said the spiritual leader always maintains that he is bringing back to India its own tradition (Buddhism), which Shourie said was almost forgotten in India.

"Because of Chinese oppression he was able to spread the fragrance of a tradition all over the world," he said.

Shourie said the Tibetan refugees were a happy and cheerful people because of the Dalai Lama "sustaining hope".

Shourie said the "oppression of two lakh Tibetans in exile has become a cause for the world because of the Dalai Lama. He has made Tibet's cause everyone's cause. He has shown how by goodness it can be made the cause of the world. He (Dalai Lama) gets into our hearts as if he is one of us. His life is one great teaching".

Shyam Saran said of the Dalai Lama: "Greatness sits lightly on his shoulders."

Source: [The Statesman](#)

India needs to be raise Tibet issue with Chinese, says former foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh

IANNS Jul 5, 2015

NEW DELHI: Former foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh on Saturday said India needs to be "more assertive" about its concerns regarding developments in Tibet and raise the issue with the Chinese.

Mansingh, addressing a talk on the occasion of the 80th birthday of the Dalai Lama, said it was his personal view. "I do believe that we need to be more assertive about our concern about the Tibetans and their fate," he said.

He said the Tibetans have "preserved for us the precious part of our heritage (Buddhism) which we have now got back. It's time we need to pay back the huge debt that we owe them".

Mansingh, who is an admirer of the Tibetan spiritual leader and held several interactions with him, said there was "nothing in India's foreign policy that says we cannot express concern for the rights or fundamental rights of people who are oppressed".

He cited Mahatma Gandhi writing to President Roosevelt about the rights of blacks, of India sending troops to Sri Lanka, of India taking up the cause of Fiji in the Commonwealth and also taking the lead in the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

"Let us not imagine that we are somewhat restrained in expressing our emotions and views on oppression on these people. I think India should have done better. Jawaharlal Nehru had accepted the fact and said, 'I failed Tibet. I failed to protect Tibet'. It requires a big man to accept that we didn't succeed."

"No matter what happens, India should take note of what is happening in Tibet and raise the issue with the Chinese during bilateral discussions," he said, to loud applause in the audience at the India International Centre here.

He also said changes were taking place in China with more and more Chinese beginning to practice Buddhism and many going to meet with the Dalai Lama during their tours abroad.

"He (Dalai Lama) foresees in his optimism that at some stage the Chinese will grant the Tibetans the cultural, religious and human rights they are entitled to within the sovereignty of China," Mansingh said.

Former foreign secretary Shyam Saran said that during his unofficial conversations with the Chinese, the Chinese feel that the Dalai Lama was "like a

perishable commodity" and that the Tibetan issue will resolve itself once the spiritual leader is dead.

"I want to point out that they are gravely mistaken in this," he said.

Saran also said there was a change taking place in China with many Chinese coming to listen to the discourses of the Dalai Lama.

Source: [The Economic Times](#)

Dalai Lama to receive Czech supporters of Tibet

Prague Daily Monitor, July 20, 2015

Prague, July 20 (CTK) - The Dalai Lama will receive representatives of the Czechs Support Tibet group and other NGOs who will pass congratulations on his 80th birthday to him in early August, director of the Vaclav Havel Library Marta Smolikova and former environment minister Martin Bursik told CTK yesterday.

The meeting will be held in Dharamsala, India, where the Tibetan government-in-exile has its seat.

The "congratulations from Czech citizens" was prompted by the NGO MOST (Bridge), that was joined by the Czechs Support Tibet, the Vaclav Havel Library, FORUM 2000, People in Need, Open Society Fund, o.s. LUNGTA and o.s. POTALA.

The campaign was also joined by a number of personalities, such as Ivan Havel, brother of the late president Vaclav Havel, former presidential candidate Jan Svejnar, former dissident singer Marta Kubisova, literary historian Martin C. Putna, film director Olga Sommerova, designer Maxim Velcovsky and priest Ladislav Heryan.

The congratulations will include a gift. It will be a tea cup by designer Borek Sipek that will highlight the "firm link between the Czech Republic and Tibet, Vaclav Havel and His Holiness Dalai Lama."

In the saucer, Vaclav Havel and the Dalai Lama are mirrored.

Forum 2000 Foundation chairman Jakub Klepal has said in a press release that members of the delegation will invite the Dalai Lama to again come to the Forum 2000 conference in 2016.

"The close link between the Czech Republic and Tibet must be maintained," Klepal said.

The Dalai Lama and Havel were friends. The Dalai Lama visited Czechoslovakia at Havel's invitation for the first time in February 1990, which sparked off China's protests. Since then, the Dalai Lama has visited Prague nine times.

Source: [Prague Daily Monitor](#)

PRESS RELEASE

European Parliament Intergroup on FoRB & RT

Brussels, July 06, 2015

Dalai Lama, an exemplary religious leader, turns 80. The Dalai Lama is celebrating his 80th birthday today and the Intergroup wants to mark the occasion by commending his work to peace, human rights and democracy. His lifelong commitment and outstanding contribution to the promotion of nonviolence, human rights and religious tolerance has resonated throughout the world.

Source: [FoRB & RT](#)

The Weekly Tibet News Digest is a collection of different articles, columns and Tibet related news published in websites. The views expressed are of the authors and do not necessarily reflect endorsement by Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, New Delhi.

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