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# Celebration of 30<sup>th</sup> Re-founding Anniversary of TWA

## ***Dharamsala September 10<sup>th</sup> 2014:***

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, Central Tibetan Women's Association and its 56 regional chapters across the four continents celebrated its 30th re-founding anniversary. The Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) was initially founded in Lhasa on March 12<sup>th</sup> 1959, when Tibetan women from all three provinces of Tibet stood united for the first time in Tibetan history and peacefully protested against the brutal occupation of China. After coming to exile, in the 1960s, Tibetan women in Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Dharamsala and Rajpur continued the struggle by working towards the preservation of Tibetan culture and tradition.





Under the guidance of His Holiness the XIV<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Tibetan Women's Association was re-established on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1984. The association began with 800 Tibetan women as member and 12 regional chapters in India. However, today, the TWA has expanded with 56 regional chapters in four continents (Asia, America, Europe and Australia) with 17,000 Tibetan women as members in exile.



This year, Central TWA celebrated its 30th re-founding anniversary at Lhagyari where Ms. Rinchen Khando Choegyal, the former cabinet minister and the founding president of TWA was invited as the chief guest. Other guests of honors were former executive members of TWA and representatives of nongovernmental organizations based in

Dharamsala. TWA's President Ms. Tashi Dolma inaugurated the function by reading the statement which included an appeal to the world leaders and human rights defenders across the world. The appeal states:

- Middle Way Policy adopted by Central Tibetan Administration in exile is an approach to resolve the issue of Tibet, and to bring about stability and coexistence between the Tibetan and Chinese people based on equality and mutual benefit. Therefore, we strongly appeal International committees and Tibet support groups to urge and pressure China to restart the dialogue and forgo all the misconception it held against the policy.
- Tibetans inside Tibet are suffering under the Chinese hard line policies over the last 60 years; this callous policy aims to destroy the root of Tibetan ethnicity and we therefore request the International committee to send North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to Tibet.
- Tibetans' struggle has been the most peaceful resistance, yet China holds discriminative and ruthless policies against Tibetans and connects our struggle to that of terrorism and splitists. China has accused His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, the world's renowned ambassador of peace and non-violence as splitist and exile Tibetans' democratically elected political leader, Dr. Lobsang Sangay as a terrorist. China will solely be responsible for aftermath of such bigotry and injustice.
- The unbearable hard line policies and injustice have compelled many Tibetans to self-immolate. However, the Chinese government has never communicated to the Chinese people about the reality behind self-immolations; therefore it is high time for international community and people to unite and stand for Tibet.

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- We urge United Nation's Committee on Enforced Disappearance to pressure China to release His Holiness the Xlth Panchen Lama, Tulku Tenzin Delek and all the political prisoners. We remain very much concerned about their health condition and wellbeing.
- We appeal for your support to pressure China for an immediate release of all the arrested civilians of Denma Shugpa Village in Kardze, including all the senior and junior leaders of the village.



The chief guest of the function Ms. Rinchen Khando while addressing the gathering stressed that “We, Tibetans should pay attention to the cause and political developments happening around the world. And we as Tibetan women should look into the condition of our own women in our community and find out where we are lacking and make it right accordingly to our customs and tradition”.



The event ended with song and dance performances by the artists from Thangtong Lukar- a Tibetan performing arts institute in Dharamsala.



TWA's  
Political  
activity  
report

# An appeal to PM Modi to bring forward Tibet's issue during Chinese President's visit.



***Dharamsala:  
September 16<sup>th</sup> 2014***

On the eve of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to India and a day ahead of India's Prime Minister Mr. Modi's 64<sup>th</sup> birthday, Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) released a press statement wishing Mr. Modi a very happy and prosperous birthday and also urging him to raise the crucial issue of Tibet with Chinese President Xi-Jingping.

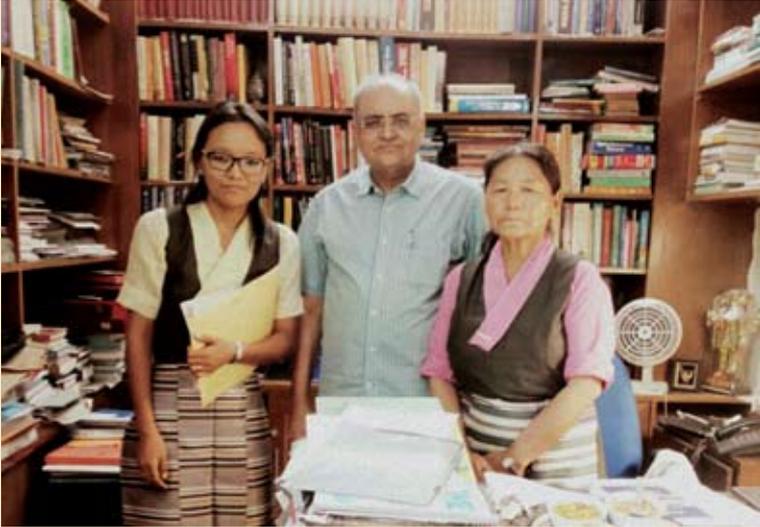
TWA calls on Xi Jinping to face the Tibet Challenge by holding talks with the Tibetan leadership in exile, particularly with the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

As part of the campaign, TWA re-released a campaign video titled #Xi Face the Tibet Challenge. That video was initially launched on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2013, the day Xi Jinping formally assumed the Chinese presidency. Over 200 Tibetan women representing 33 regional chapters of TWA staged the campaign at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi with three key slogans: Xi Jinping, end the repression in Tibet, Xi Jinping, resolve the Tibet crisis now, and Xi Jinping, face the Tibet Challenge.

A week prior to Xi Jinping's India visit, TWA has submitted appeal letters to the Indian Prime Minister and the Indian Minister for External Affairs urging them to raise Tibet.



TWA's President Tashi Dolma and General Secretary Nyima Lhamo were engaged in a two-day direct lobby campaign with the Indian leaders. They met with Kiren Rijiju, the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs of India and Balbir Punj, a senior journalist, columnist and member of the Rajya Sabha representing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).



TWA's President said, over the last 18 months, we didn't see the Chinese Government under Xi's leadership address the legitimate grievances of Tibetan people inside Tibet even when the situation has worsen. Therefore, TWA demands him to review China's failed policies on Tibet and end the crisis inside Tibet.

# TWA at KIOS International Seminar, Helsinki

***Helsinki***  
***September 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> 2014***

Tibetan Women's Association's Vice President Ms. Samten Chodon attended the KIOS International Seminar on HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ERA OF POST-2015 AGENDA at Helsinki, Finland from 23-25 September, 2014.



The seminar discussed on the future roles of civil society in promoting justice and accountability. The seminar was attended by 58 human rights defenders, civil society activists and development experts from 12 different nations.

**VOICE**

The two-day international seminar focused on few vital questions: What is the role of civil society in promoting justice and accountability in the Post-2015 era? What is the role of human rights in the Post-2015 agenda? What are the future roles of civil society in realizing the Post-2015 development goals?





On September 25<sup>th</sup>, all the participants were invited by KEPA office to have an interaction session on the works that the participants' organizations and civil right groups carry in their respective countries. Kepea is Finnish civil society's leading expert organization on development policy issues. Kepea provides training and advice for civil society organizations (CSOs) in Finland, and for their partners in developing countries through country and regional offices in three continents.

TWA's Vice President Ms. Samten Choedon gave a brief presentation on the works of Tibetan Women's Association and spoke about the current intense situation of Tibetans inside Tibet. Books and pamphlets were also distributed to the meeting attendees.



