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Chronology of Self-immolation inside Tibet

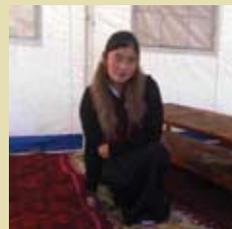
TWA pays tribute to the brave souls who self-immolated themselves to protest against the Chinese occupation and decades of oppression to crackdown the Tibetan. TWA publish the names and brief information about the self-immolators in its every quarterly newsletter 'VOICE' to pay the homage. For this newsletter, we have continued the chronology of self-immolation from the last edition (August to November 2014). The number goes from 134 to 137.

- 134. Name:** Sangye Khar
Age: Unknown
Gender: Male
Date: December 16, 2014
From: Amchok
Satus: Unknown



Sangyal Khar set himself on fire In Front of Police Station today (16 Dec) around 9 am in Amchok, in Sangchu (Chinese: Xiahe) county, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu province (the Tibetan area of Amdo labrang). The Chinese police took away his body and refused to handover the body to Khar's family. According to the sources, the region is already under intense security force.

- 135. Name:** Tseypey
Age: 19/20
Gender: Female
Date: December 22, 2014
From: Meruma, Amdo Ngaba
Satus: Deceased



A 20 year-old Tibetan woman called Tsephe from Miruma, Amdo Ngapa, Tibet set herself on fire today. She died at the scene and her body was taken away by the local police authorities. Tseypey Kyi is daughter of Chime Dorjee and Chenpa of Chudotsang family. Kyi's parents have also been taken away from their home by the police but it is not known if they have been detained.

136. Name: Kalsang Yeshi
Age: late 20s or 30s
Gender: Male
Date: December 23, 2014
From: Tawu, Kham
Status: Deceased



Kalsang Yeshi, a Tibetan monk from Kham Tawu self immolated on December 23, 2014 near a police station. According to the sources, the police station was recently constructed near his monastery, Nyitso, to inspect the monks and local people. Kalsang Yeshi was known for his work of teaching Buddhism to other.

137. Name: Norchok
Age: Late forties
Date: March 6, 2015
Gender: Female
From: Amdo Ngaba
Status: Deceased



A 47-year old woman called Norchok from Trotsuk village in Ngaba (in Chinese, Aba) burned herself to death late Thursday night in a protest against Chinese policies in Tibetan area. She was the 137th known case of self-immolation by Tibetans from inside Tibet. According to the source, Norchok was a constituent of Tephu monastery and had recently taken a vow to become a lifelong vegetarian. Norchok's remains were cremated next day by members of her village to prevent them from being taken by authorities. She is survived by her husband and a son and two daughters.

Statement of Tibetan Women's Association issued on the 56th Anniversary of Tibetan Women's National Uprising Day

March 12, 2014
Dharamsala



Today as we gather here to commemorate the 56th anniversary of Tibetan Women's National Uprising day, we pay tribute to the brave Tibetan women from the three provinces in Tibet who 56 years ago staged a peaceful yet powerful resistance against the brutal Chinese forces staging a forceful occupation of Tibet. The spirit and resilience and conviction of that resistance have continued to this day and Tibetan women are at the forefront of this peaceful non-violent movement.





The 12th March uprising day is remembered not only by the Tibetan women but is also considered a historic day in Tibetan history. Hundreds of Tibetan women who took part in the uprising sacrificed their lives and many faced execution from the Chinese government during the Cultural Revolution. Today, we take this opportunity to honor and pay homage to all of them who had sacrificed their lives for the political struggle and freedom of

Tibetan people. Their sacrifices have been the cornerstones of source of inspiration for generations of Tibetan people.

China's invasion of Tibet and its continuous implementation of harsh policies to crackdown the freedom of Tibetans living inside Tibet have triggered Tibetans to resort to more extreme forms of resistance. Between February 2009 and present day, 136 Tibetans inside Tibet have self-immolated and called for freedom of Tibetan people and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Six Tibetans in exile have self-immolated in expression of solidarity with the Tibetan people inside Tibet and in protest against the Chinese government's draconian policies in Tibet. The sacrifices made by all these martyrs are engraved in our hearts and we stand in solidarity with them.



According to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy's (TCHRD) annual report¹ on 'Human Rights Situation inside Tibet', there are 2110 listed Tibetan political prisoners in Chinese prisons. Under the harsh surveillance of Chinese authorities, there is random detention and criminalization of the family members, friends, and neighbors of the individuals arrested and convicted. TWA calls on the Chinese government to stop these arbitrary arrests of the innocent people and to release all the political prisoners including XIth Panchen lama Gedun Choekyi Nyima ,Tulku Tenzin Delek and Jadel Rinpoche.



Since the Chinese government's abduction of the six-year-old XIth Panchen Gendun Choekyi Nyima on 17th May 1995, there has been no information about his whereabouts and well being. This year marks 20 years since his disappearance. TWA urges international governments and human rights bodies to pressure China to disclose information about his whereabouts and allow the Panchen Lama to be restored to his rightful place at the Tashi Lhunpo monastery.

The human rights situation inside Tibet is continuously deteriorating; the Chinese government is not only exploiting the political and religious rights of Tibetan people, but also destroying the fragile environment on the Tibetan plateau. The Chinese government has been executing strategic measures to sinicize and

1 <http://www.tchrd.org/2015/02/annual-report-2014-human-rights-situation-in-tibet/>

alienate Tibetan people and culture. Consequently, beginning last year, the government publicly encouraged inter-ethnic marriage between Tibetan and Chinese people by introducing a government's reward scheme². TWA constructs such act as a callous plot to annihilate the Tibetan cultural identity. As announced during the 55th anniversary of Tibetan women's uprising day, today TWA is able to produce the result of research reports on 'Inter marriage of Tibetan with Chinese in Tibet' and 'Intermarriage of Tibetan with foreigners in exile'. We hope these findings could benefit readers, researchers and policy makers in making a critical analysis of these policies. TWA has neither passed any judgments nor it is in our intention to attack any individual's personal choices.



It has been 31 years since the reestablishment of Tibetan Women's Association in exile. Today TWA is an internationally recognized Women's Association advocating the rights of women in Tibet and empowering women in exile. Within these three decades, many Tibetan women have taken part in realizing and strengthening the mission of this association. Without such collective effort and determination we wouldn't have achieved such milestones in our exile history. So, we take this occasion to express our sincere

2 http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/china-promotes-mixed-marriages-in-tibet-as-way-to-achieve-unity/2014/08/16/94409ca6-238e-11e4-86ca-6f03cbd15c1a_story.html

gratitude to all the women who have worked diligently for the last many years.

Over the 31 years of TWA's history in exile, TWA has been advocating for the human rights situation inside Tibet through various means and methods: attending international conferences, distributing information kits to international audiences, doing researches on issues concerning Tibetan women, delivering appeal letters to international leaders and bodies, organizing various campaigns at the local and the global level. TWA has also initiated programs to empower Tibetan women in exile and the results of these programs have been bearing fruition. A truly empowered Tibetan society that caters to both women and men is what TWA aims to achieve so as to strengthen the social foundations of the Tibetan political struggle. Also on this significant occasion, TWA announces its 2015 Tibetan



Women Fellowship for advanced study in the field of Gynecology. More details will be made available on TWA's website.

On the significant occasion of 56th anniversary of Tibetan Women's Uprising Day, TWA would like to remind the Chinese President Xi Jinping to pay heed to the call for dialogue from the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration. The Chinese leadership must realize that the middle way policy calling for dialogue is the best way forward to resolve the long-standing Tibetan political issue and the lifetime of His Holiness the

Dalai Lama offers the best opportunity for the Chinese government to address the Tibetan political crisis.

TWA also calls on the Chinese government refrain from denouncing His Holiness the Dalai Lama and realize that in doing so they are hurting the sentiments of the global audience who respect His Holiness as the global icon of peace and a symbol for justice and freedom. TWA strongly condemn the protesters who call themselves as Shugden followers and who over the years have engaged in derogatory actions by criticizing and protesting against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. TWA calls on them to drop being the paid agents of the communist government of China.



This year marks 66years of China's illegal occupation of Tibet. Within these six decades, the Chinese government's efforts to repress the Tibetan people with their policies have failed. Tibetans continue to engage in peaceful and cultural forms of resistance and have openly and defiantly expressed their reverence and faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Tibetans in exile have been carrying the struggle forward, amplifying the voices of Tibetans inside and making sure that the sacrifice of the Tibetan martyrs including the self-immolators doesn't go in vain. The protections of Tibetan identify, language, religion and culture remain at the forefront of this political struggle.

As we remember the sacrifice of Tibetan martyrs and pledge to work towards fulfilling the genuine aspirations of the Tibetan people inside Tibet, we pray for a long and healthy life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who is the symbol of Tibetan identity and a global icon of peace and compassion.



TWA has 56 regional chapters spread across the globe and over 17,000 members outside Tibet. Today, TWA is the second largest Tibetan NGO and the only women's NGO in exile that advocates human rights for Tibetan women in Tibet and works to empower Tibetan women in exile. TWA's slogan is 'Advocacy for home, Action in exile.'



To
Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Date: 9th March, 2015

Subject: Seeking immediate intervention to improve the human rights situation inside Tibet

Your Excellency,

The Central Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) is writing this appeal letter to seek your immediate intervention to stop China from its continuous implementation of harsh policies to crackdown the freedom of Tibetans living inside Tibet.

The human rights situation inside Tibet is continuously deteriorating; recently China has deployed large numbers of Chinese security forces and increase the number of check points in Tibetan populated counties in Gansu and Qinghai provinces. The security forces are closely monitoring Tibetans gathered for religious festivals.

According to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy's (TCHRD) annual report on 'Human Rights Situation inside Tibet' , there are 2110 listed Tibetan political prisoners in Chinese prisons. Under the harsh surveillance of Chinese authorities, there is random detention and criminalization of the family members, friends, and neighbors of the individuals arrested and convicted. Moreover, between February 2009 to present day, 137 Tibetans inside Tibet have self-immolated and called for freedom of Tibetan people and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

China has been claiming that it has improved the social system and modernized Tibet extensively. However, in reality, most of the remote parts of the Tibet are still neglected from the progress. According to the report published by the TCHRD on the right to health 'In the Shadow of Development: Maternal and Child Health in Crisis in Tibet' , the serious inadequate system of public healthcare has resulted poor maternal and child health in Tibetan regions.

