

Tibet

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PRESS WATCH FALL 2013
*A publication of the
International Campaign for Tibet*

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Looking Toward the Future



དགྲེལ་འཁོར་ཚོགས་པ།

MANDALA SOCIETY
YOUR LIVING LEGACY TO TIBET

The Mandala Society is an intimate group of Tibet supporters, committed to helping future generations of Tibetans. By including the International Campaign for Tibet in their will or trust, Mandala Society members ensure that ICT will continue to have the resources to promote a peaceful resolution of the occupation of Tibet, and will be able to help rebuild Tibet when Tibetans achieve genuine autonomy.

For more information about Mandala Society membership, please contact Chris Chaleunrath at 202-785-1515, ext. 225, chris.chaleunrath@savetibet.org, or use the envelope attached to this newsletter to request a call.



2014 Calendar

A Spectrum of Tibetan Hats

This year's calendar features exquisite images of Tibetans wearing a wide variety of hats. Tibetan hats come in all sizes, shapes, and colors, and for all occasions—some formal, some casual, some monastic, some handmade. Hats are a unique part of Tibetan culture, and they are worn with great pride. The calendar includes remarkable photography along with information about the places and traditions associated with each Tibetan and his or her headdress.

Order yours now to support our advocacy for the traditional cultures of Tibet. Limited quantities are available. Go to savetibet.org to order your 2014 calendar today.



Embracing Change



TIBET PRESS WATCH

The International Campaign for Tibet works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet.

Founded in 1988, ICT is a non-profit membership organization with offices in Washington, DC, Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels and London and a field office in Dharamsala.

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Dear Friends,

Tashi Delek and greetings from the International Campaign for Tibet.

ICT has been experiencing a season of change in many ways.

On May 21, 2013, the Board of Directors of the International Campaign for Tibet announced with regret that it has accepted the resignation of my colleague, Mary Beth Markey, from her position as ICT President. Mary Beth had worked for 16 years in various positions at ICT and I am deeply appreciative of her exceptional service and will always be in awe of her unshakable commitment to the Tibetan people and our cause.

Change has also come to ICT's online presence. Recently, our website got a facelift. The goal was to make it easier for you to navigate and find what you're looking for, whether it's the most recent news, a background on the Tibet issue, or a place to take action for Tibet. We hope that the refreshed website brings a new energy to our online presence and appreciate any feedback that you might have.

"Energy" is a word that came to my mind as I interacted with the most recent participants in our Tibetan Youth Leadership Program. You can learn more about them in this issue of *Tibet Press Watch*. I trust you will share my admiration for such a fine group of young Tibetan Americans who will not only lead our movement forward for years to come, but will also end up making positive contributions to American society in general.

I also encourage you to review the update on the self-immolations taking place in Tibet. Although a most troubling story, it provides insight into the motivations of Tibetans who engage in this ultimate form of protest, as well as the depth of feelings among the Tibetan people with the current state of affairs. Each tragic death reaffirms the failure of China's misguided policies and contradicts the government's patently false claims of "ethnic groups living in harmony".

How quickly conditions inside Tibet will change for the better and Tibetans are guaranteed their fundamental human rights are predictions beyond my reckoning. But this much I know with all certainty: Given the unwavering determination of the Tibetans in Tibet, the changes we wish, pray, and work so hard for will come as long as people of conscience, such as yourself, remain engaged in our justice-seeking endeavors.

In solidarity,

Bhuchung K. Tsering
Interim President

Cover: Participants and program leaders of ICT's 2013 Tibetan Youth Leadership Program stand in front of the United States Capitol building during their visit to Washington, DC for a five-day leadership training program. (See page 4 for the full story).

Tibetan Leaders of the Future



ICT Executive Chair Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari sits down to talk with this year's group of TYLP participants.

In June, ICT hosted an intensive, five-day leadership training program for Tibetan youth in Washington, DC. The group included twelve undergraduate and graduate-level Tibetan American students. They came from New York, Minnesota, California, Oregon, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin and from fields of study as diverse as law, business, pharmacy, economics, computer science, political science, and Asian studies. Participants were selected for the achievements they have already demonstrated and their potential for leadership in the future.

