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APRIL-MONTH

HIS HOLINESS THE XITH PANCHEN LAMA'S BIRTHDAY – 25TH APRIL, 2016:

THE Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) celebrated His Holiness the XIth Panchen Lama's birthday with a visit to Tso Pema, the holy lake at Rewalsar in the Mandi of Himachal Pradesh. The TWA Central executive members went to Tso Pema a day prior to the actual date of His Holiness's birth anniversary to offer the prayer flags in deep respect to His Holiness, and then proceeded to a nunnery located there in order to pray for the long and healthy life of His Holiness and finally fed the fish of Tso Pema.

On April 25th, the anniversary of His Holiness' birth, TWA Central, in collaboration with Regional TWA (RTWA) Dharamshala, celebrated the 27th anniversary

of the birth of His Holiness the XIth Panchen Lama by hosting a signature campaign from 10.00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., calling for the release of His Holiness, this was followed by the public announcement of the lottery winners.



His Holiness the XIth Panchen Lama was born on April 25th, 1989. He is the second most revered spiritual leader in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. On May 14th, 1995, he was recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. A few days after the recognition, the six-year-old boy disappeared along with his family and carers. Suspicions that he had been kidnapped were confirmed in May the following year when the Chinese leadership admitted to holding him and his family in “protective custody.” Since his abduction in 1995, the Chinese have denied requests made by Tibetans, Tibet supporters, human rights organisations and the United Nation to have access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family. The TWA and its global networks have called on the Chinese leadership and the Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) to disclose the whereabouts of the 27-year old Panchen Lama of Tibet.

Lama’s birthday in Bern (the capital of Switzerland) and engaged with passersby to talk about the world’s youngest political prisoner.



TWA REGIONAL CHAPTERS (RTWAs) IN FOUR CONTINENTS CELEBRATED HIS HOLINESS THE XITH PANCHEN LAMA’S BIRTHDAY. HERE WE HAVE SHARED SOME OF THEIR REPORTS AND PICTURES.

RTWA SWITZERLAND along with the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe distributed delicious cakes and leaflets on His Holiness the XIth Panchen



RTWA Switzerland supporters also distributed leaflets and raised awareness about the missing Tibetan Panchen Lama in their local areas.

RTWA BYLAKUPPE & KOLLEGAL celebrated His Holiness’s birthday with the students and staff of Odanadi Seva Samasthe in Mysore. RTWA Bylakuppe also organised a prayer in the morning at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery.



RTWA SHIMLA celebrated the 11th Panchen Lama's birthday by inviting Shri. V.S Negi (President of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association) as chief guest at their event. Sangsol was offered for the long life of the Panchen Lama (sangsol is an incense burning ceremony) and served Tibetan sweet rice, tea and Indian sweet laddoo to the participants. In the evening they organised a candlelight vigil to call for the Panchen Lama's release.



RTWA KALIMPONG, DEHRADUN, RAJPUR AND TSERING DHONDEN also prayed for His Holiness' long life and held a candlelight vigil in the evening.



TWA CELEBRATED WORLD EARTH DAY ON APRIL 22ND, 2016

EARTH Day is an annual event which is celebrated each year to demonstrate support for environmental protection. The first Earth Day took place in 1970. It is now globally coordinated by the Earth Day network and is celebrated in more than 193 countries every year. This year on Earth Day the landmark Paris Agreement was scheduled to be signed by 120 countries including the United States

Last year, Tibetan Women's Association joined the Clean Upper Dharamsala Programme for their mass clean up event on World Earth Day in McLeod Ganj. This year TWA Central in collaboration with Michael Buckley (Author of "Meltdown in Tibet"), Tenpa Gyaltzen (Environment Officer of Tibet Policy Institute) and Lobsang Yangtso (PHD Student of JNU College) organised a slogan competition among school and college going students one month prior to World Earth Day. To acquire a more productive result, the competitors were divided into two groups, team A for college students and team B for school students. We were very pleased to receive a tremendously positive response from the students from both teams. On



EARTH DAY - MAKE IT COUNT FOR TIBET
Slogan + Logo Competition

This contest is aimed at creating awareness among the next generation of Tibetans on the environmental issues of Tibet. These slogans and Logos will be used for non-profit campaigns only. Several people may work together on the slogan + logo but they must be original. Slogans must be in English with optional parallel Tibetan script. Logos can be drawings, designs or photos and should be in JPEG format, maximum 2MB in size.