On the significant occasions of 56th anniversary of Tibetan National and Women's Uprising days, TWA would like to urge Your Excellency to arrange a committee to go inside Tibet and investigate the real human rights situation of Tibetans living inside Tibet.

TWA also would like to appeal Your Excellency to pressure China to resume the Sino-Tibetan dialogue with envoys of His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan Administration. We believe that this Middle Way Policy calling for dialogue is the best way forward to resolve the long-standing Tibetan political issue.

Yours sincerely,

Tashi Dolma
President
Central Tibetan Women's Association

TWA has 56 regional chapters spread across the globe and over 17,000 members outside Tibet. Today, TWA is the second largest Tibetan NGO and the only women's NGO in exile that advocates human rights for Tibetan women in Tibet and works to empower Tibetan women in exile. TWA's slogan is 'Advocacy for home, Action in exile.'



SEE YOU IN LHASA

A campaign to express the gratitude to His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama

*December 10, 2014
Dharamsala*

Every year, 10th December is celebrated as an auspicious day, the day on which His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. On the 25th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness, the Central Tibetan Women's Association and its 56 regional chapters across the four continents (Asia, Australia, Europe and North America) organized a campaign called SEE YOU IN LHASA.



The Central TWA arranged a campaign table at the gate of Tsuklagkhang and distributed the badges and books (Gems from the Heart - a collection of His Holiness' speeches) for free. The campaign aimed to evoke the unanimous vision of every Tibetan that is to make the return of His Holiness to Tibet and uniting with our brothers and sisters in Tibet.

For the campaign, TWA has produced:

SEE YOU IN LHASA badges,

SEE YOU IN LHASA ring tone and

SEE YOU IN LHASA backpacks.



TWA aspires not only to make Tibetans and friends of Tibet all across the world to wear the badges, set the ring tone and carry the bag; we seek everyone to live with the dream of return back to home.



TWA's president Ms. Tashi Dolma la said "We have organized the campaign 'SEE YOU IN LHASA' in according to the celebration of 25th anniversary of the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama. We have been here in exile for more than five decades as refugees and we will not remain as one for forever. All the Tibetans have unanimous dream of returning to Tibet and to make this dream come true, we all have the responsibilities. Through this campaign, TWA would like remind and request our brothers and sisters to live with dream of going back to home. TWA also request people to set this SEE YOU IN LHASA ring tone as your mobile calling tone, so then it can remain you the urgency of making our dream come true. TWA also request people to say 'SEE YOU IN LHASA' instead of 'BYE BYE'."

Announcement: If anyone is interested to buy the badges and bags, please visit TWA store on the Jogiwara road. Opposite to the Gu Chu Sum building.

You can download the ring tone for free from TWA's website: <http://tibetanwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ringtone-new.mp3>

Other Activities:

One Billion Rising

On February 14, 2015, TWA participated in One Billion Rising Revolution campaign organized by Jogori Rural, Dharamsala.



TWA's New Store

On December 6, 2014 Central Tibetan Women's Association opened a new store on Jogiwara road, next to Gaden Choling nunnery. All the proceeds from the sale go toward TWA's project 'Stitches of Tibet'.



Training at Tibetan Career Center

On December 11, 2014 TWA's General Secretary Nyima Lhamo led a short course to the trainees at the Tibetan Career Centre based in Dharamsala on the topic of 'Gender and Sexual Harassment at the Workplace'



Chief guest at Tibetan Career Center

On December 12, 2014, Central Tibetan Women's Association's President Ms. Tashi Dolma la graced the Tibetan Career Centre's Graduation Ceremony of the 3rd batch of 'Jawed Habib Hair Styling Training" on December 11th 2014



Women Kalons, Tibetan Women Parliamentarians, and leaders of the Tibetan Women's Association take part in the day long discussion

March 14, 2015
Dharamsala

*Report filed by: Women's Empowerment Desk,
Department of Home*

Tibetan Women's Association remains thankful for having been invited to this important discussion.



The Women's Empowerment Desk at the Department of Home, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), organised a day long discussion to review CTA's 'Women's Empowerment Policy'. The policy is now in its 7th year of implementation since its adoption by the 13th Kashag on 15 October 2008.

Women Kalons from the present Kashag, Kalon Gyari Dolma and Kalon

Dicki Chhoyang, seven Tibetan women Parliamentarians and four executive members of the Tibetan Women's Association, participated in the discussion that took place at Nyatri Hall of Gangchen Kyishong on Saturday, 14 March.

Ms. Karma Dolma, coordinator of Women's Empowerment Desk, Department of Home, CTA, delivered the introductory address and also facilitated the meeting.

Kalon Dicki Chhoyang, who heads the Department of Information & International Relations, in her speech emphasized on deconstructing the notion of ‘empowerment for women’ to make it cater to a wider audience.

Ms. Gyari Dolma, the Kalon for Department of Home, spoke at length about the background, rationale for organising the panel discussion and update on the actions undertaken by the C.T.A. for the implementation of Women’s Empowerment Policy. She expressed her expectations from the meeting to formulate a set of do-able recommendations / action plan to ensure the effective implementation of the policy in achieving the intended results.

The discussion dwelled on wide-ranging issues affecting Tibetan women in exile- gender stereotypes, sexual violence, imbalanced political participation and representation, and reiterated CTA’s commitment to address the social imperatives and thereby harness the power and potential of Tibetan women. The participants discussed the way forward in bringing about tangible changes in the exile community in creating gender equality and achieving women’s empowerment in all realms of social, political, education and economic life and significantly in strengthening the social foundations of the Tibetan political struggle.

The day-long discussion concluded with Kalon Gyari Dolma’s remark that the set of recommendations received during the discussion will be taken up for further discussion/directives of the Kashag.



Report from Empowerment Through Action (ETA) Desk of
Tibetan Women's Association

5th Tibetan Women's Advanced Leadership Training

*December 24th – 31st, 2014
Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi*

Pre-Training Preparations

5th Tibetan Women's
ADVANCED LEADERSHIP TRAINING
December 2014 (New Delhi)

"IDENTIFYING * IMPLEMENTING
* INCULCATING LEADERSHIP"

A Tibetan Women's Association's Undertaking

Sponsors:
The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation
National Endowment for Democracy
The Tibet Fund

TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

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twibwomen twacentral

TWA's Advanced Leadership Training is surely one of the most sought after trainings in the Tibetan community for Tibetan women who aspire to polish and strengthen their leadership skills. The project is well worth the time and energy spent during the month-long preparation process. Our financial partners generously accepted our proposal to support this maiden project with the much needed financial backing, thus boosting the confidence and dedication of the individuals working on the project.

The 5th Tibetan Women's Advanced Leadership Training was launched on TWA's website on October 10th, 2014, and subsequently posted on

TWA's Face Book page. As this training targets Tibetan women in the workforce, TWA sent invitations inviting potential women from various Tibetan institutions. That worked in our favour as seventeen working women registered for the training, along with ten students, for a total of 27 participants.

TWA's Coordination team set off to Delhi on the night of 21st December to make on-site arrangements for the 5th Advanced Leadership Training. Two sub-committees were responsible for the pre-training preparations. Sub-committee 'A' arranged the training kits consisting of stationery sets and water bottles, and worked with the mess at the foundation to set the menu and dining logistics. The tasks allotted to Sub-committee B included securing panelists for the panel discussion, making the final reservation confirmations with the India Habitat Centre hall, seeking opportunities for studio participation, getting the print materials from the printing office, buying mementos for the speakers, trainers and panelists and buying the group prizes.

The coordination team was responsible for the site preparation, including the electrical setup and arranging the Tibetan National flags, TWA flags, TWA training banners, speaker platforms, and tablecloths to reflect TWA's presence in the auditorium for the weeklong training.

Training Outline

This edition of the week long training was held from 25th to 31st December, 2014, at the Gandhi Peace Foundation in New Delhi, with attendees from Ladakh, Delhi, Chennai, Dharamsala and Chauntra. The twenty-seven trainees were comprised of teachers, health workers (nurse and physiotherapist), hospitality industry workers, a career counsellor, students and social workers.

The week long training was divided into three phases: identifying, inculcating and implementing leadership skills. Guest speakers at the training included Rev. Yeshe Phuntsok, Member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile; Mr. Tenzin Lekshay, Press Officer at Bureau Office, Delhi; and Geshe Dorji Damdul, Director, Tibet House, Delhi. Our professional trainers who led the training were Mr. Benjamin David from Breakthrough India, Mr. Tarandeep Rekhi, a Senior

Consultant at the Holistic Training Solutions and Ms. Tenzin Palkyi from NED and women's empowerment activist from U.S. The training covered leadership areas such action centered leadership (defining leadership, effective leader and leadership qualities, putting leadership into action, motivation, concept of delegation, decision making and action plans), confidence building, structuring one's thoughts, understanding oneself and interaction styles, managing performance at work, feedback skills, team building, team work, team effectiveness and effective public speaking skills. The outbound sessions included a day lobbying Indian leaders, an interactive evening session with women in the workforce; a group based humanitarian photo and video project, and a panel discussion with famed Indian panelists.

24th December, 2014

The coordination team just had the time to give our final touches to the week-long program, like heeding the appointments given by the possible panelists like Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar and Honourable Sheila Dikshit. Just as the transformation of the auditorium into a well-appointed venue for the training was completed, the trainees started to register, collect their training kits and get their room accommodations.

TWA's President welcomed the trainees very briefly over the welcome dinner and introduced the coordination team to the trainees.

Day 25th December, 2104

1 Opening Function/Introductory/Lobby Training

TWA President Tashi Dolma opened the Advanced Leadership Training and addressed the trainees at the opening function with a detailed background of TWA's aims and objectives, missions and activities. The trainees were then guided through the importance of the Advanced Leadership Training, its objectives and expectations.

TWA's Women Environment and Development officer, Ms. Dorji Kyi led the ice breaker in which the trainees were paired to introduce themselves to each other and then to come out with a drawing to

introduce their partners to the larger group. This activity generated some initial moments of fun and laughter. The introductory round was fun-filled and it was nice to see the trainees open up slowly to the group that they would be with for the remainder of the week.