With Deputy Director Petri Hautanemi.

## VOICE

In the afternoon of September 25<sup>th</sup>, the participants along with KIOS Executive Director MS Ulla Anttila and Asst. Coordinator Susanna Puukko visited the Ministry for Foreign affairs of Finland. The representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland introduced their high office's function, after which a



discussion forum was held where every participant spoke about their human rights situation in their respective countries. TWA's representative also spoke on the current critical situation of Tibetans inside Tibet and handed appeal letter to each and every human rights activist at the meeting.

On September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014, TWA's Vice President had meeting with Terhi Heinila, the Secretary General of The National Council of Women of Finland. They were accompanied by KIOS representative.



The National Council of Women of Finland was established in 1911 as the Finnish branch of the International Council of women (founded in 1888). The objective of the council is to promote equality, human rights, and the status of women in the Finnish society.

# Stand in solidarity with the people of Hong Kong



## ***Dharamsala October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014***

With the introduction of China's 'White Paper' and their decision to control over the upcoming election for Chief Executive in 2017, the Chinese government has started to wipe the democracy that people of Hong Kong have been enjoying till today.

Starting from September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014, a peaceful protest was staged by student groups in Hong Kong demanding Universal Suffrage. The protesters also call for Chief Executive Leung Chun Ying to step down from the post.

*August to November, 2014*

To express our (Tibetan) solidarity, the Tibetan Women's Association carried 'Yellow Ribbon' campaign at the McLeod Square, Dharamsala. TWA spread the news of on going protest in Hong Kong and urged people to support the movement. TWA's solidarity campaign was started at 10:00 AM and concluded at 3:00 PM.

TWA is impatient to all the harsh policies that China implements. We can feel the in-depth significance of the protest that people of Hong Kong are carrying today.



# TWA at International Tibet Network's meeting, London.

## **London**

***October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 6<sup>th</sup> 2014***

Central Tibetan Women's Association's President Ms. Tashi Dolma attended the International Tibet Network Steering Committee's Annual General Meeting in London from October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 20<sup>th</sup> 2014. Ms. Tashi Dolma la was invited as the representative of Tibetan Women's Association to observe this annual meeting of ITN.

The International Tibet Network is a global coalition of over 180 Tibet-related organizations from all over the world, providing strategies, trainings, campaign tools and advocacy for Tibetan rights under Chinese rule.



After the ITN meeting, Ms. Tashi Dolma and the President of Central Tibetan Youth Congress Mr. Tenzin Jigme had the privilege to meet Fabian Hamilton, Member of Parliament of England.



A lunch cum interaction was organized by Tibetans living in London for Ms. Tashi Dolma and Mr. Tenzin Jigme.



Tibetan  
Women  
Empowerment

# Women Empowerment Workshop at Gangtok

**Gangtok**  
**October 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> 2014**

A two-day women empowerment workshop was organized by the Women's Empowerment Desk, Department of Home, CTA in collaboration with the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) and Central Tibetan Women's Association (TWA).



The two-day Women Empowerment workshop was inaugurated with a formal function. The opening function was graced by Honorable Shri P.D. Rai, Member of Parliament of India, Ms.

Gyari Dolma, Kalon for Dept. of Home, CTA and other guest of honors were Ms. Pramila Tai Medhe, Former Chief of Rashtriya Sevika Samiti; Ms. Shanta Kumari, Chief of Rashtriya Sevika Samiti. The function was also attended by Ms. Kamla Bhasin, South Asia's leading Gender Trainer; Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile; Dr. B. Tsering, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile and principal of Dalai Lama Institute of Higher Education; the settlement officers of Gangtok and Ravangla Tibetan settlements and the heads of the Non-governmental organization of Gangtok.



The Honorable Kalon Ms. Gyari Dolma, in her introductory address emphasized on the importance given by the present Kashag towards women empowerment in the Tibetan community and its commitment toward women empowerment and gender equality. Honorable Shri P.D. Rai agreed to look into possibilities of future collaborations and joint ventures as a very constructive response to Kalon Gyari Dolma's introductory address where Madam Gyari stated that the Tibetan women in exile should collaborate and network with local women and work hard not only to uplift the Tibetan community, but also for the

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advancement of our host country. Shrimati Pramila Tai Medhe in her keynote address reaffirmed our belief and confidence in our strength as woman, as individuals and in working together.



The two-day workshop was led by six trainees from different parts of India, covering various topics related to women empowerment and gender equality. The workshop was attended by more than 53 participants from Gangtok, Ravangla, Darjeeling, Sonata and Kalimpong.

## DAY ONE - OCTOBER 27<sup>TH</sup> 2014

### Trainers and their topics:

1. Ms. Shanta Kumari (Shantaka), Chief of Rashtriya Sevika Samiti
  - \* Covered on: Women Empowerment and initiatives of the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti

2. Ms. Nyima Lhamo, General Secretary of Central Tibetan Women's Association
  - \* Covered on: Tibetan Women Empowerment and initiatives of TWA
3. Dr. Doma T. Bhutia, Senior Advocate, High Court, Sikkim
  - \* Covered on: Women's Legal Rights
4. Dr. Bhumo Tsering, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile
  - \* Covered on: Empowering Tibetan Women: Challenges, Progress & Opportunities



The Day-One session was led by four different trainers; the first trainer was Ms. Shanta Kumari, chief of Rashtriya Sevika Samiti. She covered the session on Women Empowerment and initiatives of the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti. Rashtriya Sevika Samiti is the largest women organization in India; it has more than 5000 chapters in India and more than hundred branches

outside India. RSS women are actively involved in sociocultural activities. The organization inculcates a sense of patriotism and social awareness in people. Various types of training camps at different levels in all parts of India are conducted periodically. Ms Shanta Kumari led the session based on the aims, objectives and purpose of RSS. She said RSS always work to encourage, empower and help women to become self reliant. RSS believes in the inborn capabilities and talents of every woman and the organization always put practical efforts for women to realize their talents. RSS runs 475 service projects all over India for the poor and underprivileged, regardless of religion, caste, creed, sect, gender, or ethnicity. These projects include schools, libraries, training centers and orphanages. It is the hope of the organizing team that the participants could learn about the initiatives of RSS and get inspired to empower Tibetan community.



The second trainer of the day-one was Ms Nyima Lhamo, General Secretary of the Central Tibetan Women’s Association. Ms Nyima Lhamo led the session on Tibetan Women Empowerment and initiatives of Tibetan Women’s Association. This session was

mainly focused on the introduction of the Tibetan Women's Association and its activities, projects, programs and campaigns. Since TWA is the only women's organization in exile, TWA has been sharing the responsibilities of building exile community as social political NGO with the tag line clearly asserting 'Advocacy for Home, Action in Exile'.



The third trainer of the day was Dr. Doma T. Bhutia, Senior Advocate, High Court, Sikkim. Dr. Doma spoke on Women's legal rights. She spoke on how women can be protected by the law; she introduced some important Articles of the Indian law that depicts no bias and discrimination toward women. Dr. Doma also alerted the trainees on how important it is to have gender equality in society, she said if there is a lot of suppression on one side of the gender then there will be equal effect on the other side. She further added, " There have been few cases when a woman victim comes to file a case but without proper evidence which infact makes the cse weak." Hence, she pointed out that women should be smart particularly if she is a victim of any gender based discrimination.



