



བོད་ཀྱི་དོན་གཙོན་ཁང་།

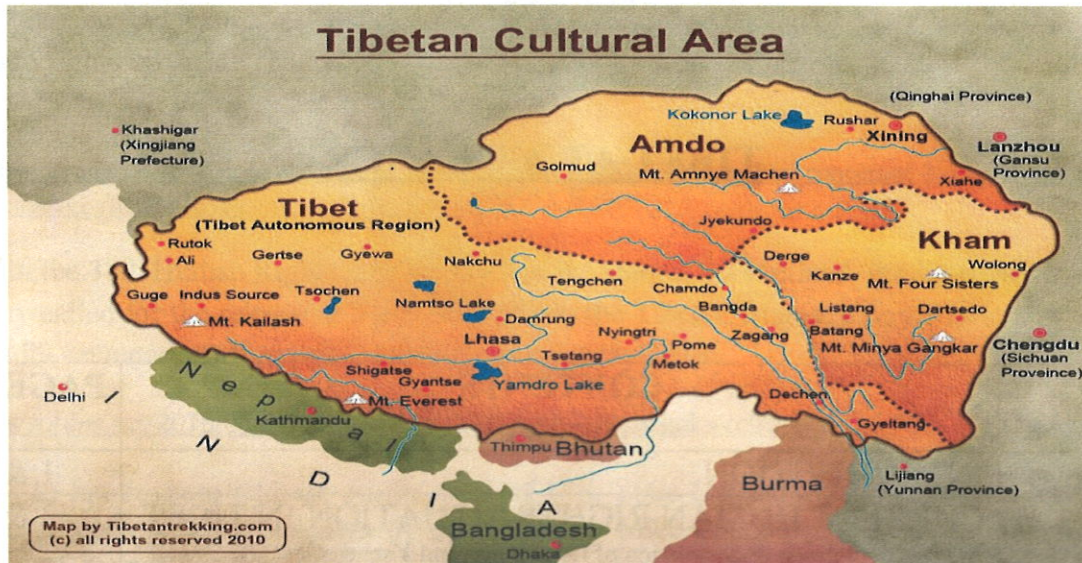
THE TIBET BUREAU

OFFICE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF H. H. THE DALAI LAMA  
PLACE DE LA NAVIGATION 10, 1201 GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

## TIBET AT A GLANCE

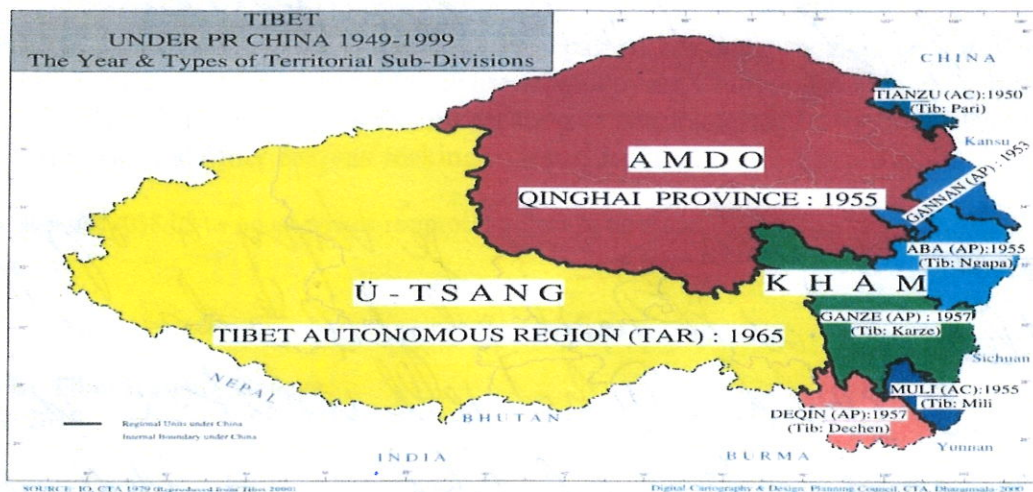
S.NO	CONTENTS	PAGE NO
1	INTRODUCTION	1 & 2
2	CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN TIBET A-Mass demolition & destruction of Larung Gar and Yachen Gar B- Criminalization of Tibetan language Rights Advocate	3 & 4
3	MIDDLE WAY POLICY: A FRAMEWORK FOR RESOLVING THE ISSUE OF TIBET	5
4	GLOBAL TIBET MOVEMENT: STATEMENTS AND CONCERN ON TIBET RAISED -2018	6 & 7

## INTRODUCTION



Tibet refers to whole of the traditional Tibetan provinces known as Cholka-Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo). Today, under the Chinese rule, Tibet is divided and ruled into the following administrative units:

- Tibet Autonomous Region,
- Qinghai Province,
- Tianzu Tibetan Autonomous County and Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province,
- Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Mili Tibetan Autonomous County in Sichuan Province,
- Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province.