The trainees were then introduced to 'secret friend' - a secret friend who would be revealed on the night of 31st December. The whole idea was to maintain the secrecy while giving fun moments and



surprises to one's secret friend. The participants were then divided into four teams and each had to name their teams and appoint a team captain and time manager. Ground rules were set with mutual agreement so that the week-long program would be effective and easy for both the organizers and the trainees.



TWA's General Secretary, Nyima Lhamo led the orientation round, guiding the trainees through the program schedule with an emphasis on highlights of the training, their team assignments, a briefing on lobbying Indian leaders, group reporting, group photo and video projects, and the panel discussion with famed leaders. The orientation round gave trainees an overview of how the week would unfold for them.

The afternoon session was lobbying training led by two of our guest speakers. Tenzin Lekshay (Mr.), Media Officer, Bureau Office, New Delhi, was the first trainer of the afternoon. Lekshay la guided our trainees through types of lobbying, strategies and tactics, and how to lobby successfully. Lekshay la also briefed the trainees on what the Tibet Lobby focus has been over the years and what kind of lobbying



campaigns we have organised so far. The session concluded with some guidelines to follow when while lobbying.

Rev. Yeshe Phuntsok, Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile, our second speaker of the day has ample experience of working in various parts of India, especially having worked very closely with Tibet support groups and Indian leaders, TWA could not have had a more resourceful person to guide our trainees. Rev. Yeshe Phuntsok shared his work experiences with due emphasis on some important points one should bear in mind while lobbying.



TWA's General Secretary gave the final presentation and briefing as to what the trainees would do the next day during the outbound training. Nyima told them that this year's ambush lobbying would be "Tibetan Women greet the newly elected Members of Indian



Parliament.” The groups were encouraged to identify the MPs and establish communication beforehand so that on the lobbying day, they would be able to meet as many as possible, and take some really good pictures for their photo-presentation to the groups. She guided them through the rules that each team must stick to throughout the day. For example, the participants must stay with their group, everyone must dress properly, wear their workshop identity card, and use the given budget for transport and lunch. Most importantly, they must appoint a group reporter and a group photographer so that preparation of their 10 minute group presentation after dinner would be easier.

With all the information they got in the afternoon session from our guest speakers, the trainees seemed very curious and excited about how the next day would unfold them.

Day 26th December, 2014

2

Outbound Training - Ambush Lobbying

Day Two was the practical ambush lobby day where the groups were sent out to meet the 6th Lok Sabha new MPs (Members of Indian Parliament). Each group was given contact details of about 15 MPs and they were to make appointments and arrange their visits.



At this time we had no asks for lobbying, but the participants were to meet the targeted politicians and greet them and thank them for their continuous support.

The aim of this activity was to give the participants a direct experience of lobbying, keeping intact with their time management skills, working in a group and using the given budget properly.



In the evening, each group presented their work, showcasing how their day went, the MPs they met, challenges they faced and their learning experiences.



The participants were able to meet 13 MPs in total on the Lobby training day. The names of the MPs are as follows;

1. Rashid Alvi (INC), member of Rajya Sabha
2. Ram Kumar Kashyap (INLD), member of Rajya Sabha
3. Maneka Gandhi (Minister for Child and Women Development)
4. Dr. Udit Raj, member of Lok Sabha
5. Juggal Kishore, member of Rajya Sabha
6. Ajay Nishad, member of Rajya Sabha
7. Thupsten Chewang, member of Lok Sabha
8. Dr. Chandan Mitra, member of Rajya Sabha
9. Mahendra Singh Mahara, member of Rajya Sabha
10. Pankaj Bora, member of Rajya Sabha
11. J.D. Saleem, member of Rajya Sabha
12. P.A Sangma, member of Lok Sabha
13. Vincent H. Pala, member of Lok Sabha

The challenges faced by the participants were that many of the MPs were not in Delhi because of the Christmas and New Year holidays, and participants not being familiar with Delhi routes and areas, resulting in confusion with the addresses which consumed a lot of their time.



The Learning's of the day included the participants getting to know Delhi area better, especially MP's residences, learning how to work cooperatively in a group and the importance of time and budget management.

On the whole, the day long outbound training on lobbying the new MPs went exceptionally well considering that many of the participants lobbied for the first time in their lives. The groups were very competitive and very determined. Many of them walked miles to manage their budget and yet all of them came back to the workshop venue on time.



Day *27th December, 2014*

3

Action Centered Leadership Training

Mr. Benjamin David from Breakthrough India based in Bangalore led the day's leadership training. The theme of the day was "Action Centered Leadership," designed, developed and delivered by Explore Training and Development Services exclusively for the Tibetan Women's Association.



The content of the training was the Action Centered approach where the participants found themselves constantly drawing on their situations through down to earth practical instructions of what a leader need to do in order to become effective. The whole exercise encouraged and ensured the action part of the program.



The program worked on actions and not points. This is when one truly imbibes effective leadership methodology. The program also focused on three domains that contribute to leadership: Task Accomplishment, Team, and Individual. The program also addressed areas of Delegating, Decision Taking, Leadership Framework, Motivating, and Resource Management.



The trainees were asked to perform some practical leadership tasks through which Mr. Benjamin explained and elaborated on putting leadership into action, motivation and delegation. Mr. Benjamin made it clear that motivation is about giving opportunities for achievement, responsibility, and creativity for every team member to develop their full potential, which requires coaching, support and recognition to get the best from each team member. The trainer also focused on being objective and specific when giving feed back or when stating your observations, thus focusing on “doing.” And avoiding long-winded stories or sweeping statements in order to be constructive and help people become better leaders.



Day *28th December, 2014*

4

Leading self: mind flow, your social styles, feedback skills

Tarandeep Rekhi, Senior Consultant at Holistic Training Solutions was our expert trainer of the day. The theme of the day long program was “Leading Self” with a focus on mind flow, social styles and feedback skills. The starter of the program was an icebreaker where trainees had to find people doing or having something the idea was to see how well we know each other.

The first session was “Confidence Building and Structuring your Thoughts,” which began with a case study as an example to see

how often in life we perceive our situations differently although they may be similar. It was made clear that it's natural for us to have distorted thoughts but in excess or if not controlled, distorted thoughts can lead to dysfunctional assumptions and make us automatically think negative thoughts. This is called Automatic Negative Thoughts (ANT). ANTs are normal in most of us; however, it's how we control ANTs that distinguish the healthy individual from an unhealthy one.



The next concept discussed was “Mind Flow Technique” which states that association and emphasis are two important aspects of memory that are vital in learning and building confidence. When



one is asked to talk on a subject, the biggest challenge is what to say and how much, and we often tend to be fearful and ramble. This technique is helpful to clarify and ease the clutter in our thoughts. It is a simple 5 step process to learn effective delivery and boost one's confidence and communication skills.



“Leading with People Styles,” how to develop awareness and understand our dominant leadership styles was the next discussion’s focal point. All trainees were given time to fill out a questionnaire and mark their score sheet so that each one gets to identify their leadership style.



We are all so different and so are our styles of leadership. Leadership is less about one's own needs and more about the needs of the organization and the people you lead and work with. Leadership styles are adapted from many factors and vary from person to person. The trainees were then divided into groups representing four different leadership styles, their traits and the strategies to deal with them. Each group then had to present their leadership style to other groups and discuss how they would like to be dealt with by people with other styles.

The final session of the day was giving feedback. Giving effective feedback is one of the most valuable tools that we can use to develop and improve performance at work and in life. The trainers explained different types of feedback and how and when feedback can be most effective. Feedback delivered and given in a timely fashion is always best.

An Evening with Women in the Workforce



The evening session was an informal discussion with women in the workforce. The objective of the Advanced Leadership Training is to encourage Tibetan women to be in the workforce and become part of decision-making bodies. The evening discussion was one session that everyone looked forward to with much excitement. The conversation included Miss Tenzin Nyima, Coordinator and Outreach Officer at Tibet Corps, Miss. Rashi Jauhri, Deputy Program

Director at Students for a Free Tibet India, Ms. Tenzin Nangsel, Deputy News Editor with Mail Today of the India Today Group and Ms. Nima Chodon, Communication Officer of Rotary International's Polio Campaign in India and a freelance Radio Jockey with the All India Radio FM.



The objective of the evening discussion was to introduce women who are working both within and outside of the Tibetan community, the work they do in different spheres of the community, to share their work experiences with the TWA Leadership trainees. Our speakers gave some valuable guidelines from their own work experiences to encourage and inspire our trainees in giving their best at their respective workplaces. Looking at the energy and support in the discussion, TWA can be only proud of our women and hopefully we will befriend women and continue being there for one another.

Day 29th December, 2014

5

Team Building and Effective Public Speaking Skills

The trainees had a fun learning day as Mr. Tarandeep Rekhi, Senior Consultant of Holistic Training Solutions had a lot of practical team tasks to guide the participants through the concepts of team building and team effectiveness.

The first task of the day was the “Crane Game” where each team makes the highest tower possible by using a crane system to arrange

a maximum number of wooden blocks. The teams were secretly observed to see how they worked. The criterion of observation included planning, strategy, time management, job delegation, team communications, clarity in communication, encouraging trust and cooperation, and listening and brainstorming.



The second task was a collaborative task to build a roller coaster to carry a ball in motion for 30 seconds in its own momentum. The teams were given time to discuss and strategize how they could combine their individual team efforts as one bigger team. Once the team's individual roller coasters were ready, the trainer gave them



extra minutes to join all the roller coasters and make one giant roller coaster. This really surprised everyone, but the only option was to collaborate and come out with one giant roller coaster.



Tarandeep Rekhi concluded his training with a closing circle where each trainee had to make one promise of change as a leader.

Ms. Tenzin Palkyi of NED and a women’s empowerment activist from the U.S. led a half-day training session entitled “Toast Master: Effective Public Speaking Skills.”

Palkyi la started her session with a brief introduction and an activity called “The Newspaper Challenge” in which each team was given a stack of newspapers, scissors and tape. The task was to pick a model within the group and make a dress from the materials provided. Each group was then asked to pick a presenter and talk about the dress they made and why they think it was the best one made. Each presenter was given 1 minute to talk about the dress. The whole idea was to let their creativity run through when designing the dress and during their presentation.



Palkyi la then did a brief power point presentation on effective public speaking skills; encouraging the trainees not to worry if they



have a fear of public speaking because most of us share that fear and there are ways to combat nervousness. It only takes preparation to combat nervousness. The trainees were then guided through what is entailed in preparation and Palkyi shared certain tips from her personal experiences in preparing for public speaking events.