The last trainer of the day-one was Dr. Bumo Tsering, Member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and the Principal of the Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Studies. Her topic for the session was Empowering Tibetan Women: Challenges, Progress and Opportunities. Dr. B. Tsering displayed the status of Tibetan women before and after 1959. She mentioned the importance of having women's contribution to uplift a society in political, social, education, economic and other areas. Through her session, the participants have learned about the status of Tibetan women in exile. Specifically about the areas where Tibetan women need to work on and also about the results and works that young leading Tibetan women are doing in India and abroad.

## DAY TWO - OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> 2014

### Trainers and their topics:

5. Ms. Kamla Bhasin, South Asia's leading Gender Trainer and also a social scientist by training.
  - \* Covered on: Status of Women worldwide, Women Empowerment, what should be the journey forward, Gender, Patriarchy, Women's Movement, Feminism, Violence against Women, etc.
  
6. Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile
  - \* Covered on: Developing the self for leadership

The first trainer of the Day-Two was Ms. Kamla Bhasin, South Asia's leading Gender Trainer and also a social scientist by training. She covered the session on Status of Women worldwide, Women Empowerment, what should be the journey



forward? Gender, Patriarchy, Women’s Movement, Feminism, Violence against Women, etc. Ms. Kamla’s session was started with introduction of the 1st Article of the United Nations Human Rights Declaration “All Human beings born equal and free in dignity and rights”. The discussions further guided through patriarchy, looking into how and who controls what in patriarchy towards productive power, reproductive power, sexuality, mobility, resources, family, religion, education, legal, economic spheres, politics, media etc. She described the social structure and ideology toward men and women. Ms. Kamla explained the definition of Gender and how our society is patriarchal society where women are suppressed and discriminated. She then defined the meaning of empowerment and why society needs women empowerment. With the definition of empowerment, she explains how women can be empowered; she said a woman can be empowered when she is given all the resources (Natural, Intellectual, Human, Financial, Time, etc.) to assist her growth and development.



After lunch, Ms. Kamla shared few video clips of women’s movement like ‘One Billion Rising’ to the participants. The purpose of showing the short documents is to encourage Tibetan women to participate in global women’s movement. Ms. Kamla Bhasin has clarified many concepts and terms that we usually define wrongly. Her session has sensitized the participant on issues related to women and her dignity.

Few important messages or learning curves from Ms. Kamla Bhasin's session were; that human being's soul is neither male nor female. "Human values are neither masculine nor feminine, there are human values and that is how we should bring up our community and our children, not as boy or girl, but as human beings with equal opportunities and the finest human qualities. The second learning was that nature has made women and men different only for reproduction. The third important thing to note was the contribution of the concept of gender is that it separates biology from what is social construct."



The second trainer or the last trainer of the 2-day Women Empowerment Workshop is Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile. Ms. Youdon covered a session on developing the self for leadership. She focused on what does it mean to be a good leader and what qualities should a good leader possess. Ms. Youdon made it simple that anyone can be a good leader as the qualities to become a good leader is not something that ordinary women can't achieve. She also focused on the importance of health; the health is the base of all the activities.

## CONCLUSION



The two-day workshop was successfully concluded with distribution of certificates to the participants. The Gangtok settlement officer and his team have facilitated this two-day session with all the necessary helps that the organizing team needed.



Tibetan  
Women  
Empowerment

# One-day ICP Interfaith Women's Meeting

*Hydrabad  
September 15<sup>th</sup> 2014*



One-day ICP Interfaith Women's Meeting was held at the Henry Martin Institute, Hyderabad on September 15<sup>th</sup> 2014. Tibetan Women's Association's President and General Secretary represented the Association in the meeting. The meeting was attended by eleven women of different faiths.

A very quick and short welcome and introductory remark by Dr. Packiam Samuel marked the beginning of the day long meeting. Dr. Deepali Bhanot made a presentation on Interfaith Coalition for Peace Women's Journey undertaken so far over the next

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hour. The presentation by Dr. Deepali guided the attendees at the meeting through the journeys made so far with certain emphasis on the challenges and highlights of the journey. The meeting attendees were then given few minutes to share their experiences and comments to celebrate or commend the efforts made and results achieved during the previous journeys.



The following session was a group discussion analyzing the experiences of the Interfaith Coalition for Peace Women's Journey; things learnt and experience that we want to keep and continue and what is it that we have experienced and done that we do not want to repeat and need to change. The groups came up with constructive suggestions and ideas to better and improve the future journeys so as to meet with the aims and objectives of the Interfaith Coalition for Peace Women's Journey. The highlights from the group discussion were; to create women's network and to keep in touch, trying to accommodate more participants, identifying powerful women from each religion and introduce them to ICP group and the local community, to better the planning process with analysis on the conflict zones,

destinations and link them up with other groups and bringing in the perspectives of the local people to the government or other groups who can bring about positive changes, it was also decided that a core-group will be formulated for 2015-2017, this group will work together with Rev. Packiam Samuel to plan, strategies and finalise the next journeys. The most important point from the groups was follow-up; it was emphasized that the ICP core-group and ICP regional/local coordinator should undertake follow-up action for the sustainability of peace building, the participants should also try to be in touch with one another through e-mail sharing information regarding the various interfaith work and other activities with other NGOs and if possible to invite the ICP women to participate.



Mr. Arne Saeveras from Norwegian Church Aid led an educational session on 'strategies for Peace building'. Mr. Arne kept his session very brief and precise guiding the attendees through what is peace building, its components, major organizations, role of women, ongoing efforts, results and criticisms.

The vote of thanks by Rev. Packiam Sameul marked the closure of the day long meeting with much hopes and aspiration en route for more women's journey. The positive constructive promises by Rev. Packiam to help and support for the women's future programmes gave everyone a sense that it is possible to build a strong interfaith women's partnership to explore the role of women in prevention of violence against women and for promoting women's empowerment especially in conflict areas through interfaith cooperation.



# Meetings and interactions with national and international groups

Tibetan Women's Association assigns great importance to meeting and interacting with students, researchers, journalists, activists and delegates to raise global awareness of the critical situation inside Tibet. Through such meetings, TWA can increase international pressure for the improvement of human rights for Tibetans living in occupied Tibet.

From August to November 2014, the TWA team met several groups and activists from different countries.

## ***August 12<sup>th</sup> 2014:***



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***August 12<sup>th</sup> 2014:***



Discussion and interaction with professors and students from St. Edwards University, US on impact of globalization on Tibetan women.

***September 25<sup>th</sup> 2014:***



TWA team met the wonderful Ms Rose Tang, a Chinese born writer and activist.

**September 29<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**October 1st 2014:**



**October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014:**



Interaction and Discussion with friends from Sweden.

**October 5<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



Interaction with English Journalism students of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi.

**October 6<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**November 4<sup>h</sup> 2014:**



**November 6<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



Interaction and discussion with friends from Sweden.

**November 14<sup>h</sup> 2014:**



Mr. James Kondo, Vice President of Twitter and visiting scientist to MIT Lab and Mr. Ali Rowhani, COO of Twitter and CFO of Pixar/Disney visits TWA.

**November 1<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



Along with other major Tibetan NGOs based in Dharamsala, TWA attended an interactive session with US Delegation led by Ms. Sarah Sewall.

**November 21<sup>st</sup> 2014**



Interaction with the second group from Australia Tibet Council.

## Other activities carried by TWA from August to November 2014

**August 18<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**September 9<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**October 16<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**October 16<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



**November 10<sup>th</sup> 2014:**



TWA participated in mass cleaning initiated by clean Upper Dharamsala Project and Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association.