At the time of invasion by troops of the People's Liberation Army of China in 1949, Tibet was an independent state in fact and at law.

When the Chinese Communist armies started entering Tibet in 1949, the Tibetan Government sent an urgent appeal to the United Nations to help Tibet resist the aggression. The General Assembly was advised by Britain and India not to take any action for the time being in order not to provoke a full-scale attack by China. But, to most countries, China's attack on Tibet was aggression.

### **The National Uprising**



Tibetans gather during the uprising against Chinese rule 10 March 1959 in front of the Potala Palace Getty

When people are oppressed, they are likely to rise up against the oppressor. There was never a popular uprising in Tibet until the 1950s. The Tibetan resistance movement against the Chinese started right from the time of the invasion. By 1956 open fighting broke out in the Eastern Tibetan provinces of Kham and Amdo. Three years later the uprising took on national proportions, leading to the massive demonstrations in Lhasa in March 1959. Since then, Tibetan uprisings and demonstrations have continued.

Today, it is hard to come across a Tibetan family that has not had at least one member imprisoned or killed by the Chinese regime. According to Jigme Ngapo, son of Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, former Vice-Chairman of National People's Congress, "after the suppressions of 1959 and 1969, almost every family in Tibet has been affected in some way".

The unabated atrocities by the Chinese authorities in Tibet have left deep wounds in the minds of Tibetan.

## Current Human Rights Situation in Tibet

Tibet is virtually closed and foreign journalists are barred from visiting restive regions. All communication channels, including Internet and phone lines are inaccessible or being strictly monitored, particularly in regions where protests have occurred. Tibetan writers, bloggers, singers, teachers, documentary filmmakers and environmentalists are especially targeted since the 2008 Beijing Olympics Games, a year during which over 342 protests took place across the Tibetan plateau.<sup>1</sup> Any independent information or expression other than the Chinese government viewpoints are restricted and considered “subversive”.

Political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination and economic marginalization have become common attributes of life in Tibet.

Tibetans' petitions, street protests, peaceful assembly and demonstrations against the denial of their fundamental rights bring more arrests, prison sentences and torture in Tibet. The space for Tibetans to speak their mind is shrinking more than ever. Due to which, Tibetans of all ages and walks of life across the Tibetan plateau have resorted to the tragic acts of self-immolation protests in the last few years.

Since 2009, 152 Tibetans; monks and nuns, father and mothers, students and writers, nomads and farmers, Tibetans from all walks of life have self-immolated in protest against Chinese repressive rule in Tibet.<sup>2</sup> 130 of them died on the spot or shortly thereafter. The whereabouts and conditions of the surviving self-immolators remain unknown. All the self-immolators have called for “freedom in Tibet” and the “return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet”. However, instead of addressing the underlying grievances of Tibetans, the Chinese authorities have responded to these self-immolations with further repressive policies by heightening restrictions in Tibetan areas and dismissing the self-immolations as an “act of terrorism” and criminalize partners, friends and relatives of the self-immolators, as a preventative measure. Chinese authorities view these expressions of protest as criminal activities though the self-immolation protests are directly related to “Chinese efforts to control religious practice and culture of Tibetans”<sup>3</sup>.

Chinese state media has reported growth of Tibet’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 10% in 2017. However, it fails to mention that during the same year Freedom house report “Freedom in The World 2017” ranked Tibet as the second least free county after Syria. Similarly, the Washington Post reported that Tibet is harder to get access to than North Korea.