The next activity was an individual task to work on a 1 minute speech. The trainees were advised to incorporate everything they learned in the past few days when they delivered their speech. A trick was that each trainee was assigned a topic about which



they might agree or disagree, but the task was to practice public speaking. The second trick was that their speech was videotaped and each presenter was judged by three judges.

When everyone finished delivering their speech, there was a feedback session. Everyone watched each participant's speech on a big screen, the judges gave their feedback and each participant was asked for self-reflections as to how they could do better the next time.

Palkyi la concluded her session by expressing her appreciation for everyone doing their best in the speech task, and their participation in the Leadership Training which indicates that they all have the willingness to do better and learn in life. The will and determination are often the first steps to greatness. Palkyi ended her session with the reminder that all toast masters start with a single speech.

Day *30th December, 2014*

6

Practical outbound training - Citizen Journalism for a humanitarian cause'

After 5 days of intensive leadership skills training, the participants were sent out again on practical outbound training. Here also they had to work in groups and complete two group projects.

Project 1 was that each group was to use their skills in citizen journalism and work on a photo story. They could choose any issue but it had to have a human value and their photos should tell the story. Project 2 was for each group to complete a 5 minute video on any social issue of their choice.

Groups were given a set amount of time and money to implement their projects and complete their presentation to be judged in the evening session. The theme for all of the group photo stories was "Humans of Majnu-ka Tilla."

Die Hard



This photo story on the theme of "Humans of Majnu-ka Tilla" had a specific focus on Youth Empowerment, showing different youths of Majnu-ka Tilla engaged in various workforce. Their video was based on the important social issue of alcohol and drug addicts,

conveying to all of us a vital message to not waste the potential and the contribution one can be of the Tibetan community.

Sensational Seven



Sensational Seven did their photo story on “Humans of Majnu-ka Tilla” with a spotlight on “Cosmopolitans of Majnu-ka Tilla,” where they tried to show the less privileged side of the area. Their video was titled “Looking for the next Sikyong.” “They questioned people randomly in the streets of Majnu-ka Tilla asking whether the next Sikyong will be a female or a male, thus capturing people’s opinions. This group managed to come out with a very well synchronized video.

Tomorrow’s Leader



This group titled their photo story “Service to men is service to God” and their photos tell the story of everyday life inside the Gurdwara Majnu Tilla Sahib (A Sikh Temple) at the beginning of Manju-ka Tilla. It was interesting how they tried to show something beyond the Tibetan community but very much within Manju-ka Tilla.

“The Iron Lady” was the video project this group worked on. It tells of the struggle of a Tibetan woman, a widow who makes her living selling street foods at Majnu-ka Tilla. Everyone in the auditorium could connect to the story, but the only hope was if the cinematography had been little better.

White Lotus



Like all the other groups, this group focused its photo story on life inside Majnu-ka Tilla and their video project was based on a self-made businessman. “The Donut Man” video shows an outline of a day in the life of this Donut Man. The video also tells the audience how donuts are made as they try to interview the Donut man.

A panel of three judges evaluated the team projects. Their project stories were judged on the basis of creativity, content, presentation (body language, eye contact and order of content), and the video project was judged on the issue their video touched on, technical aspects, and storytelling aspects.

The day ended with much contentment and satisfaction for everyone having done the projects to the best of their abilities.

Day 31st December, 2014**7****Panel Discussion/Closing Ceremony / Feedback session**

The panel discussion, 'HeforShe-Role of Men in Empowering Women,' held at the India Habitat Centre, marked the culmination of the week-long leadership training. TWA had the honour of hosting three esteemed panelists for the final day's discussion: the Honourable Sheila Dikshit, former chief minister of India's capital New Delhi from 1998 to 2013; Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, former minister and current Member of Parliament, and Ms. Karuna Nundy, senior advocate of the Supreme Court of India.



The panel discussion was attended by more than 50 people and was moderated by TWA's General Secretary. The 2-hour discussion focused what role men can play in creating gender equality, and tried to answer a few tough questions such as how do we keep the momentum and drive going to see that men's passion and desire to create a fair and just society for both men and women is achieved.

The honourable Sheila Dikshit, former Chief Minister of Delhi from 1998 to 2013, spoke on the tremendous contribution women make on a daily basis. She said, "75% of all work in the world are done by women," but more often than not, women get taken for granted.

She expressed concerns about how women don't get the credit they deserve, and the respect that men should give them. Mrs. Dikshit rejected the practice of referring to women as the weaker sex. It is just that women do not currently have the opportunity to realize



their full potential. But it is also clear that in all the fields where women have exercised their abilities, they have proved themselves. So, with the right environment, where the He's of the world create space and opportunities for the She's of the world, there can definitely be a fair society for both men and women.



Advocate Karuna Nundy said it is time to lead now and stop the culture of complicity with the system of patriarchy. It is time to

reject the system of thought that privileges men. In the current state of the world, Ms. Nundy argued, “my rights and your rights are tied in together.” It’s important to struggle for our rights, because rights are never handed to the oppressed on a platter. She said having a daughter is the biggest indicator of whether a man is a feminist. In the legal world, Ms. Nundy said, it’s now time to create systems of incentives and penalties to really make a sustaining difference in sensitizing police and judges to gender issues. She also said that the patriarchal system should be rejected completely because it not only oppresses women, but it also suppresses the compassionate and sensitive side of men.

Shri. Mani Shankar Aiyar reflected on how the He’s in positions of power are dominating society. So, unless the He’s create space for the She’s to exercise their power, women will never be able to take on leadership positions. He credited the 33% reservation for women in India for creating a platform that has allowed 13-15 lakh women to be elected to local offices. He said more women hold elected offices in India than rest of the world put together. He said that with appropriate training and education, all women could be just as effective as men. He also argued that women tend to be less corrupt compared to men and they tend to focus more on social welfare issues.



TWA’s President made concluding remarks and presented group prizes and certificates to the trainees at the closing ceremony.

The final session of the training was the closing circle where each participant shared their oral feedback. TWA believes in improving the training each year and thus the feedback and suggestions from the trainees have their role to play to better our programs.

‘Women’s Talent night’

The final evening of the training was an evening for the women leaders to unleash and let loose their talents. The “Women’s Talent Night” had teams perform solo and group songs and dances and a fashion show with a theme and social message. Just before the clock ticked midnight, the secret friends were finally revealed to much laughter and surprise as the identities of the secret friends were finally revealed.

It was then the final countdown to a brand new year 2015. TWA wishes everyone a prosperous and successful year ahead.

Buddhism Course:



Geshe Dorji Damdul, Director of the Tibet House led a three evening course on “Introduction on Buddhism.” The Tibet House was founded in 1965 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to preserve and disseminate the unique cultural heritage of Tibet. TWA remains thankful to Geshe Dorji Damdul la and his team for providing us with much needed support despite the fact that it was a last minute request sought.

One's culture defines one's identity, and Buddhism is the culture that every Tibetan can be proud of being affiliated with. Culture surely contributes to how we see ourselves and it sums up the total of ways of living we adopt and convey from one generation to another. The Buddhism courses arranged for the trainees were very well received and participated in, with so many questions and queries that surely highlighted the attention and interest of the participants.

We hope that all of us will be able to put into practice what was learnt as our spiritual leader always emphasizes on being a 21st century Buddhist, being able to use our intelligence to the maximum to transform our emotions and our actions and growing up with the best of human qualities.

Conclusion:

Tibetan Women's Association has many to thank as we conclude one of TWA's annual projects. We would like to thank our financial partners, the Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy and the TIBET FUND, all based in the United States, for supporting us with the much needed financial contributions.

We remain thankful to our 27 women leaders for taking part in the 5th edition of the Tibetan Women's Advanced Leadership Training. TWA would also like to thank institutions like the Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society, Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute (Men-Tsee-Khang), Tibetan Children's Village Chauntra, and Tibet Charity for availing the opportunity offered and for sending your representatives to our training. We look forward to a long association and continued support in future as well.

We look forward to progressing with the best of our efforts in bringing more leadership-centric programs to polish the leadership skills of our women, ultimately producing more women leaders in our community. We hope more and more Tibetan women will climb higher on the leadership scale on both personal and professional fronts, thereby strengthening the Tibetan Community as a whole, and be able to contribute towards larger issues beyond the Tibetan community.

As Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, “Be the change you want to see.” TWA is hopeful that the much needed change to make this world a better place for both women and men will come from each of us. We wish our trainees the best in all their endeavors. They surely gave us the belief that the much needed change will come from them.

Quotes from participants:

“I learned to be more responsible and will try my best to implement the skills learned to better myself and the Tibetan community”. Tenzin Nyima, Service, Dharamsala

“Life is about moving out of comfort zones, and I learned a lot of real life lessons. This training will be my take away of year 2014”. Tenzin Seldon, Student, Delhi University

“This training is a complete leadership package”. Tenzin Samten, Corporate Sector, Chennai.

“I got to live another student-like life through this training. It’s a great learning opportunity and I will always compare and compete with myself in life”. Tenzin Choedon, Teacher, Dharamsala

Report from TWA's Empowerment through Action Desk

7th Annual Buddhist Nun's Leadership Training

*1st - 7th March 2015
College for Higher Tibetan Studies*

The 7th Annual Buddhist Nun's Leadership Training, held from March 1st to 7th was attended by 28 nuns from nunneries based Ladakh – Jammu and Kashmir, Nepal (Kopan nunnery and Keydong Thuk-Che-Cho-Ling) and Tilokpur (Karma Drubgyu Thargayling). The week-long training highlighted basic leadership skills, gender empowerment, legal empowerment and conflict resolution training. The participants also had the opportunity to embark on a day long educational excursion and visit the exile hub, Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan institutes.

Pre-Training preparations

This weeklong surely being one of the sought after training for the nuns aspiring to polish and strengthen their leadership skills and the preparation for this annual affair takes enough times and energy which is all worth the project. Our financial partner has been very generous with their continued support to the project with the much needed financial drive thus help boost the confidence and the belief of the individual working on the project. As this training targets the nuns in our community, TWA sent invitations inviting nuns from three regions, Ladakh, Tilokpur and Nepal and it all worked in our favour getting 28 nuns register for the training.