## PHASE I - REPORT

### TRAINING OF TRAINERS:

Day One, August 3rd 2014

The five day 'training of trainers' workshop on Legal Empowerment of Tibetan Women in Exile, India kick started off with a special audience with His Holiness the 17th Karmapa Rinpoche. Forty eight participants from different parts of India and the whole TWA team gathered at the McLeod taxi stand, where we took cabs in group.



As requested His Holiness spoke on gender identities based on his book 'THE HEART IS NOBLE'. He said gender is a concept or an idea created by the society and we live by those rules. Like how a man should and shouldn't be and how a woman should and shouldn't be. He stressed on the gender disparities that exist in Buddhist traditions and beliefs.

He also pointed out that fabricated gender identities are problematic for men as well as for women. Men also go through

lot of problems when they are socially instructed to be in certain ways. Both men and women should be treated equally and should work together to make a better society.

Karmapa Rinpoche advised the participants to not allow these restraints to deter them but encouraged them to identify, communicate and network and build alliances with the other women groups and support each other's endeavors and actions.

After his speech, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and most of them were related to Buddhism and Gender. He cleared many of the misconceptions that we have.

After coming back from Karmapa Rinpoche's monastery, at 7 pm all the participants and TWA team gathered at Hotel Tibet for the informal welcome dinner where everyone introduced each other. After registration, rules and regulations were set for the next four days and everyone was given a secret friend for better networking and also for fun during the workshop.

## **Day Two, August 4th 2014**

The Honorable Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile Mr. Penpa Tsering and Ms. Kamla Bhasin, Feminist Activist, a Social Scientist and South Asia's Leading Gender trainer graced the opening ceremony of the five day 'Training of Trainers' on Legal Empowerment of Tibetan Women' in Exile. The standing committee members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, the special guests, NGO representatives and friends from media were also part of the opening ceremony. Fifty women and men from across India representing a cross-section of the exile population participated in the five-day training.

Mr. Penpa Tsering said that these training programs on gender sensitization and taking legal recourse to tackle sexual harassment and violence are very important in our society and

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should be given more to men who tend to be the perpetrators of such heinous crimes.

“Even though we do not have too much discrimination against women compared to some of societies that we know about there is still a great need for promotion and empowerment of Tibetan women in various fields.”

He further raised the recent cases of child molestation in Tibetan schools saying the accused must be punished. “School authorities and the general public have to be very careful in avoiding such incidents in the first place. If such thing happens we have to make sure these people are punished in accordance with the law.”

The opening ceremony also featured the launch of TWA’s ‘Legal Handbook on Indian Laws and Acts Protecting Women and Children in India’, (Tibetan and English version) and Legal Empowerment of Tibetan Women in Exile-India, a Research Report, 2014.



Ms. Kamla Bhasin stated in her address that human being's soul is neither male nor female. "Human values are neither masculine nor feminine, there are human values and that is how we want our children to grow up, not as boy or girl, but as a human being with equal opportunities and with the finest human qualities."



The opening ceremony was followed by a special tea break whilst the organizing team readied the auditorium to a training set up.

Ms. Kalma Bhasin who was the trainer of the day started her day long session with an ice breaker exercise called 'Sociogramming'. All the participants had to come into the middle of the room and group themselves according to the criteria set by the facilitator and occasionally they would stop in between for questions and comments. The whole idea was to make everyone feel connected and comfortable and build sense of team work.

The participants were then introduced to the concept 'Gender' and further discussed on difference between the sex and gender; the discussion helped in making it very clear how the society plays its role in creating all these perceptions, stigmas,

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stereotypes etc. The learning curve from the discussion was that nature has made women and men different only for reproduction. However, it is important to note that the greatest contribution of concept of gender is that it separates biology from what is social constructs.



The trainees were then put into five groups and were given three questions to discuss in groups and come out with a group presentation. The questions were: When and how did you know that you are a girl or a boy? Your most painful experience as a girl/women or boy/men? Were you treated differently at home/ community just because you are girl or boy?

The group presentation brought into light a lot of gender based discrimination and stereotypes existing in our community. One interesting thing noticeable during the group presentations was that the men's group had so less to say. This kind of showed how the society tells man not to feel or cry as if they are superior being.

The discussions further guided through patriarchy; looking into how and who controls what in patriarchy towards productive

power, reproductive power, sexuality, mobility, resources, family, religion, education, legal, economic institutions, politics, media etc.



Day Three, August 5th 2014



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The third day was led by trainer Dhardon Sharling, Women Empowerment Trainer and Member of Tibetan Parliament in exile. She started off with an exercise called 'The Human Web' or 'Faux Pas' where participants were asked to share one of their gender insensitive act that they have done in their life. While one participant shares their story to another participant, others have to keep their eyes close and think about the act that they have done. Everyone got the opportunity to tell their story and also listen to one.

After that exercise, we had open discussion on attitudinal change: tackling dilemmas and stereotypes. Few statements were read out in the audience and the participants have to either agree or disagree to the statement and give their reasons. Few of the statements were;

- Your cloths are responsible for sexual harassment.
- Women should wear Chupa (Tibetan traditional dress) when visiting a temple.
- Women are better cooks.
- Men never cry.
- Only boys can fix cars.

Right after the tea break, Panel Discussion started on 'Gender and Law Enforcement in Tibetan Community- Pre 1959 in Tibet and Post 1959 in Exile.'

Invited speakers were:

- \* Mr. Tsering Wangchuk, Special Consultant, Kashag (Cabinet), Central Tibetan Administration
- \* Mr. Lobsang Yeshe, Gender Trainer and Member, Tibetan Parliament in Exile
- \* Ms. Tenzin Tseyang, Women's Empowerment Desk, Central Tibetan Administration

While all the three speakers stressed mainly on gender issues in our society, our first speaker Mr. Tsering Wangchuk spoke on the Tibetan customary law before 1959 and how Tibetan people used to look at law at that time.

Mr. Lobsang Yeshi focused on the gender bias in the current time.

Ms. Tenzin Tseyang discussed the importance of women empowerment in our society.

Due to lack of time, only few participants were able to ask questions but many more cleared their doubt during the lunch break.



## Afternoon Session:

Trainer Miss. Dhardon screened few Indian television ads which are related to gender inequality and we had group discussion on those stories. Then the participants were divided into five groups and they were given twenty minute to make their own

one minute ad based on gender equality. The only condition was every participant to have a part in the group act. After twenty minutes everyone gathered back in the hall and the groups performed their act one after another, whilst the trainer asks questions about their act and the judge marked them for their performance.

After the group presentation, a quick tea break and everyone left in groups of 4 to Gangkyi, where the Central Tibetan Administration is based. Despite the heavy rain, everyone reached the venue on time and waited for the Honorable Sikyong (Prime Minister).

Honorable Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay held a lengthy discussion on the pressing issues of child molestation and gender-based violence that has unearthed in the recent times in the Tibetan community in exile. “We should have zero tolerance against such crimes and the perpetrators should be trailed under the court of law as criminals instead of being let free and forgiven,” said Dr. Sangay. He also focused on the importance of qualitative education for Tibetan children and the efforts of Education department in giving that.



The opportunity to question Dr. Sangay was taken by many participants and we had to stop them after more than ten questions as it was getting very late.

The discussion was concluded with group and individual pictures with Dr. Lobsang Sangay.

## Day Four, August 6th 2014

The session began around 8:30 for the fourth day. Participants were asked to sit in group to discuss the group act of the previous day and grade other group's performance. They also have to justify their grading. At the disclosure of the winners' names, all the participants exploded in laughter and applause.

Around 10 am, participants and the whole team of TWA walked down to His Holiness's temple for the special audience with much excitement. Due to His Holiness's busy schedule, we were not able to fix a date earlier but we were very lucky and blessed to get a last minute confirmation.