Begun in 2001, the Tibetan Youth Leadership Program (TYLP) provides opportunities for young people to develop the tools required to become successful youth organizers and leaders in many different capacities. Over the course of this year's program, students participated in workshops to hone their skills and build their confidence, and they met with leaders at ICT as well as experts in media and human rights, politicians, activists, and others. They had the opportunity to hear not only from Tibetan experts but also

from Chinese thinkers and writers on topics like contemporary China and the Tibet issue from a Chinese perspective.

As ICT Interim President Bhuchung K. Tsering commented, "Even though the Tibetan American population today is still small, the Tibetans are in a position to take a more active and public role in the American political system. Within the Tibetan community, the young Tibetan Americans are better placed to take up this responsibility given their exposure to the broader American society. Young Tibetan Americans have not only started to intern and work in Federal and state offices, but they are also beginning to be involved in American political campaigning. Socially, Tibetan Americans are increasingly recognizing their dual identity."

One of the goals of the TYLP is to help young leaders improve their media and communications skills. To this end, a member of the Washington Media Institute conducted a workshop on message development, in which participants had

the chance to practice making live statements for TV, press conferences, and personal interviews. Participants also visited the Tibetan Language Service studios of both Radio Free Asia and Voice of America. A few of them had the chance to participate in a live broadcast of VOA's *Kunleng*, a program in Tibetan that features interviews and discussions with informed guests. Tenzin Dechen, a computer science student from the University of Wisconsin, called his experience on the radio show "exhilarating, awesome, and memorable." Later, the group met with a former CNN White House Producer.

The TYLP also included meetings with Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and members of Congress, including Mark Pocan (D-WI), Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), and Jim Himes (D-CT). Through these interactions, participants learned more about the workings of the government, the entities that shape the discourse around foreign policy as well as the various figures and organizations engaged on the issue of Tibet.

In order to foster a network of impassioned young Tibetans, the itinerary included an opportunity for the group to sit down with TYLP participants from past years and also with local Tibetan high schoolers. Another highlight of the program was a surprise call from Richard Gere, Chairman of the ICT Board of Directors, via Skype. Their final activity together was a group-authored letter to Secretary of State John Kerry.

At the end of the program, ICT's Special Assistant for Advocacy Tencho Gyatso wrote, "Watching this group of thoughtful, committed young Tibetans, and knowing there are so many more like them spread across the Tibetan diaspora and in Tibet, I felt full of hope for the future. Their deep, indelible connection to Tibet is what will guide them toward their work for a better future for their people and their country."

More Successes

Tibetan Immigration Measures Move Forward in U.S. Congress

June 27, 2013

With the Senate approving comprehensive immigration legislation on June 27, 2013, the effort to enable Tibetans to immigrate to the U.S. has moved to the next stage in the process. The legislation includes a provision to extend immigration visas to 5,000 displaced Tibetans in India and Nepal. The measure is modeled on a successfully implemented program that brought many Tibetans to the U.S. in the 1990s.

In order to become law, the Senate immigration bill must be reconciled with a version that would pass the House of Representatives. Currently, the House Judiciary Committee is considering a series of immigration-related bills rather than one

The legislation includes a provision to extend immigration visas to 5,000 displaced Tibetans in India and Nepal.

overall bill. It is unclear how and when these bills would be considered on the House floor. The chances that the differences between the two bills can be resolved and a single final immigration bill passed are the subject of much speculation in Washington. There was no debate on the Tibet provision on the Senate floor; it passed by voice vote with bipartisan support in the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 20. For now, the fate of the Tibetan immigration provision is subject to the prospects for the overall immigration legislation. For the most recent updates, please visit our website at www.savetibet.org.

Report on Tibetan Tourism

Later this fall, ICT will release a new report about how China is encouraging a tourism boom to remake Tibet in China's image and how Tibet is being repositioned in popular imagination. The report will be available for download on our website, www.savetibet.org.



Local Tibetans participating in Tibet Fest with ICT Executive Chair Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari.

Tibet Fest 2013

Tibet Fest was held in Arlington, Virginia on June 22, 2013 in partnership with BuddhaFest. Hundreds of people attended the evening's activities, which highlighted different aspects of Tibetan culture and drew attention to the political situation inside Tibet.

