

# Tibet Society Newsletter

October 2018

*"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito"*  
His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

*News of the Tibet Society, what's happening in Tibet and the Tibetan Exile world, and news of His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

## Tibet Today, Xinjiang Tomorrow...?



The Uyghurs of north western China are much in the news with the BBC reporting on their mass internment camps and the repression of religion – but what is the connection with Tibet? The Uyghurs live in Xinjiang, or East Turkestan as it was called before China re-named it Xinjiang, and are ethnically Muslim. East Turkestan is Tibet's neighbour to the north and, like Tibet, it comes under Chinese rule and is suffering human rights abuses and systematic erosion of the freedom to follow the religion of their choice.

Chen Quanguo is the Communist Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Chen was formerly party secretary – or top official – of the Tibet Autonomous Region and made his name for implementing a new security policy for Tibet and

developing the police presence there. Now he has moved on to Xinjiang and is the person who has overseen the construction of the network of extrajudicial internment camps that are hitting our news headlines. He has also stepped up surveillance of residents by using advanced technology and increased police presence, and has introduced new regulations to curtail religious and cultural expression.

His appointment in Xinjiang has prompted comments in the world's media, with the *Economist* describing "Apartheid with Chinese characteristics – China has turned Xinjiang into a police state like no other" and saying that "Totalitarian determination and modern technology have produced a massive abuse of human rights".

The Middle Eastern *Albawaba* writes under the headline "The Man Who Silenced Tibet Is Perfecting a Police State in Xinjiang, China".

## Humanity's Heritage

Millions of people around the world enjoy great benefit from the teachings of [His Holiness the Dalai Lama](#). We can go and see him and listen to him in person—a privilege denied to most people in Tibet who are increasingly prevented from having access to Tibetan Buddhist teachings.



Tibet Society regards these teachings as part of humanity's heritage and feel we have a moral responsibility to do all we can to save it for Tibetans. Much of our Society work is done behind the scenes—we lobby parliamentarians, set up meetings, put people in touch with each other and we share information to spread the word about what is happening and why it is important.

This may not sound so glamorous but it's what makes our campaigns work and we believe we can play a part in enabling everybody—whether inside or outside Tibet—to have access to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teachings and to ensure the survival of Tibet's culture.

We desperately need your support. [Membership](#) costs £3 a month. It's not just about the money, vital though it is. By becoming a member, you are supporting the human rights of Tibetans, ensuring that their voices are heard at all levels of society.

## Spreading the Word

The Society is delighted to see the *Sunday Times* publish an in-depth [article](#) drawing attention to the way that Chinese President Xi Jinping is systematically eroding the Tibetan culture and way of life.

Our work in the Society, whether lobbying members of parliament or staging a protest, is made all the more effective when Tibet is featured in the media and people can learn from an independent source just what is going on inside Tibet.

The article looks at Rongwo

monastery in Qinghai—or to use its Tibetan name, Amdo—and how, after 70 years of Chinese Rule, while the monastery still looks as it should with its gilded roofs and mandalas, it is forbidden to even use the name Rongwo or you risk being detained by the police. Pictures of the Dalai Lama are hidden away and monks receive compulsory "patriotic education".

The article explores the restrictions on freedom and the surveillance that people are subjected to on a daily basis.

# Tibet News



## Healing the Rift

Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje and Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje, who



both hold claims to the head of the Karma Kagyu lineage, met for the first time earlier this month.

During their meeting in France they issued a [joint statement](#) saying they discussed ways “to heal the divisions that have unfortunately developed within our precious Karma Kagyu lineage in recent years. We view it as our duty and responsibility to do whatever we can to bring the lineage together.”

## Prayer Festival Banned

The Dechen Shingdrup festival, the major annual Tibetan prayer festival at Larung Gar in Tibet, the world’s largest Buddhist institute, has been banned by the Chinese authorities for the third year running. Larung Gar was in the past home to up to 40,000 monks and nuns but much of it has been demolished by the Chinese authorities. The demolition of Larung Gar has sent shock waves throughout the international community, and Tiubet support groups, including Tibet Society, have [actively campaigned](#) to halt the demolitions.