## VOICE

The special audience was very brief where TWA president was able to give concise information of the five day workshop and also presented the researched report along with the legal handbooks (Tibetan and English).

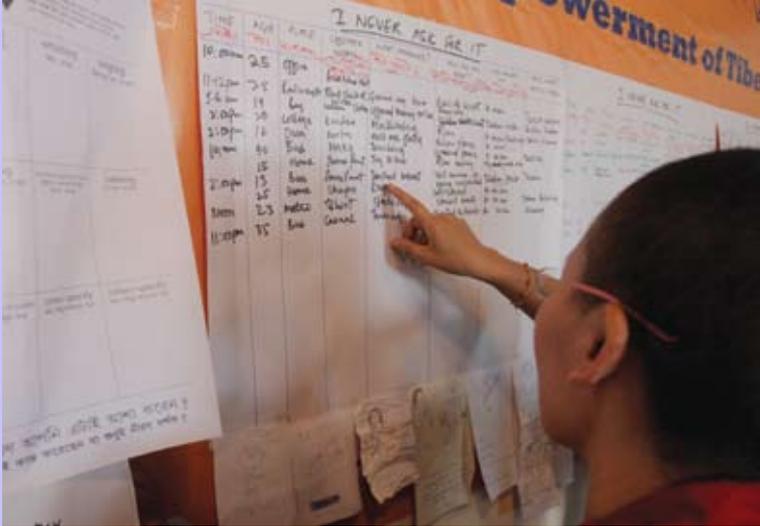
His Holiness advised that it should bear the foresight to benefit all sentient beings. “This legal empowerment training program should continue and also use its potential to empower not only women and men but also the sentient beings on earth,” said His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

After lunch, trainer Jasmeen Patheja was introduced to the participants. She is an Activist, Artist, Trainer and Founder of Blank Noise based in Bangalore, South India.

She started her session with an exercise called ‘Step By Step Guide to Unapologetic Walking’ which is basically a walking exercise, swinging arms, head held high and going in different directions. Participants were not supposed to talk but to give eye contact to the by passers. Then they would stop walking, choose a partner and make eye contact with the partner without talking. This exercise brings out the uneasiness, awkwardness and uncomfortable feeling that shows our lack of confidence in public space.



After that participants were asked to sit and settle down in a circle. Jasmeen explained the concept of action hero, creating safe space, connecting stories and experiences, getting insight and getting testimonies. More importantly finding out how to target the problem, how to create awareness through performance and campaigning as sexual violence is everyone's problem and responsibility.



Later on she asked the participants to introduce themselves with their name, age, occupation; from where they have come and where do they feel most safe?

The participants answer for the last question varied from toilet, temple, home, with family, with mother, grandmother, own room, with dad, office, family spaces in trains, with husband and kids, hometown, etc.

After the tea break, mind mapping exercise was done where the participants were given a blank paper and asked to write down whatever comes to their mind when they think of Sexual Violence.

## VOICE

Many of the words which came from the participants are unwelcome touch, guilt, sexual remarks, insult, Underestimation, suppression, beating, discomfort, sinful, force, tradition, caste, acid, social stigma, crime, inhumane, injustice, trauma, death, suicide, entitlement, power, unsafe, abuse, fear, law and order, ignorance, victimized, alcohol, immoral, stalking, whistling, eye-scanning, derogatory looks, forcing pornography, unwanted photography, etc.

Then we had open discussion on where does sexual violence takes place. With the answers, many participants shared their personal experiences of sexual harassment at different stages in their life. Few male participants also shared their stories. Our trainer Jasmeen was little surprised but happy to see many participants opening up.



For the next exercise, participants were asked to draw the dress that they were wearing at the time of the harassment along with following details;

- Time
- Age of the victim when she or he was harassed

- Place – where it happened
- Clothes – What was the victim wearing at that time?
- What actually happened?
- How did you react?
- Who caused it?
- Action Hero name – name of the victim

The experiences of the participants were written down on a chart along with their drawings. After that each group was given five minutes to analyze the details on the chart and share their thoughts and feelings regarding the events that happened in the lives of other participants.

Many of the events happened during the day time and when the individuals were in their 20s; few were even younger than that. And most of them happened while travelling. Almost all of them were fully dressed like Chupa (Tibetan traditional dress) or pants and shirt.

The exercise had a clear conclusion that the victim ‘Never Asked for It’ whether her dress was too short or she was travelling alone in the night. One good findings of this exercise is that most of the victims fought back instead of keeping quite.

The day ended with the participants including eight men taking a ‘safe community pledge’ for action, empowerment and development. Changing one’s mind set, being gender sensitive and instilling that knowledge and awareness in the community remained pertinent in all pledges.

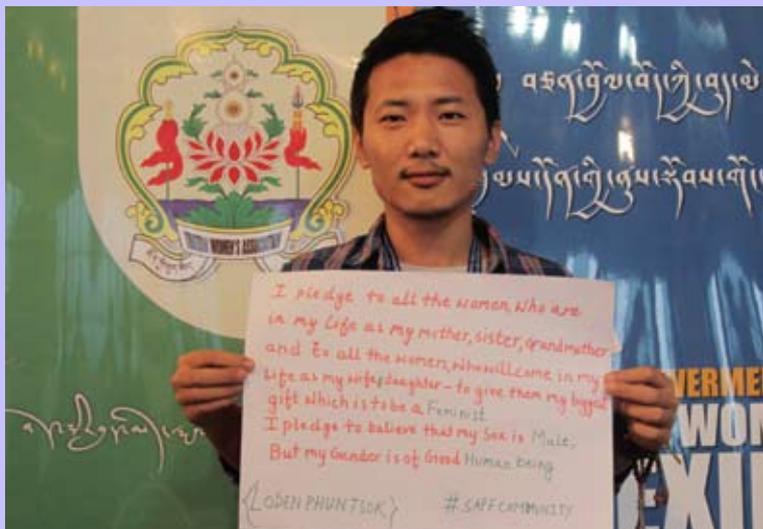
### **Few of the pledges were;**

“I will not look at her as women or him as men, but as human beings with human values with the basic right to live with dignity,” read one pledge by a 45-year-old female Tenzin Dolma.

**VOICE**

“I will protest any individual who commits sexual harassment and violence against women.” Phuntsok Dorjee, 23, male, student activist.

“I pledge that I will never make fun of anyone who is a victim of gender based violence.” Yeshi Lhamo, 24, female.



**Day Five, August 7th 2014**



The final day of the workshop was lead by trainer Dhardon Sharling on strengthening self and others which includes Strategic Communication: Innovative tools and Good Practices and Action for Life, Empowerment and Development.

After a short tea break, our final speaker Mr. Karma D Khortsa, LL.M and advocate of the legal office of Karmapa Rinpoche led 2 hours session on 'De mystifying the Indian Law for Protection of Women and Children'. He gave a presentation on 'Knowing and using the law and Legal recourse and intervention- a justified measure. Under this he covered Gender based violence against women, Women and child specific legislation, Landmark Amendment to the Criminal Law related to Sexual Assault and Violence against Women, Sexual Harassment under Amended Criminal law and etc.



This was followed by a heated debate and a volley of questions, which the speaker handled very well.

After lunch break, Trainer Jasmine took over again. As her instruction, we all gathered at the main square of McLeod Ganj forming a big circle. This exercise was called 'HAHAHA Sangha'

## VOICE

which is basically laughing out loud in the public thus making the neighborhood and community safe and welcoming and also to pass on the message that women can also laugh when and where they want to. Lot of by passers joined us in this exercise and others also enjoyed the small entertainment while wondering what is happening to these people.



