

U.S.:

ICT Report: Tibetan-Americans and supporters on Capitol Hill for Tibet Lobby Day: On February 28 and March 1, 2011, over 110 Tibetan-Americans and friends of Tibet from around the United States visited Capitol Hill to meet with their congressional representatives. They attended more than 100 meetings in the House of Representatives and Senate. Tibet Lobby Day, this year, precedes the March 20 election in the Tibetan exile community for parliamentary representatives and the chief executive or Kalon Tripa of the Central Tibetan Administration based in Dharamsala, India. These two manifestations of participatory democracy by Tibetan Americans – voting for their exile government leadership and lobbying the Congress of their adopted country – echo the Tibetan people’s demands for basic human rights, including freedom of expression and assembly, within Tibet itself and are in stark contrast to the plight of Tibetans inside Tibet.

<http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/tibetan-americans-and-supporters-capitol-hill-tibet-lobby-day>

ICT Report: U.S. Ambassador Roemer inaugurates Tibetan Refugee Center in Dharamsala: On February 24, the U.S. Ambassador to India, Timothy J. Roemer, inaugurated a new Tibetan Refugee Reception Center in Dharamsala, India. The center is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement between the State Department and the Tibet Fund, a U.S.-based non-government organization that works to preserve the Tibetan identity in exile. Ambassador Roemer, accompanied by Mrs. Roemer, was welcomed by more than 100 new refugees from Tibet and senior members of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). Ambassador Roemer also met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his Dharamsala residence. The two have previously met in New Delhi. <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/us-ambassador-roemer-inaugurates-tibetan-refugee-center-dharamsala>

The Dalai Lama’s democratization process and the U.S.: In an article in the New Republic, Ellen Bork writes about the Dalai Lama’s democracy building efforts in exile. She writes that while Tibetan democracy is anathema to China’s communist government, it is also an uncomfortable development for Washington. She writes that despite the United States’ support for programs for Tibetan refugees, and support for democracy in general and the Tibetan government-in-exile in particular, the United States does not endorse Tibetan self-determination. Its policy focuses instead on preserving Tibet’s “unique cultural, religious and linguistic heritage” and promoting “dialogue” between the Dalai Lama and Beijing. She says that the success of Tibetan democracy, depends in part, on whether the United States, so often a key partner in international democratic transitions, will bring its Tibet policy into line with its democratic ideals. <http://savetibet.org/media-center/tibet-news/trouble-tibet>

INSIDE TIBET:

Tibet closed to foreign tourists in March: Travel agents said on March 7, that Chinese authorities have closed the Tibetan region to foreign tourists, just days ahead of the third anniversary of 2008 Tibet uprisings. An employee at the Xizang Tourist General Company in Lhasa told AFP by phone, “The tourism bureau will not give permission to foreigners to come to Tibet in March.” A day earlier, on March 6, the official Xinhua news agency reported that Tibet’s Communist Party chief Zhang Qingli said that the region was still facing “very grave challenges” in the fight against separatism. China has increased security in Tibet since the 2008 demonstrations. A report released by Human Rights Watch in 2010 said Chinese security forces brutally beat and even shot dead some protesters during the unrest, and tortured many in the subsequent crackdown.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/travel/Tibet+closed+foreign+tourists+March/4395460/story.html>

Sangay Gyatso, a leading protestor in 2008 uprising, dies: According to a report received by the Central Tibetan Administration, Sangay Gyatso, who was among the leading peaceful protesters during the widespread protests in Tibet in 2008, succumbed to his physical and mental trauma suffered during a year-long escape in the hills to evade Chinese government persecution. Defying intense restrictions by the Chinese government on 4 April 2008, Sangay and his colleagues from Labrang Monastery spoke to a group of visiting foreign journalists about the “suppression of fundamental human rights in Tibet by the Chinese government.” Like Sangay Gyatso, many Tibetans in Tibet are forced to leave their homes for hills to escape torture by the Chinese authorities. The death of Sangay Gyatso has reinforced the danger to the lives of many Tibetans who are losing their strength to live in insuperable harsh circumstances.

<http://www.tibet.net/en/index.php?id=2157.&articletype=flash&rmenuid=morenews&s&tab=1#TabbedPanels1>