ICT Co-Founder Named Director of Radio Free Asia Tibetan Service

March 29, 2013

Co-founder of ICT Tenzin N. Tethong has been named the new director of Tibetan Service at Radio Free Asia (RFA). Tethong was born in Tibet before going to India with his family in 1959. For more than 30 years, he has committed himself to working for Tibet—helping to bring His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the U.S. for the first time in 1979, serving as Prime Minister of the Central Tibetan Administration in India, and founding such organizations as ICT, Tibet Fund, and Tibet House-New York. Tethong was chosen after an extensive, worldwide search for a visionary new leader. RFA President Libby Liu told the Broadcasting Board of Governors, "He has spent his entire life serving the Tibetan people and his integrity is above reproach."

Radio Free Asia has broadcast unbiased, reliable local news in nine languages to six countries in East Asia since 1996. A non-profit organization funded by the U.S. government, RFA transmits its programs in Kham, Amdo, and Uke dialects in Tibet and is a vital source of information for Tibetans living under the repressive Chinese regime. China attempts to interrupt transmittals by jamming RFA broadcasts and blocking Internet access, but RFA counteracts these efforts by providing information about circumventing the censors. Each year, ICT and its supporters help ensure the continuance of government funding for this important program.

Inside Tibet

Ongoing Self-Immolations Amidst Violence from Chinese Police

121 Tibetans are known to have self-immolated in Tibet since February 27, 2009, with 120 of the self-immolations occurring since March 16, 2011. This total includes 102 men and 19 women, 83 percent of whom have died following their protest. With sadness and regret, we present the Tibetans who have chosen self-immolation as a non-violent act of protest since our last edition on April 16, 2013.

TIBETAN MONK SELF-IMMOLATES IN KATHMANDU



On August 6, a 38-year old monk called Karma Ngedon Gyatso, who arrived in exile in 2011, died after setting himself on fire at the Boudha stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal. Tibetans who knew Gyatso describe him as deeply religious. This is the second fatal self-immolation by a Tibetan monk in Kathmandu this year.

JULY 20, 2013



An 18-year old monk called Kunchok Sonam set himself on fire and died outside his monastery in Dzoege, Ngaba, where the crackdown has

been among the most intense in Tibetan areas. Kunchok Sonam was regarded as “exceptional” in his studies. He had told friends that living under Chinese rule in Tibet had brought too much suffering. A heavy troop presence was deployed in Thangkor (Chinese: Tangke) town and at the monastery. Another Tibetan monk, Tangdzin, was detained, according to one Tibetan source. Radio Free Asia reported that hundreds of Tibetans have gathered at the monastery in support of monks

who prevented Chinese authorities from taking away his body.

Wellbeing: Deceased

JUNE 11, 2013



Wangchen Dolma, a Tibetan nun in her early thirties, died after setting fire to herself near a monastery in Tawu, eastern Tibet, during a gathering

of several thousand monks for a major religious debate and teaching. After the self-immolation, communications were restricted in the area and surveillance of monks at Nyatso monastery was intensified. **Wellbeing: Deceased**

MAY 27, 2013



A Tibetan nomad in his early thirties called Tenzin Sherab set fire to himself and died in the Gyaring area of Yushu in Qinghai province, accord-

ing to exile Tibetan sources. Police took Tenzin Sherab’s body was taken from the site of his self-immolation by police. According to the same sources, his body was later released to his family.

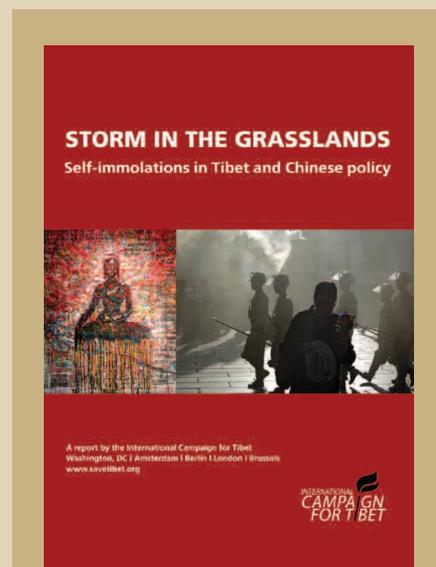
Wellbeing: Deceased

APRIL 24, 2013

Two monks of the Taktsang Lhamo Kirti monastery set themselves on fire in the monastery’s assembly hall. They shouted slogans of protest against the Chinese government and its policies in Tibet and died immediately. Monks took the bodies



of Losang Dawa, 20 (left), and Konchok Woesser, 23 (right), to their rooms and said prayers for them. Local authorities mandated their remains be cremated quickly. **Wellbeing: Both deceased**