Participants:
Team A: Students in Tibetan schools in India and Nepal from class 9-12.
Team B: Tibetan College students from BA - PhD Candidates in India Nepal and Bhutan.

Cash Prizes: INR 5000 each for top 5 winners from both Teams.

Themes:
Major threats from damming and diversion of Tibet's Rivers
Impact of removal of Tibetan nomads from the grasslands
Global importance of the environment of Tibetan Plateau
Mining and its environmental implications in Tibet
Impact of Climate change on the Tibetan Plateau
Tibet's Impact on nations downstream

Last Date of Submission: April 10, 2016
Result Announcement: April 22, 2016 - Earth Day

Team A: kindly send your slogan + logo to climateaction2016@gmail.com with your name, name of your school, class, School Roll Number.
Team B: Kindly send your slogan + Logo to climateaction2016@gmail.com with your name, name of your university/department and mobile number.

For Queries, Call: +91 8826507758, Email: climateaction2016@gmail.com
Visit our facebook page: www.facebook.com/EarthDayMakeItCountForTibet

Organisers: Michael Buckley (Author 'Meltdown in Tibet'), Norzin Dolma (Tibetan Women's Association), Tenpa Gyaltzen (Tibet Policy Institute), Lobsang Yangtso (Jawahar Lal Nehru University)



and China. This signing represents a key requirement for the ratification of the historically drafted climate protection treaty adopted by the consensus of the 195 nations present at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris.

Earth Day, 22nd April, the top five winners from the each of the two teams were declared and the prize money distributed to the respective winners during their school day.

We received 38 entries from schools and 18 entries from colleges from which the five top winners from each group were selected. The top 10 winners received the cash prize of Rs. 5,000/- each.

MAY MONTH

SAKA DAWA - A MONTH HONOURING THE BUDDHAS' LIFE

TIBETANS observe Saka Dawa, the most sacred month for Buddhists, when we celebrate the birth, enlightenment, and death of Buddha Shakyamuni. The Saka Dawa observations take place in the fourth Tibetan month which in 2016 began on May 7th and ended on June 5th. Most holy of all is the full moon day, the 15th day of the month, which is the date of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and pari-nirvana (death). Tibetans believe that the merit of any good deeds during this month will be considered double because it is an excellent time to dedicate oneself to all kinds of spiritually positive actions. Every year the Tibetan Women's Association and its regional chapters organise an event to accumulate merit. The following are the events organised for Saka Dawa;

RTWA RAJPUR AND DEHRADUN participated in the event "Introduction to Buddhism" organised by Dehradun Buddhist Centre on May 27th. Dehradun Buddhist Centre invited Dr. Buddh Priya Ashoka (SSP, Mirzapur, U.P.), Mr. R. B. K. Baudh Sangh and Ven-Herohito as a chief guests. In the evening they observed a peaceful candlelight vigil which was attended by Indian, Ladakhi and Tibetan Buddhists. RTWA Rajpur set fish free in the river for the long life of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and His Holiness the 11th Panchen Lama on May 23rd.



RTWA DHASA members lit a butter lamp on May 21st for the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the Tibetan cause.



RTWA DELHI on Saka Dawa, May 17th, the day the Panchen Lama was abducted in 1995, TWA executives set more than 1,000 fish free in the Ram Ghat River to accumulate merit for the Panchen Lama and prayed for His Holiness the Panchen Lama's long life.



RTWA TSERING DHONDEN participated in an event “Introduction to Buddhism” organised by Dehradun Buddhist Centre on May 27th and also took part in the evening candlelight vigil. As well as these activities, they organised a four-day prayers for the long life of His Holinesses the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. Where villagers attended the prayers and they prayed 25, 82,888 times “Mani” and 567 times “Dolma”. They also released 108 fish and donated clothes to the poor.



RTWA DHONDUPLING released fish in the Indian holy river Ganga at Haridwar.