## Activists Detained

Around 35 Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) activists were detained by Delhi police after storming the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi. The protest was timed to coincide with the bilateral security meeting between China and India which took place at the Embassy, with China’s Minister of Public Security, Zhao Kezai, leading the Chinese delegation, which included Ministers from the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

## No Compensation

A protest took place outside the government offices in Nyipa township in Chone county on 11 October, with Tibetans protesting about the non-payment of compensation which they were promised in 2015 when their livestock was culled by order of the

government. Livestock farming was their main source of income, but many families are now left without their animals or with greatly reduced stock.

## Protest in Brussels

Protestors from Chinese controlled Tibet, southern Mongolia and Xinjiang gathered outside the 12th Asian and European Meeting (ASM) to protest against Beijing’s repressive control in their countries. The ASM was between China and EU trade delegations and took place in Brussels on 18-19 October. The rally was jointly organised by UNPO (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation), ICT (International Campaign for Tibet), the World Uyghur Congress and the Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Centre.

## Protestors Beaten

A group of Tibetans were attacked and beaten by Chinese workers in Choeje village in Qinghai province during a protest about land. The Chinese workers were damaging the Tibetans’ nearby grazing areas by driving heavy vehicles and machinery over the land and then refusing to pay compensation. *Radio Free Asia* reported the attack, and that some Chinese workers had been taken into custody.

## Railway to Tibet

Chinese President Xi Jinping has announced a new \$36 billion (£27.5 billion) railway to link the capital of Tibet, Lhasa, with Chengdu in Sichuan and cut the journey time by over 30 hours. The 1,700-kilometers long railway will rise to 5,072 meters above sea level. Xi is quoted as saying the project is of “profound significance for the country’s long-term stability and the development of Tibet”. Tibet support groups have consistently expressed concern over Chinese development projects in Tibet.

## Two Landslides

Two major landslides in Tibet have sparked demands for an investigation into the excessive mining and dam construction developments by the Chinese authorities in Tibet which are seen to be causing environmental disasters.

The Yarlung Tsangpo river in Menling County in U-Tsang was blocked by a landslide with around 6,000 people evacuated as the water level rose in the

lake by 40 metres. No deaths or injuries have been reported. While in Kham, the Dri Chu river is similarly blocked, again, no reports of the casualties and an emergency rescue plan is reported to be in place. Bogong and Ningba villages have been evacuated and Boluo Township primary school closed with the pupils and teachers transferred elsewhere. Dri chu is the longest river in Asia, reaching the Pacific Ocean near Shanghai.

## Universal Periodic Review

United Nations member states have met for the pre-session on China for the forthcoming [Universal Periodic Review](#) (UPR). Speakers from the Tibet Advocacy Coalition, World Uyghur Congress, World Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, Hong Kong UPR Coalition, PEN International and Scholars at Risk spoke on the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet and China’s unfulfilled promises made in the second cycle of their UPR. Tibet Society will be attending China’s UPR at the beginning of November.

## CECC Report

The Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) has released its [Annual Report 2018](#) which says that United States lawmakers and the Trump Administration should push for reciprocal access to Tibet and renewed dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama’s representatives. The report documents the deteriorating human rights situation inside China—including in Tibet, which the report shows was an historically independent nation that China annexed in the 1950s.

## Former Prisoner Dies

Shonu Palden, 41, a former political prisoner in Tibet, has died after prolonged treatment for torture-related injuries he suffered while in prison. from multiple health complications resulting from torture while held in prison. Mr Palden was arrested in June 2012 for spearheading protest during the 2008 uprising. He was subsequently held incommunicado detention and tortured, before being released on 24 July 2014 in very poor health prior to completion of his prison term.



# Tibet Society News

## The Society Mourns a Friend



Tributes are pouring in for [Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari](#) who died in San Francisco aged 69 on 29 October. He was known as a skilled diplomat in the international arena, and an impassioned advocate for the Tibetan people, universal human

rights and global democratic reform.