The ICT report, “Storm in the Grasslands,” offers the most comprehensive analysis published to date on the relation between the Tibetan self-immolations and Chinese policies in Tibet.

To order a copy, or read it online, please visit www.savetibetstore.org.

Special Reports

Tibetan Monks Shot on Dalai Lama's Birthday

July 26, 2013

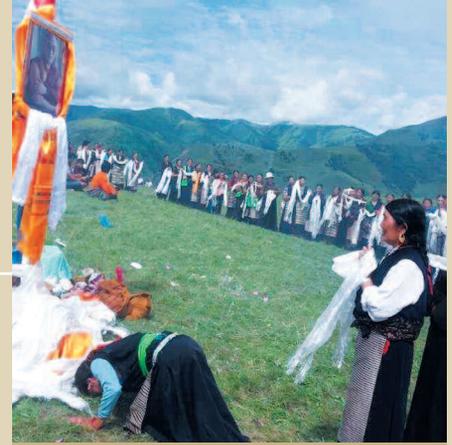
The Chinese authorities have attempted to block communications in Tawu in eastern Tibet after police opened fire on unarmed Tibetans peacefully celebrating the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday on July 6, at a sacred mountain in Nyitso, Tawu, (Chinese: Dawu/Daofu), Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (in Tibetan area of Khan) in Sichuan.

Two Tibetans were shot in the head and at least eight others seriously injured. Other Tibetans detained were tortured in custody. Social media networks and mobile phone connections have been affected as officials seek to prevent information reaching the outside world from the area.

Bhuchung Tsering, Interim President of ICT, said, "The decision to use such lethal force upon a peaceful gathering... reveals the dangerous culture of impunity that exists in Tibet under Chinese rule." He urged the Obama administration and the European Union to express its abhorrence of this act.

According to Lobsang Jinpa, a Tibetan from Tawu now in exile in India, prayers for the long life of the Dalai Lama began early that morning at Nyitso monastery. But armed police then stopped local Tibetans from conducting *sangsol*, a Tibetan Buddhist ritual of burning incense and juniper leaves to mark important occasions, by surrounding the mountain, Machen Pomra, according to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Dharamsala, India. Faced by the armed police, local people then joined monks and nuns at another grassland area nearby.

When Tibetans began to make their way back after the completion of the religious ceremonies for the Dalai Lama, they were confronted by armed police at a bridge leading to the road. An image received from inside Tibet depicts the contingent of troops lined up with riot shields on the bridge facing Tibetan laypeople and monks leaving the grassland area.



Tibetans made offerings and draped *khatags* (white blessing scarves) over an image of the Dalai Lama.

According to various Tibetan sources, some of the police smashed the car windows of monk Jangchup Dorjee, the brother of nun Palden Choetso who had set fire to herself and died on November 3, 2011. A dispute began between Tibetans and the armed police, and a prominent Tibetan Rinpoche and other senior monks attempted to resolve the situation peacefully.

According to one exile Tibetan source, it had almost been resolved when orders were given by the head of the police to use force and open fire.

Efforts to Moderate Anti-Dalai Lama Policy Shut Down

July 24, 2013

Several recent developments in the Tibetan area of Amdo represent a backward step by the authorities following the indications of moderate debate on China's Tibet policy in recent weeks. While no shift in the tough policies on Tibet has been observed, there is evidence that policy analysts, scholars, Tibetan religious figures and others in the PRC have drawn attention to the counterproductive nature of oppressive measures and the high levels of security presence in Tibet.

Following the visit of one of China's top leaders, Yu Zhengsheng, to Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture earlier this month, the Chinese government's hardline policies against the Dalai Lama were emphasized in published statements by officials. The notices

warned of penalties for spreading "rumors" about Dalai Lama pictures being allowed.