“Life is as dear to a mute creature as it is to man. Just as one wants happiness and fears pain, just as one wants to live and not die, so do other creatures”

— His Holiness the Dalai Lama

8TH ANNUAL BUDDHIST NUNS EMPOWERMENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING

May 8th-14th, Dolma Ling Nunnery, Sidhpur



THE Eighth Annual Buddhist Nuns Empowerment Leadership Training, held from May 8th to 14th, was attended by 28 nuns from three different nunneries: eight nuns from Namkha Khyung Dzong (Orissa); two nuns from Jangchub Choeling (Mundgod) and 18 nuns from Sakya College for Nuns (Manduwala). The seven days of training focussed on sessions on basic leadership skills and understanding of gender issues. The training also enabled the participants to implement practical projects to enhance self/group responsibilities.

PRE-TRAINING PREPARATIONS

Our team, the Tibetan Women's Association, prepared a detailed programme for the Nuns Empowerment Training. The week-long leadership training focussed on empowering Tibetan nuns in and around India and is one of the most sought-after programmes initiated by our Association. It took many months of preparation to ensure the success of the programme and we are confident that the efforts invested in this preparation enabled the training to achieve a high level of satisfaction.

The pre-training preparation for the Annual Nun's Empowerment Program included setting the schedule,

logistics, arranging the training kits (stationary sets, water bottles and yoga mattresses), getting in touch with the working committee of Dolma Ling Nunnery, confirmation of the trainers/speakers and getting the printed materials from the printing office, etc.

A day prior to the start of the programme, the coordination team reported to the venue and set up the hall with banners, flags and arranged the tables, checked the electrical set up to ensure there would be no hindrance on technical or comfort grounds at the training venue.

MARCH 8TH – REGISTRATION

With preparation underway, the trainees started to report and register at the training venue, Dolma Ling Nunnery, Sidhpur. They collected their training kits and became comfortably accommodated in their rooms. Nuns from different nunneries shared rooms, this encouraged them to interact beyond their comfort zones and allowed them to assimilate new bonds as well as creating space for exchanging experiences.

TWA's General Secretary welcomed the trainees after the welcome dinner and introduced the trainees to their coordination teams.

DAY 1, MAY 9TH

The first day of the Eighth Buddhist Nun's Empowerment programme sponsored by Science meets Dharma, Switzerland, kick started with an intensive introduction to the Yoga course to be followed for one week by Gen. Lobsang Dhondhen La, our Yoga Master for the programme. Gen. Lobsang Dhondhen la has been personally trained under the great Indian Yoga master, Swami Ram Dev from 2002-2007 at Patanjali, Haridwar. Genla made the first day an introductory session by sharing his experience of the positive effects of practicing yoga daily. He said that it has become human tendency to wait for a bad incident to bring a change in one's life, including health-wise and we often wait till we become ill before thinking about a healthy life. Genla explained how Yoga will naturally cure a lot of illness without having to visit hospitals except in cases of severity. This early morning session was a very fresh start to the day, with the perfect space/venue/time to learn and practice yoga and it was satisfying to see the nuns getting more interested in the long term benefits of yoga.

TWA's president, Mrs. Dolma Yangchen 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. She gave a thorough description of TWA's social contributions towards strengthening the unity of our community in many ways. The trainees were then guided through the importance of the Annual Buddhist Nuns Empowerment Programme, its objectives and expectations.



TWA's Project Officer, Ms. Tenzin Choezin led the introductory ice-breaker in which the trainees were paired and then made to introduce their partner to all the other participants through drawings. We are very hopeful that this primary introduction of the participants has brought them a moment of laughter and a space to allow them to feel comfortable and to begin to part with their submissive nature through fun and ease for an hour. The next 45 minutes were dedicated to orientation, ground rules, group division and secret friend. The orientation round was led by TWA's General Secretary, Ms. Tsering Choezom, who guided the trainees through the week long programme schedule with emphasis on the highlights of the training; guiding them with a detailed explanation of the day-to-day schedules and explaining the educational excursion day. In short, the orientation round gave an overview of the one-week training session to be followed.