Then groups were given the final task of the workshop where each group was given a specific area around McLeod Ganj. Here participants had to collect thumb print on charts which consist of different types of Sexual harassment.

Finally everyone gathered back in the hall for the closing ceremony. Participants were awarded the workshop participation certificate along with TWA publications.



Participants were requested to give a written feedback on the five day workshop and following are few of their thoughts;

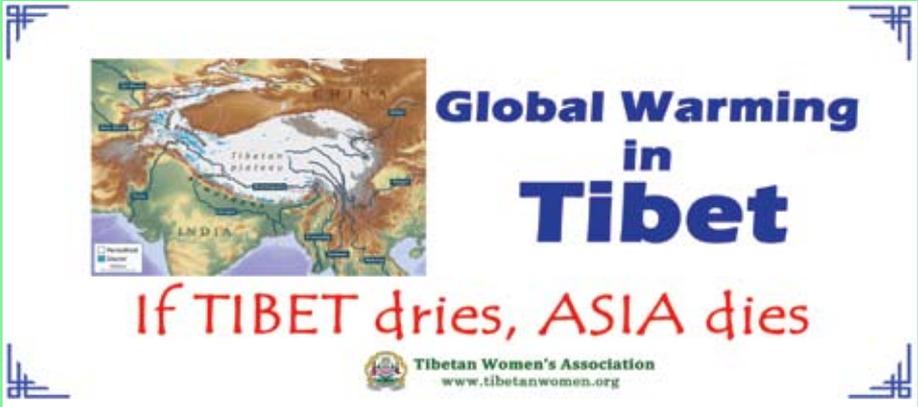
- “This workshop made me realize the importance of empathetic listening, especially during the 3rd day when various personal stories have emerged, which clearly contradicted our present/dominant perception of our own society as ‘Gender based violence’ free” Ugyan Choedup, JNU Student

- “This workshop on legal Empowerment of Tibetan Women in our Tibetan community is first of its kind that I have attended. Needless to say, I learnt in detail the Gender concept, sexual violence, Patriarchy, legal rights and how to approach it” Tenzin Paldon, Age 34
- “It was a life changing experience, I came as a man but after this workshop, I walkout as a feminist. We need more male participation in the future” Loden Phuntsok, Age 24
- “Workshop on ‘legal Empowerment of Tibetan Women in Exile’ has really helped me in understanding gender bias and sexual assaults on women. Also ways to address the problems legally as well. For me this workshop was helpful, impressive, empowering, well organized and trainers are awesome.” Duk , Age 27



The farewell dinner concluded the workshop with much laughter and joy.

# People's Climate March



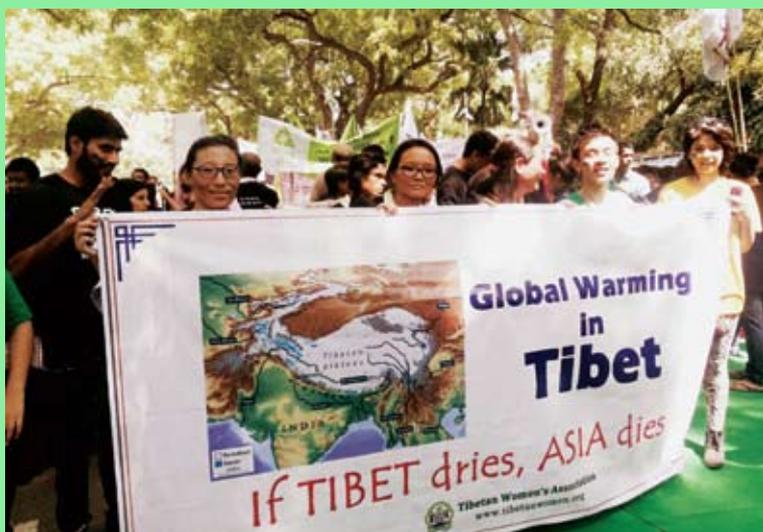
***New Delhi  
September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014***

Along with people of Delhi and around, Tibetan Women's Association also participated in 'People's Climate March' at Delhi on 20th September, 2014. More than 2,000 people joined the march from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar drumming, singing and shouting slogans.

College students, school children, civil society allies, young professionals, rights groups, Resident Welfare Associations, farming communities and many more participated. The rally ended with a gathering at Jantar Mantar where speakers from different parts of the country addressed the audience.

TWA representatives joined the march with a banner related to climate change and rivers in Tibet. Aiming for the signature campaign on World Rivers Day, we distributed brochure, pamphlet and badges. One day before the march, 350.org

organized an open meeting among the NGOs and we were able to talk about the environmental situation in Tibet, specially the importance of water security for our neighboring countries. We urged the audience to take interest in this matter and try to inquire about the truth.



Women's  
Environment  
and  
Development  
Desk

## World Rivers Day

*Dharamsala*

*September 28<sup>th</sup> 2014*



World Rivers Day is a global celebration of the world's waterways, occurs annually on the last Sunday in September. This day aims to highlight the many values of rivers and strives to increase public awareness while encouraging the improved stewardship of rivers around the world.

Women's Environment and Development Desk (WEDD) of Tibetan women's Association have taken every opportunity to promote the environmental situation in Tibet. More importantly, being aware of Tibet's geographical significance to many of Asia's countries, WEDD have always tried to represent Tibet at many international and national platforms.



Observing 'World Rivers Day' is one of the many events that WEDD organizes every year. This year we started a signature campaign specifically for the Indian audience on Tibet's Rivers in Delhi (during People's Climate March) and in Dharamsala on World Rivers Day. This campaign was aimed to increase the public awareness about the significance of Tibet's rivers to India as six of these rivers flow in India from Tibet like the Brahmaputra, Karnali, Sutlej, Indus, Arun and Manas.

Around five hundred people participated in this signature campaign and to these people we were able to explain why India needs to have a water-sharing agreement with China.

Along with a petition these signatures will be sent to Sushri Uma Bharati, Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

We also did a photo opt near Bhagsu Nag waterfall holding posters which reads 'Tibet's Rivers, Asia's Lifeline'



WEDD will be doing lot of other activities to advocate the environmental situation in Tibet, especially for Tibet's rivers.

## Observational Report on Stitches of Tibet

# Farewell to the 13th batch of Stitches of Tibet

***Dharamsala***  
***September 13<sup>th</sup> 2014***

The Stitches of Tibet (SOT) is a non-profit vocational training program initiated by the Tibetan women's Association (TWA) in 1995. The program provides free training in tailoring to Tibetan women for a period of 18 months. Besides tailoring, the trainees are also taught written and spoken English, Computing, Math and Tibetan. Since its inception, the program has trained more than 150 Tibetan women (newly arrived/born in the exile community).



In September this year, the 13th batch completed their 18 months training with Stitches of Tibet. A very modest function was held in the morning of October 4th which was attended by the Central office's staffs and executives and the trainees

from SOT. The trainees had their best chupa and apron on for the day. The function started with certificate distribution to the outgoing trainees which was then followed by a brief farewell speech by TWA's President. Some of the trainees shared their experience during their time at SOT. They all looked very excited and happy.



After the function, a private audience with His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa karmapa and a special lunch was arranged by the Central office for the trainees. For some of them, it was their very first audience with His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa which left them in awe and tears.

Lunch was served at Hotel Dhauladhar in lower Dharamsala where the trainees enjoyed sumptuous Indian food. It was a sad as well as a happy day for everyone. Sad because it's time to say good bye to yet another wonderful batch and happy for we are able to empower more and more women every 18 months!