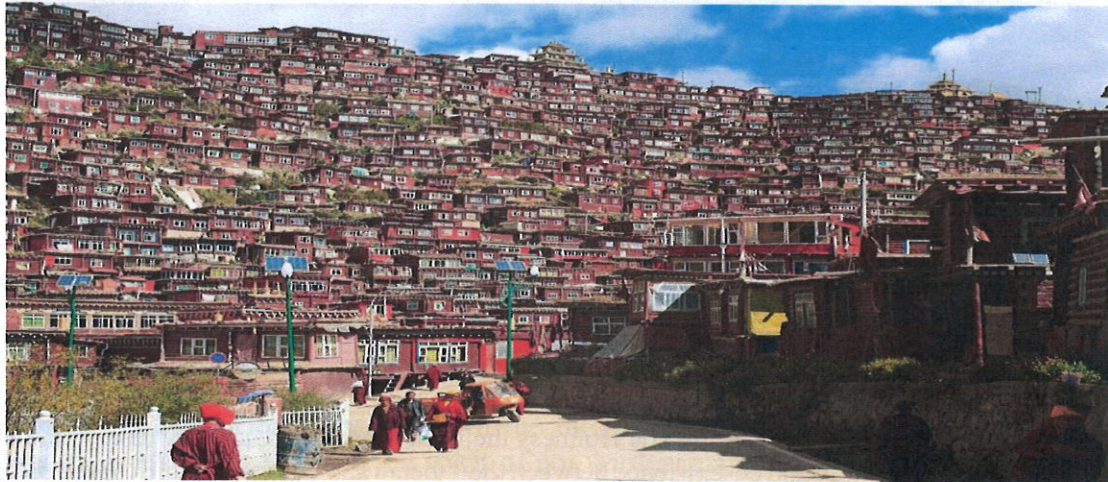
---

<sup>1</sup> *Tibetan's FIERCE Objection to Unjust, Brutal & Repressive Rule by China (Ver. II)*. (2012). Retrieved 27 January 2015, from [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xK9Y632trIA&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xK9Y632trIA&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

<sup>2</sup> As on 05 October 2018.

<sup>3</sup> The United States' Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) annual report released in April 2014

### **Mass demolition and destruction of Larung Gar and Yachen Gar--**



In the name of “development”, the Chinese authorities have destroyed Larung Gar and Yachen Gar, two of the major Tibetan Buddhist learning centers. Radio Free Asia has reported that by the end of May 2017, Chinese authorities had evicted 4828 monks and nuns and demolished 4725 houses since July 2016. Monks and nuns expelled were forced to sign document vowing never to return to the institute. Saddened by the demolition of the institution, Tsering Dolma, Semgha and Rigzin Dolma, three nuns in 20’s, committed suicide and left notes referring to the demolitions and government “harassment”.

### **Criminalization of Tibetan language Rights Advocate-**



Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan shopkeeper from Kyekundo county in Kham Yulshul (Chinese: Yushu Prefecture) was detained on 27 January, 2016 for publicly advocating Tibetan language education in schools in Tibetan populated areas. Two months before his detention, Tashi Wangchuk appeared in a New York Times documentary in which he can be seen advocating for the rights of Tibetans to learn and study in their mother tongue. In may this year, Yushu Intermediate People’s Court sentenced him to five years for “inciting separatism”.

## MIDDLE WAY POLICY: a framework for resolving the issue of Tibet



The Middle-Way Approach is proposed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to peacefully resolve the issue of Tibet and to bring about stability and co-existence between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples based on equality and mutual co-operation. It is also a policy adopted democratically by the Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan people through a series of discussions held over a long time.

**Meaning of the Middle-Way Approach:** The Tibetan people do not accept the present status of Tibet under the Peoples Republic of China. At the same time, they do not seek independence for Tibet, which is a historical fact. Treading a middle path in between these two lies the policy and means to achieve a genuine autonomy for all Tibetans living in the three traditional provinces of Tibet within the framework of the Peoples Republic of China.

Since the renewal of direct contact with the Central Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2002, extensive discussions have been held between the envoys of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and representatives of the Central Government. In these discussions envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama have put forth clearly the aspirations of Tibetans. The essence of the Middle Way Approach is to secure genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC. This is of mutual benefit and based on the long-term interest of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

### **Subject Matters of Self-government**

- 1- Language
- 2- Culture
- 3- Religion
- 4- Education
- 5- Environment Protection
- 6- Utilisation of Natural Resources
- 7- Economic Development and Trade
- 8- Public health
- 9- Public Security
- 10- Regulation on population migration
- 11- Cultural, educational and religious exchanges with other countries

More information available at

<http://tibet.net/important-issues/sino-tibetan-dialogue/memorandum-on-genuine-autonomy-for-the-tibetan-people/>