The orientation round was then followed by ground rules, group division and secret friend. The whole team of the nuns programme, including the two organisers and the 28 participants, were seated together to decide the ground rules to be followed till the end of the programme. We listed 10 ground rules and promised to co-operate on these for a better and an effective one-week stay together so that it would become easier for both the organiser and the participants. After the ground rules were made, we divided the nuns into four groups and each had to name their teams and appoint a team captain and time manager. The four teams each decided a name for their team and thus we had Songtsen Group, Ngyamley Group, Lhakar Group and Dunkyoe Group. The trainees were then introduced to "secret friend" - each one getting a secret friend who

would be disclosed on the night of March 7th. The idea was to maintain the secrecy and keep giving surprises and fun ideas to one's secret friend.



The afternoon session was led by Ms. Dechen Wangmo (Women's Empowerment Desk) on Gender sensitisation for Tibetan Nuns. The session began with Dechen la asking each trainee about their expectations from the training she was going to lead. After which she defined gender/sex, identifying their respective meanings. It was really encouraging to see the nuns confidently speaking out their thoughts and expectations. Since we always assume Tibetan nuns to be timid and always confined into the socially fitted norms of a perfect being, it was extraordinarily interesting to see the nuns breaking all these impositions and coming forward with courage to face off the stereotypes socially imposed on them. The half-day of the gender empowerment session was filled with activities to keep them active throughout the session, most of which focused more on the trainees' participation than on the trainer's explanation of understanding gender and the socially-imposed notion of how a gender should be. Elaborating on the needs of a gender, everybody present in the activity hall agreed on safety and security as the most basic need. Therefore, using a few examples, Miss Dechen talked about how gender based violence is a threat to our gender, our individual right. The next few minutes of the session saw Miss Dechen la asking the participants to draw a farmer of their imagination and to name them according to their wish; to our surprise we saw varied results for these drawings. It has become a natural tendency to imagine a male farmer each time we were to think of one. In fact, in reality in the Tibetan exile community there are 1,035 male

farmers and 1,302 female farmers. So, there are 20.5% more female farmers than male but when we think of a farmer, the majority of us tend to imagine a male. This was seen as an impact of a male-dominated society where we automatically see men as having more to do in the world beyond household chores despite the fact that it is the other way round. This can have the effect of jeopardising the credit due females for what they achieve. Gender empowerment is a wide topic and our trainer invested effort into making the session as precise as possible through attractive activities.

To keep the first day short, the after dinner session a screening of two short documentaries, "Breaking the Shackles: 50 years of Tibetan Women's Struggle" for 20 minutes followed by a documentary "Middle Way Approach" for 40 minutes.

DAY 2, MAY 10TH



Miss Dorji Kyi from Lha Charitable Trust led the day's session on "Building Effective Communication Skills". The groups discussed for 10 minutes what communication is, and why it is so important, and then the nuns played the game "Finding the animal partner", which highlighted the importance of communication and showed the clear difference between animals and human beings, specifying the enhanced ability to communicate. The nuns were given a small briefing on the definition of communication, the most basic meaning of communication being the act of transferring information from one place to another, and that it has various forms including gesture, writing, speaking and touching. We are always communicating in one form or another and it is absolutely impossible to survive life without communicating because we are all dependent

on each other. However we often become ignorant of the importance of communication. Since the ability to communicate is the primary factor that distinguishes human beings from animals, likewise the ability to communicate well distinguishes one individual from another. Dorji Kyi la explained the uses of effective communication: an effective communication could help us understand a person/situation better; enables us to solve differences, build trust and respect and explained how it helps us connect with people without creating a space for misunderstanding. The nuns were introduced to the concepts of communication and its processes through presentations, games and group exercises.

The trainees were extremely active throughout the session. Unlike the other scheduled training sessions, communication was allotted a full day's training slot, however the nuns actively participated in all the activities without their attention waning as we had feared.

In between the official activities, Dorji la also initiated some games such as "build-a-house" which made for a very fun-filled day with great learnings on how to build effective communication skills to promote more effective socialisation.