The Coordination team had the on-ground arrangements made for the 7th Annual Nun's Leadership Training. The pre-training preparations included the task to set the schedule, logistics, to arrange the training kit (stationery set, water bottle and yoga mat) and set the menu, dining timings with the mess at the Centre, arranging and confirming the trainers and speakers, getting the print materials from printing office, buying the group prizes.

The coordination team finally sets the hall with the banners, tables, taking care of the electrical set up; thus serving to reflect TWA's presence in the auditorium for the weeklong training.

1st March, 2015 - Registration

Just as the auditorium had turned into a well transformed venue for the training, the trainees started reporting and registering at the training venue collecting their training kit and got accommodated in their rooms.

TWA's General Secretary welcomed the trainees very briefly over the welcome dinner and introduced the coordination team to the trainees.

Day *2nd March, 2015*

1

The standard routine at TWA trainings is the morning yoga session and the yoga session early waited for the nuns and organizers. Had it not been the rain and the cold weather, the yoga mats would have added colours to the green lawn at Sarah, instead of conducting the yoga sessions in the hall. The yoga session was led by Mr. Choedhar Chughtsang who had been trained by the well known yoga master Swami Ramdev.



TWA's President began the training with her opening remarks and addressed the trainees at the opening function giving a detailed

background of TWA's aims and objectives, its missions and activities. The trainees were then guided through the importance of the Annual Buddhist Nun's Leadership Training, its objectives and expectations.



TWA's Women Environment and Development officer, Ms. Dorji Kyi led the ice breaker in which the trainees were paired to introduce each other and then finally come out with a drawing to introduce their partners to the larger group. This activity was fun as it brought their initial fun moments and laughter. The introductory round was fun filled and it was nice to see the trainees opening up slowly to



the group that they will stick with for a week. The trainees were then introduced to 'secret friend' and each one gets a secret friend which would be revealed and disclosed on 7th March night. The whole idea is to maintain the secrecy and keep giving fun moments and surprises to ones secret friend. The participants were then divided into four teams and each had to name their teams and

appoint a team captain and time manager. The ground rules were set with mutual agreement so that the week long program becomes effective and easy for both the organizers and trainees.

TWA's General Secretary led the orientation round guiding the trainees through the weeklong program schedule with emphasis on featuring highlights of the training; guiding them through their team assignments, briefing on the day long educational excursion , group reporting, group photo project. The orientation round gave trainees an overview of how the week will unfold for them.



The afternoon session was led by Nyima Lhamo, TWA's General Secretary theme on Gender Empowerment for Tibetan nuns. The session began with a very simple instruction for the groups to come out with the words that describe girl/woman and boy/man to them in groups. The answers from the groups were set aside for discussion in the later hours and the next group activity had the groups discuss and brainstorm on the following three questions: How and when did you know that you were a girl, Your most painful experience as a girl and Were you treated differently at home because you are a girl? The participants were asked to share their answers for above topics based on their group discussion. Each group was asked to present their points. The main idea behind this activity was to make them realize the existence and reality of inherent and innate gender discrimination in the society. The group activity was then followed by a detailed explanation on what

is gender and what is sex and patriarchy. The answers to the first two group activities actually prepared the nuns for the session on what is sex and gender. The answers could be separated either as sex or gender which clearly highlighted plenty socially constructed expectations and definitions of a boy/man and of a girl/woman. Then the topic was further connected to patriarchy and patriarchal system; the participants were clearly instructed that gender is neutral and not the problem, gender is the result of patriarchy and patriarchy is never a fight between boy/man and girl/woman. In fact patriarchy is a fight between two ideology; patriarchy and equality. Patriarchy is everywhere and so inherent in us but it is for us to decide.

The participants were then guided through the means and mediums of gender socialization; after certain discussion and explanations, the trainers screened few videos; some of which reflected on how socially constructed definitions of women and men are so innate in us, some videos highlighted how media can play a constructive role and bring positive changes through the messages they give to the masses through television commercials. After the screenings, the groups had their second activity to come up with one-minute gender sensitive advertisement. The groups were given time to discuss and prepare for the enactment of the advertisement after which the groups came with their creative ideas and group performances.



“River of Life”, the session after dinner saw the nuns sit in a circle drawing their life’s journey in a visual representation, ultimately explaining how their life has been so far, the motivation and strengths behind them.

Hearing the nuns brought to surface how circumstances gave them the choice of becoming nuns to some of them while most of them made their some made the choices by themselves and some of them had a conscious decision and choice to bring change for themselves and for others. The objective of the session was to send a message that we are all the same as humans but our backgrounds so various bringing in a range of strengths and inspirations thereby showing them the potentials that they have in doing the best in life.

We hope the sharing in this session will help the nuns realise their potential and achieve their dreams.

Day 3rd March, 2015

2

TWA’s General Secretary, Nyima Lhamo led the day’s session on ‘Building effective communication skills’. The nuns played the game ‘Finding the Animal Partner,’ which underlined lessons about communication and the significant difference between animals and human beings: the enhanced ability to communicate. The nuns were then introduced to concepts of communication and communication processes through presentations, exercises, role plays and group exercises.



The nuns were briefed on how to employ SMART communication skills (strategic and creative communication) in daily lives, how SMART communication skills make things much easier, on the importance of being SMART in everyday life and even at work when delegating, chairing, negotiating, motivating, selling, leading or disagreeing. SMART communication skills is all about getting your point across in a firm, concise and empowering manner no matter what position you hold.



The nuns then had to produce a group presentation of an award winning television commercial; each group designed a product to sell, with a jingle for the product and performed the commercial



to the larger audience. What had been learned during this session is that communication goes far beyond the actual words that we say and the more important part is not what you say, but how you say it and the way you say it. Communication skills are not about personal or positional power but they are an art, a skill and an asset for you to become successful in your field.

The afternoon session was on effective public speaking skills and Nyima briefly introduced what the nuns will do in this session. The nuns were grouped into smaller groups for their first afternoon activity called 'newspaper challenge', where each team where each team was given a stack of newspapers, a scissor and a tape. The task was to pick a model within the group and make a dress out of the materials provided. Each group was then asked to pick a presenter and talk about the dress they made and why they think it's the best one made. Each presenter was given 1 minute each to talk about the dress. The whole idea was to let their creativity run through when designing the dress and during their presentation.



Nyima then did a brief power point presentation on effective public speaking skills; encouraging the trainees not to worry if they have fear of public speaking because most of us have the fear in us and there are ways to combat nervousness. It only takes preparation to combat nervousness. The trainees were then guided through what entails preparation and Nyima shared certain tips from her personal experiences in preparing for a public speaking event.



The next activity was an individual task to work on a 1 minute short speech. The nuns were advised to incorporate everything they have learned in the past few days when they deliver their speech. The trick was that each trainee was assigned a topic each which may be something they would agree or disagree but the task was to practice public speaking. The second trick was that their speech was videotaped and each presenter was judged.

When everyone finished delivering their speech; it was the feedback session. Everyone watched each participant's speech on big screen, the judges gave their feedback and each participant was asked for self-reflections as to how they can do it better the next time.



Nyima concluded her session appreciating everyone for doing their best in the speech task, appreciated their participation in Leadership Training which only indicates that they all have the willingness to better and learn in life. The will and determination is often the first step to greatness.

Every breather and activity played highlighted the importance of all elements of communications: source, message, channel, encoding, decoding, receiver, feedback and context. Every breather tested the trainees' application of strategic communication skills.

Day 4th March, 2015

3

Sonam Dechen, the Co-Director and Tenpa Phuntsok, trainers from Tibetan Centre for Conflict Resolution (TCCR) led the morning session. Understanding conflict was the first topic for discussion asking the nuns to come out with the words that comes to their mind when they hear the word 'conflict'. The participant's answers and ideas varied a lot but mostly swayed towards negative like war, hatred, chaos, crisis etc. The nuns were then told that we feel



uncomfortable when we hear the word conflict. Our trainers then defined conflict to the nuns introducing to them various available definitions and finally affirming the definition that the centre has come up with that incorporates that notion of ignorance, which is rooted in our Buddhist philosophy. The discussion further stated

that conflict should not always be viewed as negatively; perceiving conflict positively is always an opportunity to learn about the other side and can prove to be one of the best means to create peace. The learning curve here thus states that it is very often the way we think of conflict that sets the tone its resolution. The trainers then identified the causes of conflict being factors like culture, needs, interests, values and perception based on ones ideology.



The next topic discussed looked at how conflicts escalate in general; we looked at the steps uphill, the process by which conflicts grow in severity over time either between individuals or groups ranging from personal enmity to bigger hostilities in political or military context. Once the trainers explained the steps uphill in conflict escalation, the nuns were given a group task to think of a real life incident on conflict that had happened in the past and relate it to the steps uphill to elaborate what happened at each step and explain to the larger group how conflict escalated in that particular incident. The trainers then explained to the nuns some of the effective ways to resolve a conflict would be by being aware of interdependency, building trust, finding shared goals, values and interests and finding opportunities for creative synergy.

There was a certain realization in many of us that our culture and religion has played its vital roles in helping us deal with conflicts in daily lives. Means like dialogue, awareness and mutual respect are paramount features of conflict resolution and not to forget that Buddhism teaches compassion for all beings.

The exercises and breathers incorporated in the session aided in keeping intact the interest of the nuns alive throughout the session.



After lunch session was theme on team building effective teamwork led by TWA trainer, Dorji Kyi. The session was filled with a lot of practical team tasks to guide the nuns through the concepts of team building and team effectiveness.

The groups were explained why and how team work is important to enhance the team's participation in meeting the goals, accomplishing tasks, to enhance social relations and clarify team roles, to solve tasks and interpersonal problems. The teams then discussed to come out with their definition and components of a team; to which Dorji explained the components of team building as;

- Goal setting: aligning around goals
- Interpersonal-relationship management: building effective working relationships
- Role clarification: reducing team members' role ambiguity
- Problem solving: finding solutions to team problems

The team tasks given thought the session observed how they worked in teams; based on criterion such as planning, strategy,

time management, job delegation, team communications, clarity in communications, encouraging trust and cooperation, and listening and brainstorming.

Dorji concluded her session with a closing circle where each nun had to make one promise of change as a leader.

Day *5th March, 2015*

4

All the nuns seemed excited and eager looking forward to the day long educational tour about to unfold for them.