## GLOBAL TIBET MOVEMENT

In the official Chinese propaganda, Tibet supporters are routinely referred to and labeled as “hostile western forces” and the Tibet movement as whole is labeled as “splittist movement” backed by “Western imperialist forces”. However, the reality is that the supporters of Tibet are far from hostile to Beijing. The members of Tibet Support Groups belong to a wide diversity of countries, cultural background and ideological denominations. As a matter of fact, Tibet today also enjoys support from a substantial number of Chinese who contribute meaningfully in supporting the cause of Tibet. The common thread that unites these supporters is the common belief that freedom, justice and human dignity are the birthright of every human being.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said, “it is natural for human beings to feel a sense of compassion and solidarity if they see their fellow human beings suffer”. The Tibet Support Group members have taken upon themselves the universal responsibility of working for the dignity and freedom of Tibetan people.

The interaction of the Tibetan people with the international Tibet supporters over the years has reinforced their Buddhist belief in the spirit of non-violence and forgiveness, even towards China. It has rejuvenated the sense of optimism for the future of Tibet and the world at large. Just as truth and justice must triumph at the end, Tibetan people believe that Tibet will regain its lost freedom sooner rather than later. When such a time comes, Tibetans will remember the consistent and committed contribution of Tibet supporters to the cause of Tibet.

## INTERNATIONAL STATEMENTS AND CONCERNS ON TIBET - 2018

**JANUARY**-European Parliament adopts resolution calling for Immediate and unconditional Release of Tashi Wangchuk and Tibetan monk Choekyi.

<http://tibet.net/2018/01/european-parliament-adopts-resolution-calling-for-immediate-and-unconditional-release-of-tashi-wangchuk-and-tibetan-monk-choekyi/>

**FEBRUARY** - A group of UN human rights experts expressed concern over labeling “inciting separatism” against Tashi Wangchuk. The experts called on China to “drop” all the allegations against him. The experts condemned the Chinese authorities for detaining him and “criminalization of his freedom of expression as well as his rights to stand and speak up for what he perceives as human rights violations in his region and country”.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22683>

**MARCH** - On the 37<sup>th</sup> UN Human Rights Council, the United States, Canada and the European Union and number of European governments expressed strong concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet.

<http://tibet.net/2018/03/un-member-states-raise-tibet-in-the-37th-un-human-rights-council-session/>

**APRIL**- The US State Department issued a statement to commemorate the 29th birthday of Tibet’s missing Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

<http://tibet.net/2018/04/us-state-department-calls-for-the-immediate-release-of-tibets-panchen-lama/>

**MAY** - Pier Antonio Panzeri, Chair of European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights issued statement that expresses concern over China's harsh sentencing of Tashi Wangchuk, Tibetan Language rights advocate. The chair called on China to drop the charges against him and release him.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20180522IPR04033/droi-chair-concerned-by-harsh-sentencing-of-tibetan-language-rights-activist>

**JUNE**-In the 38th Human Rights Council session in Geneva, Switzerland, the European Union and Germany called for the release of Tashi Wangchuk, the Tibetan language rights advocate who was wrongfully sentenced to five years imprisonment in May 2018.

<http://www.tibet.net/2018/06/eu-germany-calls-for-tashi-wangchuks-release-at-the-38th-hrc-session/>

**JULY** - In his keynote address on the final of U.S. State Department's Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom, Vice President of United States Mike Pence pressed being honored by the presence of former Tibetan political prisoner and activist Golog Jigme. In recognising Golog Jigme's courage and stand for liberty Vice President Pence said that for nearly 70 years, the Tibetan people have been brutally repressed by the Chinese government and Golog Jigme's escape from Tibet and into exile meant that the Tibetan people's "fight to practice their religion and protect their culture goes on."

<http://tibet.net/2018/07/tibetan-peoples-fight-to-practice-their-religion-and-culture-continues-u-s-vice-president-mike-pence/>

**AUGUST** - A group of UN experts sought additional information and comment from the Chinese government on its "two-track" passport issuing system that systematically discriminates and obstructs Tibetans from acquiring passports.

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Racism/SR/Communications/OL-CHN-14-2018.pdf>

**SEPTEMBER** -The US House of Representatives passed the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, a bipartisan bill that promotes access to Tibetan areas by denying Chinese government officials access to the United States if they are responsible for creating or administering restrictions on United States officials, journalists and other citizens seeking to travel to Tibet.

<http://www.tibet.net/2018/09/us-house-passes-reciprocal-access-to-tibet-act/>

**Prepared by Tibet Bureau, Geneva  
05.October 2018**