Mr Gyari was appointed as the Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Washington DC in 1990 while also serving as President of the International Campaign for Tibet. He gained access to the highest levels of leadership in the United States government and was able to successfully institutionalise the Tibetan issue within the government.

In 1998, Mr Gyari led the dialogue process with the government of the People's Republic of China, conducting nine rounds of high-level talks and working tirelessly to sustain the process, expand the channels of communication, build trust with the Chinese leadership and maintain a broad international interest in the dialogue process.

He was trusted, consulted and admired by many world leaders and members of the diplomatic corps. Upon his retirement in 2012, the US Senate passed a resolution that honoured his service and commended his achievements.

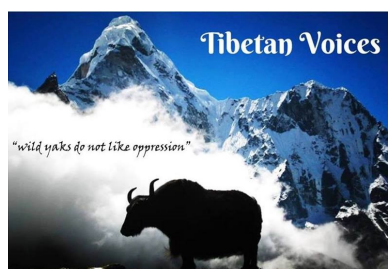
Before his appointment in the United States, Mr Gyari served in the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and was one of the youngest people to be appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Kashag (Cabinet) of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Mr Gyari was born in 1949 into an influential family in Nyarong, eastern Tibet and recognised as a reincarnation of Khenchen Jampal Dewé Nyima from Lumorap Monastery. His early education was in the traditional Tibetan monastic system. He became a journalist and was one of the four founding members of the Tibetan Youth Congress. He was active in Tibetan politics, the establishment of democracy in the exile government, the promotion of Tibetan culture and Buddhism as well as an academic.

He was respected and loved throughout the Tibetan community and will be greatly missed.

Mr Gyari is survived by his wife, Dawa Chokyi, their six children (Tenzing Dechen, Tenzing Choyang, Norbu Wangmo, Tashi Chodon, Tulku Penam and Tenzing Tsering), five grandchildren, as well as four brothers and three sisters.

## Poetry, Resistance and Human Rights



Tibet Society was delighted to be involved in a poetry reading by Tibetan poet and activist [Tenzin Tsundue](#) who visited Britain for a speaking tour around

the country at the invitation of Free Tibet and Tibet Watch. The event, *Poetry, Resistance and Human Rights* was held at the Brighthelm Centre in Brighton on 8 October. Tsundue's fellow speakers were Wangden Kyab, Research Manager at Tibet Watch and John Jones, Campaigns and Advocacy Manager at Free Tibet. The theme of the event was "Remembering the Tibetan Uprising of 2008 and bringing you poetry from inside Tibet and from Tibetans in exile".

Tibet Society President Norman Baker spoke at the event to welcome Tsundue on behalf of the Tibet Society. Tsundue read from his book *Kora* which depicts the life of Tibetans living in exile. *Kora* is available from Tibet Society office, contact Gloria Montgomery.



As well as writing *Kora* and his campaigning activities, Tsundue is known for his stunt in 2001 flying a 30-foot banner with the inscription "Free Tibet" from the Hotel Oberoi in Mumbai as the Chinese Premier was passing.

*I am Tibetan.  
But I am not from Tibet.  
Never been there.  
Yet I dream  
of dying there*

Excerpt from *My Tibetanness* by Tenzin Tsundue

***The Tibet Society, the world's first Tibet support group, was founded in 1959. Funded by its members, it has been working for over 50 years to seek justice for Tibet through parliamentary lobbying, campaigns and actions.***

***Published by the Tibet Society  
2 Baltic Place, London N1 5AQ  
Tel 020 7923 0021 / [info@tibetsociety.com](mailto:info@tibetsociety.com)  
[@tibetsociety](mailto:@tibetsociety) / [www.facebook.com/TibetSociety](http://www.facebook.com/TibetSociety)***

***Patron: His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
President: Norman Baker  
Chairman: Riki Hyde Chambers***

***Tibet Society Contact: Gloria Montgomery  
Head of Advocacy and Campaigns  
Email: [advocacy@tibetsociety.com](mailto:advocacy@tibetsociety.com)  
tel: 020 7923 0021 / or 07377 890148***

***Newsletter Editor: Jenny James***