The first educative session was the Parliament house where the nuns were addressed by the Honourable Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile. The nuns were extensively introduced to the Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE) as being the unicameral and highest legislative organ of the Central Tibetan Administration; it was explained how the creation of this democratically elected body has been one of the major changes that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has brought about in his efforts and commitment to introduce a democratic system of administration. The nuns then were lectured about the numbers of Parliament members; their election on the basis of the traditional provinces of Tibet; the four members elected by the Tibetans living in Europe, North America and Canada; the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon faith.

The nuns were then briefed about the elections of the Parliamentarians, the criteria of eligibility to contest elections in the Parliament, the tenures, the number of sessions held, the standing committee composition, the periodic tours of the members of Parliament to settlements and their tasks and the existence of Local Parliaments (scaled down replicas of the TPiE) established in the major Tibetan communities.

The Honourable Speaker emphasized on the importance of Tibetan language as the ultimate medium to master Buddhism and therefore the need to study well and to work hard to overcome the challenges of a life in exile. The nuns had the pleasure to pose for a group picture with the Honourable Speaker Mr. Penpa Tsering to mark the conclusion of the Speaker's address to the nuns.



The group then walked to the next adjacent building where the Honourable Minister Pema Chonjor assented to address the nuns on initiatives of the Department of Religion and Culture and Nuns Empowerment. Honourable Kalon stressed on the importance of education for the nuns especially Buddhist studies and work hard for Geshema Degree. He encouraged the nuns to do better in their studies, in building their self confidence and thereby to be able to contribute to the society. Even though time was running out on us, few of the nuns were able to ask questions.

The nuns were then introduced to Tibetan Medicine and Astro Institute where Dr. Tseten explained the nuns around their museum about the history of the institute and Tibetan medicine. The most interesting part was to observe the keenness and interest in the nuns when they got to visit site to see how the Tibetan medicines were made from raw materials to the final packing stage. It was also interesting to hear some of the nuns sharing their thoughts saying they never realised the task and process behind making the medicines and some of them also vowed not to waste medicines in future. An interesting education visit comes to an end right before lunch break.



Library of Tibetan Works and Archives was the next visit; the nuns visited the museum at LTWA, guiding the nuns through the history and establishment of the library, followed by a visit to the manuscript section. The following session that awaited the nuns was led by Mr. Nyima Gyaltsen, Head of Science Department at LTWA on Science and Buddhism. Nyima la spoke about science, its definition and characters, the relationship between Buddhism and Science. He stressed on the areas where Buddhism can benefit from Science and the areas where Buddhism can contribute towards science. It was really inspiring to see the nuns contribute their ideas and opinions to his talk and also asked many questions.

The final interactive session was with the Honourable Sikyong, the Tibetan Political Leader, Dr. Lobsang Sangay at the Kashag hall.

Sikyong made the nuns feel at ease throughout with a lot of questions to the nuns. The session mainly focussed on focused mainly on women, women empowerment, self confidence, self esteem and self belief. The nuns were encouraged to believe in themselves, to build their self-confidence and self-esteem and to continue with their monastic education up to their best possibilities; they were inspired to avail of opportunities within and beyond nunneries and to be contributing members of the Tibetan community at large.



A group picture with the honourable Sikyong marked the end of the session and boarding the cabs everyone returned to the training venue.

It is often that many visit Dharamsala either on personal or work accounts but rarely do we make it a point to study Dharamsala, especially Ganchen Kyishong, the exile Tibetan hub.

Day 6th March, 2015

5

Day 5 was the outbound practical training for the nuns. Even though the nuns have been briefed about this day during orientation round, after breakfast nuns gathered in the hall for reminding the instructions for the day. After that the nuns left in groups for their project implementation.

As instructed all the nuns came back to the workshop venue before dinner. After dinner we all gathered in the hall and the groups

started preparing their group presentation. Each group presented their project along with their financial statement. Even though the organizing team did not give any specific topic or theme for the group project, all the four groups did their project on environment related issues. They all went to different areas in Dharamsala and cleaned up the dirtiest places like the bus stand, main market, lingkor road and few nunneries. Two groups planted flowers around the nunneries since there will be someone to water the plants.



All the groups have done extremely well and it showed on their face while presenting their work.

Day *7th March, 2015*

6

For the final day of the workshop, the nuns were led on a session on the legal outlook for violence against women and protection of women and children under the Indian Law. During this session the following topics were explained to the nuns; Sexual violence, gender based violence, sexual harassment, rape, stalking, voyeurism, age of consent and presumption of consent, tips for dealing with sexual harassment, guidelines in filing FIR. This session was solely aimed for making the nuns aware of the problems and ways to handle them so that they could help themselves and help others.

The nuns sat in a circle for 'Spin a yarn', the oral feedback session where each nun were given a minute each to share their feelings and learning from the weeklong program.



The final closing function saw TWA President Ms. Tashi Dolma thank the nuns for their active participation throughout the week and wished them well in the future as they were handed their certificates of participation.



The nuns then visited the Gyutoe monastery as part of the program for some social bonding hours and much to the delight of the nuns,

a teaching by Samdhong Rinpoche had begun the same day as we reached there. The nuns spent few quiet hours to receive the teaching before we headed back to Sarah for the final evening.

The day ended with our special farewell dinner and the secret friends were revealed; all in much laughter exchanging gifts and hugs taking pictures with their new friends. The last night was the opposite of the first night when we all barely knew each other. The dining room was filled with laughter and joy. It was a heart warming experience to see the nuns so happy and content.



Conclusion

Tibetan Women's Association has many to thank as we conclude one of TWA's annual projects. We would like to thank our financial partner Science Meets Dharma based in the Switzerland, for supporting us with the much needed financial contributions.

We remain thankful to our 28 nuns for taking part in the 7th edition of the Annual Buddhist nuns Leadership Training. We would also thank the respective heads and authorities of the nunneries for availing the opportunity and assenting to our humble invitations and thus for sending their nuns to take part in our training. We look forward to a long association and continued support in future as well.

TWA remains thankful to the nunneries for availing the opportunity offered and Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society for supporting us with a yoga master throughout the weeklong program.

We look forward to progressing with the best of our efforts in bringing more leadership-centric programs to polish the leadership skills of our women, ultimately producing more women leaders in our community. We hope more and more Tibetan women will climb higher on the leadership scale on both personal and professional fronts, thereby strengthening the Tibetan Community as a whole, and be able to contribute towards larger issues beyond the Tibetan community.

As Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, “Be the change you want to see.” TWA is hopeful that the much needed change to make this world a better place for both women and men will come from each of us. We wish our trainees the best in all their endeavours. They surely gave us the belief that the much needed change will come from them.

Thank you very much

Report from Women Environment and Development Desk of
Tibetan Women's Association

20th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP20)

*General Army Headquarters, Lima, Peru
1st December to 12th December 2014*



Introduction

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) entered into force in 1994, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. The Conference of the Parties (COP) was designated as the supreme governing body of the Convention.

This year COP20 was held at the General Army Headquarters, Lima in a facility built for the occasion. This structure had more than 30 meeting rooms and 2 plenaries with capacity for 2,000 people. Two weeks of intense activity, COP20 mobilized a large number of people gathered in Lima to be part of this international event that

brings together representatives from governments, civil society, NGOs, business and authorities from 195 countries.

Dorji Kyi, Women's Environment and Development Desk Officer (WEDD) of the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) along with Mr. Tempa Gyaltsen, an environment research fellow at the Tibet Policy Institute was able to attend the UN conference from 4th to 12th December, 2014. TWA would like to extend our gratitude to NED (National Endowment for Democracy) for providing the travel Fund. This is the 4th time that Tibetan Women's Association was able to send a representative to this UNFCCC conference.

Following is a brief report on the 9 working days at COP20 in Lima, Peru.

First Week, 4th- 6th December, 2014



We the two Tibetan representatives were able to attend the meetings only from 4th December due to visa and flight ticket issues. For the first day after registration and getting our id badges, we took a tour inside the main venue to observe the different locations of the conference venue. There were two huge plenary halls namely Lima and Cusco where the negotiations happen every day and we were allowed inside for observation only.

Totally there were 2 press conference rooms, 30 meeting rooms and 10 observer rooms for the side events. We were allowed in

almost all the meetings except few closed door meetings. There were around 100 exhibit booths for observer organizations as well as for Parties to showcase their work at COP20/CMP10. Side event schedules were announced through the UNFCCC website, the Side Events Brochure and CCTV monitors listed the day's events.

Every day the first thing we did after entering the conference venue is check the side event schedule and verify which events are related to us (Tibetan environmental issues) and decide which to attend. On Friday we attended an event on Data, knowledge management and Innovation for Climate Action where the experts discussed on the importance of research and data sharing on climate changes. Another event I attended that day was 'Amazon in destruction: Adaptation, Women and Indigenous People'. Here the speakers spoke about Climatic destruction of the Amazon and programs of adaptation and Indigenous Women, in recognition of its strategic role, the required knowledge and practices, and entitled to direct access to climate funds. These events were very much related to environment as a whole and to women's role in these changes but we were looking for opportunities where we can raise the issue of Tibet's environment.



We distributed our brochure and badges where ever we found places and looked for a place to display our banner but we came to know that we are not supposed to put up any banner or poster in the official conference venue. Hence I held the banner at the entrance

gate for a picture pose and immediately after few minutes a police officer came and asked for the permission letter and told me that we need to take permission for any activity inside the conference venue. I kept in my mind that Monday I should go and ask for permission to do a small campaign inside the venue.

Saturday, we went around the exhibit booths and left the distribution materials at the displace tables. Then we went to attend an ongoing event titled 'NAMAs Day' (National Appropriate Mitigation Actions) which was addressed by **Mr. Manuel Pulgar Vidal**, COP20 President and Minister of Environment, Peru, **Ms. Christiana Figueres**, UNFCCC Executive Secretary and **Mr. Rodrigo Suarez**, Climate Change Director, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Colombia. They spoke on the role of NAMAs in contributing to transformational change and filling the pre-2020 ambition gap, and linkages between NAMAs and INDCs. It was an opportunity to hear from and meet a wide range of public and private international organizations that are actively engaged in helping developing countries realize their low-emissions development aspirations. But I couldn't connect the event to our story. Ms. Christiana Figueres said that we have a huge potential for change and survival as we have been training for this, meaning land, water, resources and waste management.