Yu Zhengsheng, who is on the seven-member Politburo Standing Committee, visited Labrang monastery during his July visit. He reiterated the official line when he called for "an absolute fight against the Dalai Lama clique in order to realize national unification and Tibetan regions' development and stability." (People's Daily, Yu Zhengsheng stresses stability in Tibetan regions — July 9).

The authorities have now sought to send a strong message that they are enforcing the "unwavering" policy of "anti-splitism". Pictures of officials and Tibetan monks at a meeting to study Yu Zhengsheng's speech in Tsolho were posted on websites in Amdo last week in the

Tibetan language, indicating the statements were aimed at a Tibetan audience. According to the article, officials at the meeting asserted that pictures of the Dalai Lama would not be displayed in monasteries in Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and that they would seek to 'sincerely follow' the leadership's policies in order to 'unite the nationalities.'

The meeting followed news of discussions in Tsolho about proposals to display portraits of the Dalai Lama, end denunciation of the Tibetan leader, and lessen police presence in monasteries. It now appears that the discussions have been shut down, possibly as a result of a directive from the central authorities enforcing compliance at a local level.

Read the full text of these reports online at www.savetibet.org in ICT Reports.

Field Team: Reporting Emerging Stories from Tibet

ICT receives many questions about our field team—the Tibetan researchers in Nepal and India whose efforts form the bedrock of our communications and government advocacy work. We sat down with Kate Saunders, Communications Director and head of the team, to discuss their complex, courageous endeavors.

In 2008, a young Tibetan man we will call Lobsang (not his real name) was living in Amdo province in eastern Tibet. He was an advocate for his country and a former monk who felt particularly strong about China's repression of religion; Buddhist monks at his monastery were not even allowed to practice their rituals. Lobsang and his friends decided to take the risk to protest this oppression, in spite of the fear of repercussions. They went into the street with handmade Tibetan flags and held a peaceful protest. The Chinese authorities were shocked. They did not open fire on the young men, as had happened elsewhere. But they did chase them, and one of Lobsang's friends was caught. He was quickly sentenced to a lengthy term in prison.

In recent years, China has undertaken a huge effort to block information and to seal off the Tibetan plateau from the rest of the world. ICT works to counteract this effort and to ensure that Tibetan people can tell their own stories.

It was this episode that galvanized Lobsang's escape into exile in Dharamsala, India. When he emerged from Tibet, he dedicated himself to transmitting stories from recent exiles to the rest of the world as a member of the ICT field team. Lobsang's experience is not unique among field team researchers. Their identities are guarded, but like him, they are recent exiles familiar with the Tibetan context and

fluent in the Tibetan language so that they can communicate easily with fellow exiles. Often, they are scholars and former monks who are highly educated. Because of their own personal stories of repression and the loss of homeland they have experienced, they tend to be especially committed to and passionate about their work on behalf of Tibet.

In recent years, China has undertaken a huge effort to block information and to seal off the Tibetan plateau from the rest of the world. ICT works to counteract this effort and to ensure that Tibetan people can tell their own stories. The work is necessarily grassroots—undertaken by Tibetans themselves, in contact with other Tibetans. The details are kept confidential in order to maintain the security of the researchers, who must take precautions even in exile—especially in Nepal, where Chinese influence is strong.

A crucial component of the field team mission is speaking to Tibetans who are just coming out of Tibet. Often, these are nomads who have been displaced, children who are seeking schooling, or elderly people who risk their lives to be in the presence of the Dalai Lama before they die. The field team speaks with them to gain their views on daily life and their experiences of Chinese policies being enacted inside Tibet. Sometimes, members of the team are the first to ask questions about their lives, and telling their stories becomes a profoundly therapeutic process for the recent exiles. The researchers develop relationships with them and put them in touch with others in the community so that they can gain support.

In the past decade, new technology has changed the work of information gathering and reporting. As social media has

become more widespread, the Chinese have stepped up their interference, and those Tibetans who have given witness to outsiders—by transmitting photos or sending messages—can be sentenced to even longer prison terms than those who protest. But Tibetans are continuing to find ways around the censors in order to express themselves, using digital technology and instant communications.