The trainer once again drew the trainees' attention with her powerpoint presentation to a discussion on how to improve one's communication skills by becoming an engaged listener, paying attention to non-verbal communication, keeping stress in check and by asserting oneself. A very important part of communication is undoubtedly listening skills: unless and until an individual engages as a good listener, their understanding of a conversation will be hindered. Not listening opens spaces for misunderstanding and thus demeaning the whole understanding of an effective conveyance of messages to one another.

Finally, Dorji la wrapped up the session by discussing the lessons learned on building a creative communication. Because seven billion people are communicating every day there is a profusion of messages, therefore the challenge is to make your message more attractive and compelling and that we can only do by conveying it



creatively so that it captures the audience. The trainer embedded her wholesome effort to give the nuns the opportunity to stand up in front of the group and talk, time and again. Dorji la made sure that each and every nun received equal opportunity to use the platform to learn how to speak to the group. The second day of the programme ended successfully with the nuns giving positive feedback to the trainer and sharing how empowered they felt from receiving this education on communication and getting a chance to use their skills practically.

The following evening the participants and the two organisers were seen seated on the ground making a circle to set up the evening activity 'Rivers of Life.' This activity allotted 20 minutes for the nuns to draw their life story on the limited space of an A4 sheet of paper in a visual representation by narrating how their lives has been so far, the motivation, weaknesses and strengths that underlie what they have been through.

That evening saw a mixed emotion while the nuns narrated their stories, this session saw many fun/laughing moments and an uplifting of positivity with their great sense of humour, getting cosy in the dreadful weather with their emotional stories of how they left behind their homes in Tibet to flee to a freer country, some narrating the reasons behind why they have become a nun.

DAY 3, MAY 11TH

"EDUCATIONAL EXCURSION DAY"

The third day of the programme was scheduled to visit various departments of the Central Tibetan Administration, Tibetan Library and Archives and

the Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute (Mentsekhang.) Since many of the nuns were coming to Dharamshala for the first time, we believed they were highly excited about visiting the political hub of the Tibetans-in-exile, Gangkyi. Their daily religious routines and the studies have kept them away from the chance of understanding the governing bodies of our exile community and only few had knowledge of the political functioning of our community.

Our first visit was to the Tibetan-Parliament-in-Exile. We had earlier made an appointment for a meeting with the President of TPiE, the Honourable Speaker Mr. Penpa Tsering la, but unfortunately we were not able to meet him because he was out of Dharamshala. However the Vice President, Geshe Sonam Tenphel la, addressed the nuns in lieu of the Speaker. The nuns were introduced to the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile as being the unicameral and highest legislative organ of the Central Tibetan Administration; he gave a detailed introduction to how this democratically elected body was initiated by His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama who promoted a democratic system of administration. He also informed the nuns about the election process of Members of Parliament, the number of sessions held, the standing committee composition, the periodic tours of the members of parliaments to settlements and their tasks. Following this, Ven. Sonam Tenphel la allowed an opportunity for the nuns to ask questions. It was a thrilling experience to be seated in the parliament meeting hall and listen to the Vice-President within the official environment of TPiE.



The next visit was to the Cabinet (Kashag) to meet the Honourable Sikyong, the Tibetan political leader, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, but once again we were unable

to meet him as he was not in Dharamshala and therefore, Mrs. Lhamo Tsering la (Staff placement desk) gave a detailed introduction to the Kashag and the job allocations within the department and beyond, which explained the functioning bodies of the Central Tibetan Administration and their respective departments on behalf of the Honourable Sikyong. Mrs. Lhamo la made sure to cover the overall functioning of the CTA. She also explained the recruitment process for the new staff and the criteria for recruitment. The nuns were given opportunity to raise questions and clarify their doubts and it was indeed a very proud moment for us to observe the kind of enthusiasm that the nuns showed in politics. There were many aspects of questions, doubts and suggestions raised by the nuns regarding educational opportunities for nuns, job recruitments for nuns, and on nuns contesting for election to parliament. Mrs. Lhamo answered all their queries but most importantly the meeting ended with the discussion on the importance of education v/s experience. There can be confusion about which supersedes in the field of working and can be a much-debated issue by the general public. She threw some light on this from her own perspective, saying that education and experience are of equal importance, except that educational qualifications are of vital importance when entering an association or in a work environment because without a proper qualification it is extremely hard to achieve a good job. However, she said, it is important to put a great effort in the job you are selected for, therefore for a great performance in your field of work, experience could also play a vital role. Hence, she left the participants to consider the importance of both. It was indeed a very productive discussion session even though we could not meet