Report  
from  
RTWA

# Record of Activities undertaken by TWA's Regional Chapters

*RTWA*

*August-November, 2014*

## RTWA CLEMENTOWN



August 10th 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Associations in the Doon valley together offered gifts and tied rakhi to 21 Indian dignitaries on Raksha Bandhan (a Hindu festival that celebrates the love and duty between brothers and sisters). Every year, the regional Tibetan Women's Associations in India celebrate Raksha Bandhan as a gesture to thank the host country and their people.

September 2nd 2014: The members of RTWA commemorated the 54th 'Democracy day of Tibet' in their settlement.

September 21st 2014: Prayers were offered in the evening when news of another self immolation in Amdo, Tibet broke out.



September 27th 2014: In September 1987, Tibetans were forced to watch the public execution of three Tibetans in Lhasa, which spurred protest and demonstrations on Sept. 27th and which was in fact the first bold protest ever since the 1959 Uprising.

In exile, this year on Sept. 27th, the regional Tibetan women's associations from Doon valley co-organized a candle light vigil in remembrance of the martyrs who fought for our country.

## RTWA DELHI

August 4th 2014: The regional Tibetan Women's Association in Delhi did a mass clean up on the banks of Yamuna River which lies behind the Tibetan colony. With the help from Indian laborers, it took them three days to clean.

Every Friday, the executives from RTWA Delhi take the initiative of cleaning the colony by hiring 5-6 laborers who are paid the very same day. They also take charge of the garbage tanks for which they pay the MCD.

August 10th 2014: This year on the day of 'Raksha Bandhan', the executives of RTWA Delhi had the honor of tying rakhi to the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi at his office. They urged him to support the Tibetans and the Tibet movement.



The executives also tied rakhi to other ministers such as Shri Harshwardhan Singh – the Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Shri Kapil Sibal – former Law Minister, Shri L.K.Advani – former leader of BJP and others.

August 15th 2014: To celebrate the 68th Independence day of India, RTWA Delhi co-organized a function along with the Residential Welfare Office at Samyeling TCV Day School where the guest of honor was MLA Parlad Singh Sawhney. Other Indian dignitaries were also invited. RTWA took the responsibility of distributing water and snacks to the attendees.

September 3rd 2014: In order to have a stronger relationship and learn from each other's ideologies, the Tibetan Bureau office in New Delhi organized a network meeting with the Indian women's association and Tibetan women's association. Mr Tenpa Tsering –Representative of Bureau of H.H. the Dalai Lama in New Delhi, Ms. Dolma Gyari – Ministry of Homes, CTA and Mr Tsewang Gyalpo – General Secretary of Bureau office, New Delhi were among others who attended the meeting.

Each of the women's groups introduced each other about their work and culture. They promised to support each other's cause whenever and wherever necessary.

September 10th 2014: On the 30th anniversary of the Tibetan Women's Association, the regional Tibetan Women's Association – Delhi commemorated the day at the colony's temple. Representatives from different Tibetan associations and residents of Samyeling Tibetan colony were gathered at the function.

September 20th 2014: Representatives from RTWA Delhi along with the executives from the Central office, Dharamsala joined the 'People's Climate March' in New Delhi. Thousands of people from different parts of India comprising of environmental activists, students, farmers etc joined the rally which is a global initiative against climate injustice.

## **RTWA DALHOUSIE**

August 25th 2014: Along with Regional Tibetan Women's Associations in Doon Valley, RTWA Dalhousie celebrated the Raksha Bandhan to thank Indian Government and people for their support.

September 10th 2014: 30th TWA's anniversary was commemorated in Dhalahousie Tibetan settlement.

## RTWA DHARAMSHALA

August 10th 2014: Like every year, the executives of RTWA – Dharamshala tied rakhi to their Indian brothers on the day of Raksha Bandhan. In return, some of the Indian brothers gave them money as a token of love and respect.



October 9th 2014: In solidarity with the brothers and sisters who set themselves on fire, RTWA – Dharamshala with other NGOs organized a candle light vigil. There were many Tibetans and foreigners who took part in the vigil. The speaker during the event was Ms. Rose Tang – a Chinese survivor during the Tiananmen Massacre.

September 23rd 2014: Special prayers were offered for a 22 year old student named Lhamo Tashi who set himself on fire in Tibet. Lhamo is the 132nd Tibetan who self immolated calling for freedom and return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama into Tibet.

## RTWA HUNSUR

August 15th 2014: When the whole nation was celebrating the 68th Independence Day of India, across the southern region of India in a Tibetan settlement, the regional Tibetan women's association of Hunsur took the opportunity to show their gratitude towards the country which gave refuge to thousands of Tibetans. They gave away small token of appreciation to the Indian staff at CST Gurupura.



August 2014: The executives of RTWA Hunsur met with a group from France. They had a small tea party gathering and a few hours of dance class where the French were taught how to do Tibetan dance.

September 2014: After attending the 4 days workshop on 'Legal Empowerment of Tibetan women in India' organized by the Central TWA, executives of RTWA Hunsur organized a similar workshop to impart their learnings to the people in their settlement. People from different age group, young and

old all took part and appreciated the workshop. Besides working towards empowering Tibetan women, the executives are equally involved when it comes to social welfare activities. They met and have helped a Tibetan woman who lost both her legs in a train accident.

## RTWA DEKYILING



August 10th 2014: The executives of RTWA Dekyiling tied rakhi to the Chief Minister of Uttrakhand, Mr Harish Rawat and other various Indian dignitaries.

September 10th 2014: Mrs. Neelam Sehgal from BJP and Dr... Lobsang were invited as the guest of honors during TWA's 30th anniversary celebration.

## RTWA MUSSOORIE

September 10th 2014: The Central Tibetan Women's Association along with its chapters across the globe celebrates its anniversary every year on September 10th. This year marked the 30th

anniversary. In Mussoorie, the regional TWA commemorated the day with the people in the settlement. There were representatives from various regional NGOs, settlement officer etc. During the function, tea and sweet rice were served.

September 18th 2014: The regional Tibetan Women's Association has contributed school uniforms, thermals or inner wear to the junior section students from CST Mussoorie on various occasions. Most of these students are either from poor family or are from a very remote area in India. Some of them are from Tibet.



September 19th 2014: Numerous protests by Tibetans and Tibet support groups took place in different cities of India during the Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to India. Similarly, the members of RTWA – Mussoorie staged a protest at the main market showing concern and anxiety over the wave of self immolations happening inside Tibet and human rights violation caused by the Chinese government.

## RTWA MUNDGOD



August 10th 2014: Executives of RTWA Mundgod tied rakhi to the Indian members from Indo-Tibet Friendship society, the District Commissioner and various other Indian personalities in and around Hubli city.

September 2nd 2014: Prizes were distributed to the students from primary and nursery school by the executives of RTWA Mundgod.

September 11th 2014: Once every month, the executives of RTWA Mundgod visit the old age home in their settlement. They clean and wash the clothes, bedsheets etc and help take shower of the elderly people.

## RTWA NAINITAL

August 10th 2014: Every year, members of RTWA across India tie rakhi to Indian dignitaries in their locality. Likewise the executives of RTWA Nainital visited Dr. Narayan Singh Jantwal, former MLA from Nainital at his residence to tie rakhi. They sat with him and

## VOICE

his wife for couple of hours during which they spoke about the aims and objectives of Tibetan Women's Association and the achievements it had made so far.