ICT maintains high standards in confirming and verifying the information it receives before sharing it with foreign governments and global media. Before filing any report, two separate sources must be identified.

Researchers for ICT also speak to foreign journalists on the ground in India and Nepal and help them meet with Tibetans in exile, including monks and community leaders—a level of access that would be difficult for outsiders to achieve given the fear and distrust within the exile community. As the situation inside China grows increasingly tense, more people from all over the world are visiting Dharamsala—including journalists, pilgrims, and travelers—and they are asking for information about Tibet.

Recently, the field team arranged a briefing by Tibetan exiles of different ages and backgrounds for an American government delegation in Dharamsala. The Americans reported how powerful it was to meet Tibetan exiles face to face and hear their stories. Humanizing the situation in Tibet can have a profound effect on outsiders, leading to changes in policy, greater funding, and a host of meaningful impacts—all of which find their foundation in the efforts of the field team.

Arts & Culture Column

Dzi Beads

Made of agate stone and normally worn around the neck or strapped across the body from right shoulder to left waist, their name means “luminous” or “splendor.” Tibetans regard *dzi* beads (sometimes spelled *gzi*) as more precious than diamonds or gold, with deep ties to family, myth, history, and tradition that bring the wearer a powerful aura of spiritual protection against illness or misfortune.

The origins of these beads are shrouded in mystery. They may have come to Tibet via Tibetan soldiers who traveled to Persia and Tajikistan during a raid long ago. Some sources record their appearance in India between 2000 and 1000 BC. In 1984, a prominent Dzogchen teacher, Namkhai Norbu, published a book called *Necklace of Gzi: A Cultural History of Tibet* in which he argued that the beads served as a monetary system in ancient times. It is fairly certain that they did not originate in Tibet, though they have become an important part of Tibetan culture.



Dzi beads display a variety of patterns that help determine their spiritual value. Today, the market is flooded with fakes, while authentic *dzi* are increasingly rare.

Some Tibetans believe that *dzi* are not of human origin at all, but rather gifts from the heavens. Perhaps because shepherds and farmers sometimes found them in the fields or grasslands, some people believe that the beads were dropped to earth by the mountain gods—part of the Bon religious tradition that preceded Buddhism. The *dzi* beads usually have a small chipped spot at one end, and Tibetans believe that local deities or whoever brought the *dzi* as a gift kept the small chipped piece as a first offering; the spot is called “*dzi-phu-lang-jey*,” meaning “the mark of the first *dzi* offering.”

The patterns on the *dzi* help determine how precious or auspicious the beads are. No two *dzi* beads are alike: they come with various patterns in the forms of circles, ovals, zig zags, dots, lines, etc. The number of “eyes” (circular dots) on a bead is considered particularly significant. The nine-eyed *dzi* is the most rare and valuable, and the most eyes on a single bead is twelve.

For Tibetan families, *dzi* are treasures to be revered and kept in the family. Families pass their *dzi* from one generation to the next, usually through the maternal line. In Tibet, particularly in the Kham region, there is a deep affinity for *dzi*, and people wear them both as jewelry and as protective amulets with deep ties to their own familial heritage.

Today, only a third of the *dzi* that once existed still remain in Tibet. Almost 70 percent of the *dzi* once in the hands of Tibetans was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Some were confiscated while others were ground up and sent to China for use in Chinese medicine. More recently, wealthy Chinese have begun believing in the spiritual properties of *dzi*, calling them “*tianzhu*” or “heavenly beads.” They are now extremely rare, and some authentic *dzi* are sold for the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of U.S. dollars while fake *dzi*, mass-produced in factories, have flooded the market.