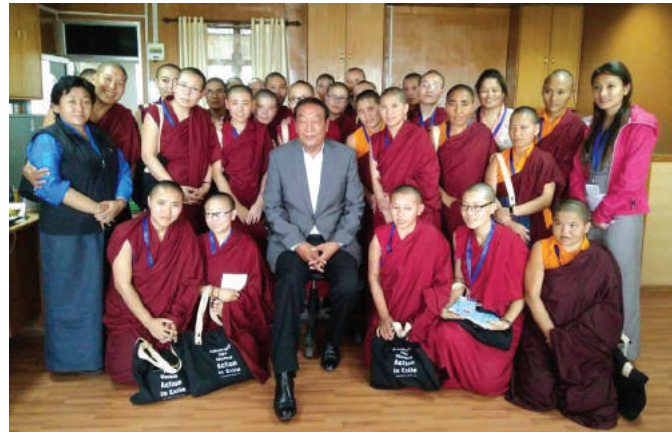


Honorable Sikyong as we had wished.

The nuns were then introduced to the Tibetan Medicine and Astrological institute (Mentsekhang) by Amchi Ngawang Chodak who spoke about Tibetan medicine. It was enriching for the nuns to come in person and have a look around the making of pills because it is said that majority of Tibetan nuns are weak in health, either due to digestive problems, women's menstrual pains, jaundice, etc but that they are unaware about the preventions and the long term cures available and they are prone to consume medicines provided by Mentsekhang blindly. The session on Tibetan Medicine gave them an understanding of how Tibetan Medicine really helps cure diseases and, more importantly, Amchi Ngawang la focused on teaching the nuns that prevention is better than cure and spoke of what is good and what is not good for health generally. The nuns were seen grabbing all the opportunities to ask Doctor la many questions and to clarify their doubts.

The visit was followed by a meeting with the Honorable Minister Pema Chonjor la. He addressed the nuns on the functioning of the Department of Religion and Culture. Specifically focussing on nuns empowerment, he stressed the importance of the upcoming Geshema exam and explained how this initiative came into being. He said he had helped to initiate it with the grassroots authorities as a major project to promote the education of the nuns and empower them to achieve an equal status in society alongside the accepted existing Geshe qualifications. Despite the limitations of time, the participants boldly raised questions on issues relating to Geshema examinations as well as to their nunneries, and also made suggestions on some of the improvements needed in and around their circle of nunneries. The Honorable Kalon responded positively, saying he shall look into their suggestions and respond via their respective nunneries.

The final visit was made to the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA) to meet Geshe Lhakdor la, the Director of LTWA. The participants had an interactive session with Geshe la discussing Science and Buddhism. The flexibility with which Geshe la spoke about how science and Buddhism could benefit and contribute to each other was easily understood,



which, with Geshe la's down to earth humour, made the nuns open up more towards the whole phenomenon of Science and Buddhism. Geshe la focused on 'Secular Ethics Education.' He advised the nuns on the importance of evaluating the deeds of His Holiness and not just to celebrate them for his names sake. He also said that technology gives only one-sided information which is a big threat for us. There were further discussions on the law of nature and the theory of relativity. After the session, the nuns spent an hour visiting the LTWA museum and saw the collections of our cultural artefacts, clothing, small models of sacred places of Tibet and of Tsuglakhang and other important places. Most importantly, the nuns had the opportunity to visit the room specifically kept for the collection of holy manuscripts.