That afternoon I met Joanna from Global Gender and Climate Alliance. We spoke about the environmental situation in Tibet and TWA's work in India. She told me about an open Women's Caucus where we get to share our stories and thoughts relating to the ongoing activities and negotiations at COP20. I went to meet the woman who is in charge of this group but unfortunately I was not able to meet her that day as she went to a side event in Jockey Club.

That day I also met Mr. Soumya Dutta, an environmentalist and a professor at Delhi University. I met him previously in Delhi for 'People's Climate March. So I was very happy to see a familiar face in a foreign country. He suggested that we (TWA) should visit the colleges and universities in India for Tibet's environmental advocacy. He also promised to help us in and around Delhi for the arrangements.

Second Week, 8th-12th December, 2014

Monday

Monday morning the first thing I did was attend the Women's Caucus where many women from different countries have come. I came to know that this meeting was hosted by Women and Gender Constituency. It is an open Women's Caucus, organized during the official meeting time for the Women and Gender Constituency at each meeting and inter sessional of the UNFCCC. The Caucus is a space for all those interested in women's human rights and gender equality to network, share and collectively advocate.

Everyone was given time to introduce themselves and the NGO/organization they represent. I introduced myself and where I am from. I briefed about the environmental situation in Tibet and the need for international support. After the introduction round, we discussed about passed events where people have raised gender issue with climate change and also the upcoming events for the day. After the meeting, I had interaction with few women personally and discussed about the situation in Tibet. They seem to know much more than I expected.

Later I went to the security check area to get permission for a small campaign inside the conference venue. The officer asked me to fill up few forms there and also asked me to check my e-mail where I need to fill up more details of the campaign that I am planning to do. I followed the procedures and gave them the details but they mailed me after a day saying they need to verify the documents and get back to me which never happened.

Later I attended an event on Gender and Climate where the speakers talked about how women face bigger challenges with climate change. Importance of women's leadership and empowerment in adaptation and sustainable development. They also focused on role of women and human rights. One of the speaker said that we are the first generation to fully understand climate change and the last generation to address the issue.

After lunch while distributing our materials near the meeting rooms, I met few people from Nepal and India. We spoke for a while

on water issue and the need for water-sharing treaty between China and the neighboring countries. They share the same thoughts but they believe that it's hopeless because of China's economic power.

I went to an event later which was titled 'Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction'. The speaker Mr. Naysan Sahba, Director of the Division of Communications Public Information and Spokesperson (UNEP) spoke about a program where they help people in understanding the concept of climate change by breaking the complicated concepts into easy ways to understand better. He also demonstrated a game with the audience to make us understand how they work.

Tuesday



On Tuesday, we went to the other venue called "Voices for Climate" in the Jockey Club where citizens were also allowed. We toured around the venue. Within it, there were five thematic pavilions, all of which, besides having exhibition areas, also have a properly equipped auditorium for forums, panel discussions, seminars and others involved in forestry issues. Themes for the five pavilions were Forest, Mountain and water, ocean, energy and Sustainable Cities Pavilions. This place was setup very creatively and communicatively so that people can understand climate change and other concepts better.

Here we attended an event on Hydro Power Projects titled ‘The reality of the hydropower dams as solution for climate change’ where the speakers talked about the negative impact of large dams and how they are not clean energy source. Ms. Monti Aguirre from International Rivers spoke about the increasing number of dams and how people blindly believe that it is clean energy. She also said scientific evidence reveals that large dams are not clean or sustainable energy source.

After the event, I spoke to Ms. Monti Aguirre about the hydropower projects in Tibet and asked whether there are any international laws that restrict the number of dams that a particular country can build as China has built more dams than the rest of the world put together. I also asked her why people are not raising the issue of hydropower projects and its negative impact at the COP meetings. This was an honest doubt as all the side events or the people we met during the past few days spoke about climate change, low carbon economy, sustainable development and mitigation but no one spoke on the negative effects of hydropower or mining. For my questions, Ms. Monti answered that there are no such Laws which limit a country to build a certain number of dams and she said she is aware of what is happening inside Tibet. For my second question, she said it is a sad thing that people believe Hydropower as a clean energy and hence at the COP meeting hydropower is a less important issue to discuss.

Later I went around the venue distributing our materials and speaking to the volunteer students about Tibet and our environment issue. They seem very interested.

That day I met Ms. Chanda Gurung, from International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development. Even though she works in the U.S, she is basically from Nepal and knew all the problems that we faced as Tibetans. We spoke on our environmental issues as well as gender issues in our society. Like TWA she is also working for a NGO that works towards gender equality and protection of women and children from sexual harassment. We promised to keep in touch for future collaborations on both the issues.

Wednesday



This day was the most interesting and exciting event of COP20 for me as thousands of people from all parts of Peru and the world have gathered to march in Central Lima against the destruction of Earth's resources. **The Marcha en defensa de la Madre Tierra or "March in defense of Mother Nature"** began around 10 in the morning from the Campo de Marte and it ended around 3:00 p.m. in the historical Plaza San Martín. Students, environmentalists, workers, women's defenders, anti-poverty activists and indigenous groups joined the "People's Climate March" in the capital. People were saying that this was the biggest climate march Latin America has ever seen.



The 10th of December is also the International Day of Human Rights and hence with a strong sense of freedom and remembering the situation in Tibet, we (the only two Tibetans) also joined the march with our Tibetan national flag, banner and materials for distribution. This march was more like a celebration than a demonstration as it was colorful and cheerful with rhythmic drumming and brass bands.

We distributed our Tibet's environment advocacy kit as we march along the groups. That day I really wished we had more Tibetans with us and I strongly regretted for not having the distribution materials in Spanish language as majority of the people could speak and read only in Spanish. This was the most important lesson I learned for next year's COP.

Thursday

On 11th morning as usual I went to the Women's Caucus where we discussed about the previous day's march and how it made us all feel hopeful. Few of the women were at the side events and they shared their points from the events. After that we were divided into two groups where one group was to discuss on a petition letter and our group was to draft a 5 minutes statement to read at the negotiation on behalf of the Women's Caucus and the Women and Gender Constituency. In this discussion, we tried to point out that most of the world's farmers, teachers, health care givers and home makers are women and unless women are included as equal in the climate agreements, the negotiations cannot success. We urged the Parties to commit to a just, fair and transformative agreement in Paris that ensures human rights to all and include gender equality. Later we were asked to gather in the negotiation hall Cusco as Ms. Usha from All India Women's Conference read the statement.

That day I also attended an event titled '**Mountains and water - from understanding to action**' where the speakers spoke about sustainable mountain ecosystem and water management. The speakers were high level representatives from Bhutan, Peru, Kyrgyzstan and Mountain Partnership Secretariat.

Friday

At the last day of COP20 I met 2 representatives from India. They were from the ministry of Environment and Climate Change. We spoke for a while about the water issue in India and Tibet. They also shared the same opinion of a water-sharing treaty between India and China but they said China's economic power is making everything difficult. They gave me their e-mail id and told me to write them if I need any help. For me this was a huge thing because we do need help for our environment campaigns in India. I just hope they will keep their promise.

This day was brief as most of the people have already left and the venue was kind of empty compared to few days ago. As it was the final day, I went to say good bye to the new friends that I made in those few days. I exchanged contacts with all of them and we promised to keep in touch and hopefully meet again.



Ms. Payal Parekh, Global Managing Director of 350.org. I met her in India for a youth climate submit and very happy to meet her again in Lima.



Ms. Catherine Musa and Isateu Camara, delegations from Malawi, Africa.



Ms. Joanna and
Ms. Sarah from
Women's Caucus

Conclusion:

Women's Environment and Development Desk (WEDD) of TWA would like to acknowledge the travel fund from NED for providing the great opportunity allowing the WEDD officer to attend the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was one of the largest conferences ever held in Peru with an estimation of 14,000 people attending the conference. TWA also understands and values opportunity like this to represent Tibet and Tibetans at such vital international forums to advocate and network with likeminded groups.

I want to thank **University of East Anglia** for giving us the accreditation as without the accreditation we would never make it to COP20.

I also would like to extend my gratitude to Ms. Milagros Molales and her family for opening their home to us and providing a wonderful stay.

The overall experience of COP20 in Lima was wonderful yet challenging as it was my first time understanding to an international climate conference. I am determined to bring a stronger campaign in Paris for COP21.

Report from Women Environment and Development Desk of
Tibetan Women's Association

Let It Flow

*March 14, 2015
Dharamsala*



On the March 14 International Day of Action for Rivers, Tibetan Women's Association rejoice this day to remember the significance of Rivers in Tibet, lift our voices to celebrate rivers around the world and salute those who struggle to protect them. Tibet is the source for many of Asia's principal rivers and the end of those same rivers lie the world's largest deltas. Nearly 2 billion people depend on Tibet's water for fishing, agriculture, industry and for drinking.

Chinese occupation of Tibet is not only destroying our culture and religion but they are destroying our land and water ways by pollution, diversion and damming.

On this International Day of Action for Rivers, we join the campaign 'Rivers are in our hand' to promote the importance of rivers and urge you all to unite, we demonstrate that this issue is not merely

local, but global in scope. We have the power to protect these vital lifelines if we join together and act.

We would like to thank our Photographer Phuntsok Palden la for the wonderful pictures.



Report from Women Environment and Development Desk of
Tibetan Women's Association

World Water Day

*March 22, 2015
Dharamsala,*

On Sunday, 22nd March, 2015, Tibetan Women's Association and Student for a Free Tibet jointly organized an event to mark the World Water Day 2015. Since 1993, the United Nations General Assembly declared 22 March as "World Water Day" and nations around the world devote this day to promote the importance of water resources for drinking, agriculture and sustainable development. Therefore in advocacy of Tibet's rivers and ecosystem, the two NGOs held an event at TCV Day School. The event was started off with a street theatre act around McLeod main market, followed by photo op, screening of Michael Buckley's new documentary 'Plundering Tibet' and a talk by Mr. Tempa Gyaltzen from Tibet Policy Institute.



The aim of this event is to highlight the issue of damming, diversion and pollution of rivers in Tibet and also talk about environment degradation in Tibet. For centuries, the 11 downstream nations of Tibet including China have had access to the free flow of rivers from Tibet, bringing not only water for irrigation but rich nutrients for

growing crops. But over the last sixty years, China's policies in Tibet have led to major environmental degradation poisoning river and groundwater through unregulated mining, drying up of wetlands and shrinking of lakes, and disrupting the fragile ecosystem at the headwaters of these rivers.