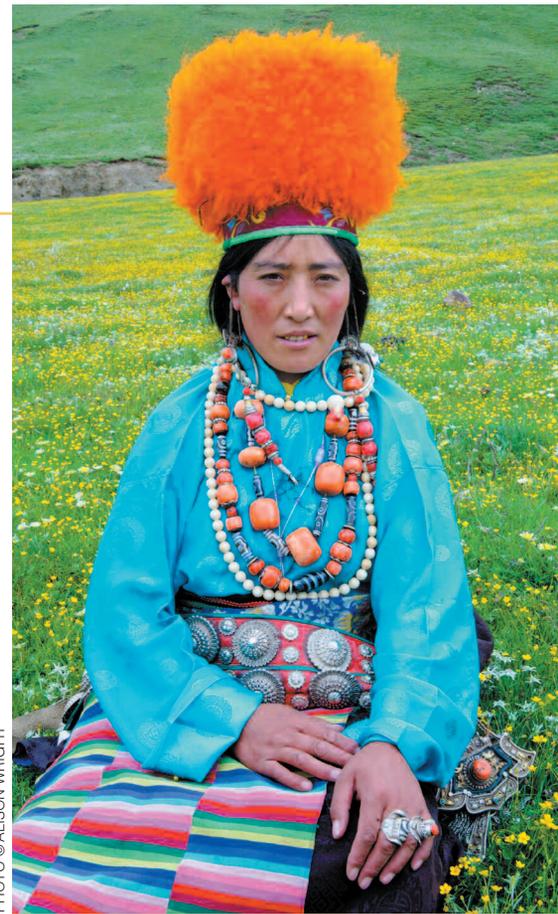


PHOTO © ALISON WRIGHT

This woman in Lihang is wearing her family jewelry of coral, *dzi* (between the coral) and ivory beads.

The familiar patterns of the *dzi* live on in other ways, however. *Rangzen* (“freedom”) bracelets, worn by supporters of Tibet around the world, were first woven by political prisoners from parts of their prison uniforms. The black and white pattern has nine eyes and a triangle peak, intended to bring spiritual protection to the wearer and to symbolize the enduring struggle against oppression. The same pattern is used for the slingshots wielded by shepherds and nomads to protect their flocks, and in the Kham region, bridle accessories for horses bear a similar nine-eye pattern.

Inside the sacred Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, Jowo Rinpoche—one of the holiest and most revered Buddha statues in Tibet—is adorned with many precious jewels including many *dzi*. The beads appear as spiritual offerings on other Buddha statues throughout Tibet.

Member Engagement

Did You Know? *Facts About Tibet*

- Historical Tibet is the size of all of Western Europe. The Tibetan Autonomous Region is only half this size.
- The world's largest and highest plateau, Tibet is referred to as the "world's third pole" because it contains the biggest ice fields outside of the Arctic and Antarctic.
- An estimated two million nomadic herders in Tibet have been "resetled" by China.
- Prior to 1949, Tibet had its own currency, postage system, and national flag, along with its own distinct culture and religion.

Thank You *Chinese Language Newsletter*

Last spring, we received notification that deep government budget cuts had resulted in a grant we depend on to sustain our Chinese outreach activities being slashed by \$25,000. This severely threatened our ability to continue distributing our Chinese-language newsletter, *Liaowang Xizang* (Tibet Monitor).

But thanks to the generosity of ICT members who stepped in to save the newsletter, we have been able to continue publishing and distributing 3,500 copies per issue to people inside Tibet and China and around the world. Chinese language news can always be accessed via the electronic version at www.liaowangxizang.net

Ideas, Advocacy & Dialogue On the ICT Blog *Read more at weblog.savetibet.org*

A Bombing, A Self-Immolation, and a Double Standard

By John N., July 24, 2013

A Chinese petitioner who commits an act of self-harm elicits some sympathy in the Chinese press, while a Tibetan monk who self-immolates is met with utter silence.

Writing and Its Consequences

by Chris Ratke, June 3, 2013

Is it possible for a Tibetan living in the People's Republic of China (PRC) to maintain his freedom after writing on aspects of Tibetan life in the PRC which challenge the accepted Party version of events?

Dalai Lama, Beijing, and Tibetan Self-Immolation

by Chris Ratke, May 21, 2013

Rather than holding Party leaders in China accountable for the conditions that have led to the self-immolations, a frequent line of inquiry seeks to reconcile popular notions about the Dalai Lama with his perceived inaction regarding the self-immolations.

Sikyong Lobsang Sangay's DC Visit and the Challenges Ahead

by Todd Stein, May 20, 2013

How will Sikyong Lobsang Sangay execute the next step in advancing the Tibet issue within the current political circumstances—including the political transitions in Beijing and Dharamsala, the self-immolations in Tibet, Beijing's new global and regional assertiveness, and the reactions to the popular revolutions in the Middle East?