September 10th 2014: In the morning to commemorate the 30th anniversary of TWA, the members of RTWA gathered at Garden Kunkyopling at 9AM to offer prayers and sangsol. A press statement was read to the people gathered.

## RTWA ORRISA



September 10th 2014: 30th anniversary of Tibetan Women's Association was celebrated by the members of RTWA Orrisa.

## RTWA POANTA SAHIB



September 10th 2014: Executives of RTWA Poanta Sahib celebrated TWA's 30th anniversary.

## RTWA PURUWALA



September 10th 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association distributed notebooks, pens and pencils to the students of Sambhota Tibetan School.

## RTWA RAJPUR



August 10th 2014: Hindu festival Raksha Bandhan was celebrated by tying rakhi to notable Indian leaders to thank them for their support and to further strengthen the Indo-Tibetan friendship.

August 16th 2014: The people from Rajpur settlement along with the members from RTWA Rajpur actively participated in the women empowerment workshop organized by the Central TWA.

## RTWA SHILLONG

September 27th 2014: Joining the rest of the world, Arunachal Pradesh celebrated the World Tourism Day with various programs. RTWA Shillong performed traditional Tibetan song and dance.



November 15th 2014: The regional chapters of TWA across the globe initiate different activities to raise funds for their respective chapters. Similarly, the executives of RTWA Shillong made tsampa (Tibetan staple food made from roasted barley or wheat flour) and sold it to raise money.

## RTWA KATHMANDU



## VOICE

November 15th 2014: RTWA Kathmandu helps run an old age home in their locality where around 15-20 elderly Tibetan men and women live. The executives take full responsibility of all the expenses. They take charge of cleanliness of the complex, health and other related issues of the people living in the old age home. Every winter, they distribute warm clothes and other accessories.

## RTWA TASHI PALKHIEL, POKHARA



September 2nd 2014: One of the main sources of fund raising for RTWAs is during Tibetan festivals or occasions. Like every year on democracy day, the RTWA Tashi Palkhiel sold momos and also had lottery withdrawal. They were able to raise enough funds through the sale.

September 10th 2014: 30th founding anniversary of Tibetan Women's Association was celebrated in the settlement with great joy and entertainment.

## RTWA TASHI LING, POKHARA

September 10th 2014: At 7:30AM, in presence of local assembly members, the abbot from Dargyeling monastery, members of RTWA Tashi Ling and people from the settlement gathered at the temple to offer prayers and sangsol. After the sangsol, everyone assembled at the community hall where the actual function started. The RTWA President read the press statement issued by the central office which was then followed by speech from guest of honor.



October 15th 2014: This October marked the 50th year since Tashi Ling Tibetan Settlement was formed. There was a grand celebration for 3 consecutive days where many Tibetan, Western and Nepalese dignitaries were invited on the 1st day. There were various events and activities. On the night of the cultural performance, the members of RTWA performed various Tibetan song and dances.

## RTWA NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

September 10th 2014: A special fund raising event for Ngoenga School for Tibetan children with special needs in Dehradun was organized during the 30th anniversary celebration of Tibetan Women's Association. There were live Tibetan song and dance performances by Tibetan artists.



September 28th 2014: The regional Tibetan Women's Association of New York /New Jersey welcomed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he made his maiden visit to the United States.

October 1st 2014: Hundreds of Tibetans and members from various Tibetan NGOs stood in solidarity with Hong Kong at the Times Square, NYC.

October 6th 2014: The executives from RTWA NY/NJ had the privilege to sit for a luncheon with Jetsun Pema, younger sister of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

## RTWA ONTARIO

September 2nd 2014: The executives of RTWA Ontario organized a 'Benefit Dinner' to support Tibetan Women's Association's 'Integrated Socio-Economic Development' project. Many attended the event to show their support towards the work of TWA.



## VOICE

October 1st 2014: As part of the continued effort in observing Lhakar, the RTWA Ontario dedicated the Lhakar activity in the month of October to stand in solidarity with the demonstrations taking place against the implementation of Confucius Institute in schools.



November 11th 2014: A 'Momo Munch Fest' at Tibet Kitchen restaurant was arranged by RTWA Ontario to raise fund. The event was a huge success!

## RTWA ITALY



Throughout the year, RTWA Italy organizes various campaigns and events to raise Tibet issue in Italy.



November 22nd 2014: RTWA Italy organized a fund raising event by preparing Tibetan traditional momo.

## RTWA TSERING DHONDEN



August 14th 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association Tsering Dhonden offered gifts and tied Rakhi to more than 20 Indian leaders and high official on Raksha Bandhan. That gesture of Tibetan women was also covered by local Indian Medias.



September 10th 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association Tsering Dhonden celebrated the 30th Re-founding Anniversary of Tibetan Women's Association. They have organized sangsol and formal function in the morning and in the afternoon they have organized a Women Empowerment Workshop for the local Tibetan women.



## RTWA KOLLEGAL



August 20th 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association Dhondenling organized a formal function on August 20, 2014 to express the gratitude of His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama and to launch the book on 'Middle Way Approach'. RTWA Dhondenling also arranged a lunch for all the people who have attended the function.



## VOICE

September 30th 2014: RTWA Dhondenling launched 'The Middle Way Approach' book to the local Indians. RTWA Dhondenling took the responsibility to translate the book into Hindi language. Mr. Raja Chariji, the president of the Indo Tibetan Friendship society has briefly explained the essence of the Middle Way Approach to the Indian audiences.

## RTWA MINNESOTA



October 2014: On the anniversary of the US Congressional Gold Medal awarded to the 14th Dalai Lama, executives of RTWA Minnesota performed Tibetan cultural dance at the occasion.

November 1st 2014: A Halloween party fund raising event was organized by RTWA Minnesota.

## RTWA BIR

July 31st 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association Bir took part in the celebration of enthronement of Palnor Rinpoche.



August 10th 2014: RTWA Bir observed the Indian festival Raksha Bandhan by offering gifts and tying Rakhi to Indian dignitaries. Celebration of this occasion is to strengthen the relationship between Tibetans and Indians.

RTWA HERBERTPUR



August 22nd 2014: Regional Tibetan Women's Association Herbertpur celebrated the Indian festival Raksha Bandhan by offering gifts and tying rakhi to local Indian leaders. Every year, they celebrate the festival as a gesture to thank Indians for their support and help.

# Chronology of Self-immolation inside Tibet

TWA pays tribute to the brave souls who self-immolated themselves to protest against the Chinese occupation and decades of oppression to crackdown the Tibetans. TWA publish the names and brief information about the self-immolators in its every quarterly newsletter 'VOICE' to pay the homage. For this newsletter, we have continued the chronology of self-immolation from the last edition (April to July 2014). The number goes from 132-133.

132. Name: Kunchok  
Age: 42  
Gender: Male  
Date: September 16th 2014  
From: Golog  
Status: Hospitalized



On September 16th 2014, a 42 year-old Kunchok self-immolated outside a police station in Tsangkor town in Gade, Golog (Chinese: Guoluo), Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province. According to the sources, local Tibetans managed to extinguish the fire and hospitalized him in the nearest hospital. Eventhough this self-immolation happened on September 16; the exile community received the news only on October 5.

133. Name: Lhamo Tashi  
Age: Early 20s  
Gender: Male  
Date: September 17th 2014  
From: Tsoe city, Kanlho  
Satus: Deceased



On September 17th 2014, a young Tibetan student called Lhamo Tashi set himself on fire outside a government Public Security Bureau headquarters in Tsoe City, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province. Lhamo Tashi self-immolated around midnight and local police has taken away his charred body.