With an increasing number of Chinese hydropower projects and water-diversion projects in Tibet, as well as water pollution from mining in Tibet, it is certain that Tibet and its ten downstream nations will face great challenges in the coming years. Therefore, we are raising our voice, campaigning, protesting and promoting the protection of Tibet's environment at every opportunity that we get.



Marking the importance of this day, petitions were also sent to India and other 10 downstream nations to raise their voice against damming, diversion and pollution of the rivers which has been their lifeline for over hundreds of years. Petitions were also sent to few International NGOs who are working towards the protection of rivers, asking them to support us and raise the issue of Tibet's rivers in their campaign and events.

Observational Report on Stitches of Tibet

I thank you for the great opportunity

*March 15, 2015
Dharamsala*

What I am now is all because of TCV and serving my own Tibetan community in which I am growing is what I always have in my mind since my childhood. Countless number of students like me are out there with this same attitude. Anyhow, in the actual field it is not that easy to get what we are longing for. So, I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to serve my community through Tibetan Women's Association. I would like to extend my heartfelt thank you to all the members of TWA for granting me this wonderful platform. Thank you for the great opportunity.



I was part of Stitches of Tibet (SOT) for almost two months as an English teacher. There was no preset project or specific lesson planned for the girls. The choice was left totally over me, and I opened the door of opportunity for the students to decide what they want me to talk about. I let them to decide what they are willing to study. The reason why I did this was that nothing can be learned without interest. If the subject of my teaching is something

in which students are interested in then there is less chance to go it over their head. But some of the lessons were decided as per their need and requirement. According to the observation that I made during the class hours, few things were there which they learned but with no clear idea. I tried my best to clear their doubts. Few things were taught according to the need in our day to day life like letter writing, and application. So, for me the period of two month didn't go in vain and I hope the students felt the same.

The students of the SOT are mostly women with a family to look after besides their daily classes. However, class exercises were given after every lesson and home works were given on weekends. Despite their tight schedule they somehow manage to complete whatever task that I gave them. So this was a great help for the smooth flow of my lesson plan. I really appreciate for their great skills of management. Apart from this they are all very polite and open to make suggestion regarding my way of teaching, which made me much easier to adjust with them. After all it was great to be a part of SOT. I enjoyed being with them. My prayers and best wishes are always with the girls.

I really appreciate Tibetan Women's association for creating such a precious opportunity for the Tibetan Women in exile. Tibetan Traditional dress is a growing fashion nowadays and I think TWA is creating a great employment opportunity for Tibetan women by teaching English along with the skills of stitching. I hope this great work of TWA may last forever and ever.

Record of Activities undertaken by Regional Chapters of Tibetan Women's Association

December 2014 to March 2015

Clementown



December 3, 2015: The regional chapters from the Doon Valley together led a peace rally throughout the market reciting prayers and shouting slogans. English and Hindi statements were read and distributed to the masses. The guest of honor at the function was Mr Sushil Gupta (Asst. to the Mayor).

December 6, 2014: The regional TWA – Clementown, organized invited monks and offered special prayers at their community hall to commemorate the 'Pelhamo' festival.

December 10, 2014: The executives of RTWA celebrated the 25th anniversary of the day when His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was awarded with a Noble Peace Prize. The executives encouraged the masses gathered at the function to set a particular ring tone titled 'See You In Lhasa' – a campaign initiated by the Central Tibetan Women's Association.

December 18, 2014: Two hours 'ngowa monlam' or prayers and butter lamps were offered for martyrs Sangye Khar and Tsepe Kyi from Amdo, Tibet.

Dekyiling



December 6, 2014: Pelhamo festival was celebrated amongst the people in the settlement.

Delhi

December 11, 2014: On behalf of the Tibetan Women's Association, two executives from RTWA Delhi attended 'The Alliance of Religions of India: Scriptural Interpretations of Peace Dialogue' summit in New Delhi. The summit addressed the dual – responsibility of religious and governmental sectors in the issues of human rights, social justice and religious freedom within India.

Dharamshala

December 6, 2014: Every year, the Tibetan Women's Association celebrated 'Pelhamo' festival. In Lhasa, Tibet, the Tibetans wake up very early in the morning to offer prayers at the 'Jokhang Temple' and to get blessings from a particular diety which is opened to the public once a year. The day is regarded as a Women's day of sort. This year, the regional TWA – Dharamshala, offered fruits and eatables at a nearby rehabilitation center for people with disabilities.

December 25, 2014: Prayers and a candle light vigil were organized by the RTWA Dharamsala in collaboration with other regional NGOs for the martyrs who set themselves on fire inside Tibet.

March 8, 2015: RTWA Dhasa organized a candle light vigil with SFT and RTYC for Norchuk, a 40 year old woman from Amdo Ngaba who self immolated to protest against the brutal occupation of Tibet.



March 12, 2015: RTWA organized a peace march to commemorate the 56th Anniversary of Tibetan Women's Uprising Day. The march was started from the Tsuklagkhang to Kachari. They have invited Central TWA's president and Dharamsala settlement officer as the chief guest for the gathering. The march was joined by large number of students, nuns and lay women.

Gangtok



December 6, 2014: RTWA Gangtok celebrated 'Pelhamo' festival. They have organized a prayer session at the nearby monastery.

Italy



January 7, 2015: RTWA Italy along with Tibetans and Tibet support groups observed a minute of silence, said prayers and protested in front of the Chinese Consulate in Rome to show solidarity with the Tibetan brothers and sisters who set themselves on fire inside Tibet.

February 28, 2015: RTWA executive was invited to speak about Tibet to a group of 26 students at a school in Rome. The students were introduced to Tibetan dress, jewellerys, flag etc.

March 10, 2015: On the 56th anniversary of National Tibetan Uprising day, RTWA Italy took to the streets of Rome and distributed flyers on Tibet to the public. They also hoisted Tibet's flag in front of the Radical Party office and encouraged their Italian friends to raise the Tibet flag commemorating the day.

March 14, 2015: RTWA Italy took to the streets of Paris to participate in the European solidarity rally for Tibet.

Kathmandu

December 6, 2014: The RTWA Kathmandu invited the former executives from their chapter and public to celebrate the Pelhamo

festival. Together they offered sangsol in the morning and enjoyed throughout the day by performing 'gorshey' – Tibetan traditional dance.



December 10, 2014: Tibetans in Kathmandu gathered to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Noble Peace Prize day. Despite the security and presence of Nepalese police everywhere, they enjoyed the day to the fullest. The RTWA Kathmandu in collaboration with RTYC performed 2 Tibetan dances and so did the other schools and groups in Kathmandu.

January 12, 2015: Renovations are underway at the Old Age Home run by the RTWA Kathmandu.

London



March 12, 2015:

RTWA London commemorates the 56th Anniversary of Tibetan Women's Uprising Day by organizing a function at the October Gallery from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. They invited Chilli Hawes, the founder of the October Gallery as the guest speaker. The event successfully concluded with participation of more than 70 people.

Miao

March 12, 2015: The Tibetan women from Miao settlement took part in a peace rally, offered prayers and candle vigil to mark the 56th anniversary of Tibetan Women National Uprising day. The day was led by the regional TWA in Miao.

Mundgod



December 6, 2015: RTWA Mundgod celebrated 'Pal lha Dhugchen', a religious festival. They organized sangsol in the morning and a day long prayers for a long and healthy life of His Holiness the Dalia Lama by inviting the nuns from the nearest nunnery.

December 23 to 28, 2014: During His Holiness' a week long teaching at Gaden Jangtse Monastery, the members and executives of RTWA Mundgod have volunteered in the service of security duty, cleaning the teaching premises and supervising the parking areas.

February 22 to 25, 2015: The executives of RTWA Mundgod arranged a prayer session for four consecutive days. The prayer was for a long and healthy life for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and for all the Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for the freedom of Tibetan people.

March 10, 2015: In collaboration with other Tibetan NGOs, RTWA Mundgod organized a day long campaign and rally in Bangalore city to commemorate the 56th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day.

March 12, 2015: RTWA organized a function to honor the 56th year of Tibetan Women's Uprising Day. For the function, they have invited Aduk Tseten, a member of Tibetan Parliament in exile as the chief guest. The gathering was blessed with speeches from the chief guest, settlement officer and president of the local assembly.

Mussorie



March 10, 2015: RTWA Mussorie commemorated the 56th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising by joining the peace march.

March 12, 2015: The executive members RTWA Mussorie observed the 56th anniversary of Tibetan Women's Uprising by organizing a long march.

Nainital



March 10, 2015: The members of RTWA Nainital participated in the peaceful protest march organised jointly by RTWA and RTYC Nainital to commemorate the 56th Tibetan National Uprising day. The procession started from the Tibetan market at 10am with many Tibetans holding placards and Tibetan National flags. Procession was led through the main market area of Nainital along the famous mall road towards the other side of the Naini Lake. The participants shouted pro independence slogans and pamphlets were distributed to the mass. The procession came to its conclusion back at the Tibetan market with the singing of “mimang langloo”, “dentsik moenlam and national anthem.

March 12, 2015: The regional working committee members had organized a special mass prayer to commemorate the 56th Tibetan Women’s Uprising day. They were denied permission to organise a protest demonstration therefore a mass prayer was organised at the Tibetan market at 9am. It was attended by more than 50 Tibetan residents. The entire Tibetan market remained closed for the day to mark the day.

Shillong

March 12, 2015: Rtna shillong conducted a program at the monastery commemorating the 56th Tibetan Women National Uprising day by show casing a short film on the status of Tibet, held

prayers and also conducted a candle light vigil from the monastery to jhalupar.



Tsering Dhonden



March 12, 2015: The regional TWA – Tsering Dhonden along with the TWA chapters in Doon valley organized peace rally which was participated by more than 200 Tibetan women. The function was addressed by the guest of honor Mr. Sushil Gupta, Assist. to the Mayor of Dehradun.

Varanasi



March 12, 2015: The RTWA of the Central University of Tibetan studies, Varanasi, organized a debate night to commemorate the 56th Tibetan women's uprising day. The debate topic was "can Tibetan women be able to give their child a bright future?" They have invited the scholar and professor Jampa Samten as the chief guest. The debate was judged by three Acharya students.

Bylakuppe:

Executives of RTWA Bylakuppe had an interaction with a group of students from Alabama University. The executives talked about the critical situation of Tibetan living inside Tibet.