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International Campaign for Tibet



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Share us with your contacts and join in the Tibet conversation.
The more people who care about Tibet, the bigger the impact we can have!

Urge U.S. Ambassador Locke to Ask China to Investigate Shootings of Tibetan Worshippers

On July 6, two Tibetans were shot in the head and several others were seriously injured after Chinese police opened fire on a crowd gathered peacefully to celebrate the 78th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Nyitso, Tawu, eastern Tibet.

Graphic images received by ICT show a monk with a severe head wound, identified as Tashi Sonam from Nyitso monastery, after the shooting in Tawu. Another monk who was shot in the head has been identified as Ugyen Tashi and is said to be in critical condition in a hospital in Chengdu, the provincial capital. Several other Tibetans were seriously injured and are being treated in Dartsedo.

ICT has found no justification for the shooting of unarmed Tibetans, much less for the excessive numbers of armed police at a religious function. At a recent high-level dialogue in Washington, Chinese officials said that their government upholds the rule of law, and U.S. officials expressed concerns about human rights abuses, including in Tibetan areas. In addition, U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke recently visited Lhasa. Therefore, we are requesting that Ambassador Locke ask the Chinese government to hold an objective inquiry into this incident that endangered unarmed civilians and to prosecute the perpetrators.

Please take a moment to clip this petition, sign it and send it back to us in the attached envelope so that we can deliver your message along with the others. Thank you.



PLEASE CLIP HERE:

Ambassador Locke:

Thank you for visiting Lhasa in June as an expression of interest and concern for the situation facing Tibetans in the People's Republic of China. As you may know, denial of basic religious freedom is a major grievance of Tibetans. In one grave, recent example, a group of Tibetan monks and laypeople were targeted when they gathered on a hillside to celebrate the Dalai Lama's birthday. Chinese authorities sent in a large security force, which ended up shooting at the crowd, resulting in two Tibetans with severe head injuries and many others with serious wounds. Therefore, I urge you to:

- Ask the Chinese government to undertake an objective investigation into the shooting of unarmed Tibetans participating in a religious ceremony to venerate the Dalai Lama, and to bring the perpetrators to justice;
- Ask the Chinese leaders to respect the rights of Tibetans to practice their religion without interference by security forces; and
- Keep Tibet at the forefront of your engagement with the Chinese government to support a People's Republic of China rooted in respect for human dignity and universal rights.

Respectfully,

(Sign here) _____

Name _____ State _____



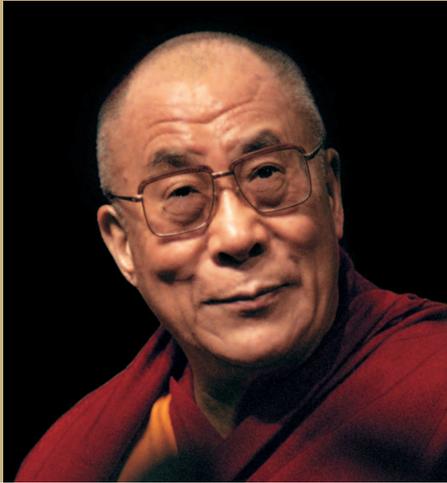
His Holiness the Dalai Lama Will Be in North America This Fall

For the full schedule, please visit www.dalailama.com

Atlanta
October 8–10

Mexico
October 12–16

New York City
October 18–20



Small Gifts, Big Difference

The *Friends of Tibet* is a small inner circle of supporters of the International Campaign for Tibet who make an automatic gift each month. The steady, reliable support of our *Friends of Tibet* gives us the ability to act (and not just react) in defense of the people and culture of Tibet. Take the next step in your support by joining the *Friends of Tibet* today. Contact Lizzy Ludwig at lizzy.ludwig@savetibet.org or 202-580-6767.



There was a strong paramilitary presence at a ceremony unveiling a vast thangka (religious picture) of the Buddha at Drepung monastery, Lhasa, on August 6, 2013 to herald the beginning of the annual Shoton ('Yogurt') Festival.