DAY 4, MAY 12TH

We have now come to the midst of our programme schedule, the fourth day of the nuns leadership training was led by Mrs. Sonam Dechen la, the Associate Director and Tenpa Phuntsok trainers from

the Tibetan Centre for Conflict Resolution (TCCR) for a half-day session on the theme of conflict resolution. First of all, the trainers asked the trainees for the first word that comes to them when hearing the word conflict, and as expected this produced responses concerned with aggression, angst, temper, hatred, chaos, etc, focussing on the negative impact which results from a conflict. Our trainers then gave a detailed definition of conflict to the nuns, saying that conflicts are not necessarily negative as rooted in our mentality, but that we can learn to look at conflicts positively and thus be able to use the term to create peace. The high professionalism shown by the trainers was extremely helpful in drawing the attention of the participants with their many interactive activities for the trainees. They taught the nuns on subjects as broad as nonviolent communication and its sub-topic 'Pure Observation' (ie how we should learn to enhance a practical conveyance of message to the next person with the pure observation and not just a mere understanding of your own judgmental perspective within a situation). It really was a productive session with active participation from the nuns.



They initiated games with a moral touch to enable them learn from them, for instance in the Chinese whispering games one of the trainers passed a message from the start of the circle – but by the end of the circle the whole meaning of the message had changed. This meant that listening power plays a vital role in the conveyance of messages or conversations, thus it becomes very important to be a good listener in order to be a good speaker, and we must know the information thoroughly before we pass it on to the next person because this could become a factor in making space for conflicts. Therefore, it is always better to prevent conflict, and keep in mind the causes

for various conflicting areas and overcome them by being a little more careful.



In the afternoon the session was led by Ms. Norzin Dolma, Women's Environment Desk Officer of Tibetan Women's Association on the Environmental Issues that are threatening the social and cultural existence of Tibet and the ten nations downstream of Tibet that have a connection through the rivers. She used one hour to touch on various topics like the establishment of railways and the migration of Chinese population into Tibet, which is certainly threatening the Tibetan population by turning them into a victimised minority in their own land. She spent another few minutes talking on nomadic issues in Tibet before moving on to the real talk of the session, discussing the water crisis and China's mega dam-building projects, and how these affecting the ten downstream nations of India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Mongolia and Thailand. Nuns were given opportunities to raise questions after the session and at the end, Ms. Dolma collected messages on the environment from the trainees. This session provided a very good opportunity for the nuns to educate themselves in the field of the environment. We believe that it's a big concern for all individuals to understand the threats of environmental issues connected with Tibet, particularly for nuns – as they are more involved in their religious practices these issues remain unknown to them. Therefore, it was a small initiative of our association to further extend the understanding to the nuns of our country.

The final training session was on Women's Health, a talk by Ven. Tenzin Lhadon la, a renowned Tibetan Doctor who has over 20 years of Tibetan Medicinal experience. Amchi la lectured the nuns on how to



prevent certain diseases which particularly affect women. It is said that women are particularly prone to many critical and incurable diseases and therefore prevention is very important. Amchi la spoke of the importance of hygiene and nutrition to help strengthen our health and also mentioned many ways in which we can help reduce menstrual pains. This session saw many questions related to health and diseases and was indeed very efficiently carried out. We are still very thankful to Amchi la for making time to cover such vital topics.

DAY 5, MAY 13TH

The fifth day of the Buddhist Nuns Empowerment Programme was the outbound practical training, or sessions in which the nuns put their training into practice with projects in the local community. Since the four groups had agreed on their projects the previous evening, they decided to work on different areas, unlike last year when all four groups completed their projects on environment-related issues. This year, the four groups selected one team captain and a time keeper from each group. The teams each chose name for their group Nyamley, Dhunkyoe, Lhakar and Songtsen. They were given space to co-operatively decide a topic for social services to implement their practical outbound training. Songtsen group decided to do an area cleanup within their capability for the day. Nyamley group visited the elderly people's home located in McLeod Ganj and cleaned the areas around it. Dhunkyoe group visited Nyingtobling (the Tibetan handicapped children's craft home), and last but not least, Lhakar team visited a remote slum area near Norbulinga and distributed small gifts for the children living there. Upon returning from the training, the four groups each gave a small

presentation on their project. It was really interesting to see the nuns taking decisions from grassroot level to budget planning and successfully implementing their projects from the planning stage to delivery. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, "If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito." Likewise, even though the projects implemented by the nuns are on a minor scale, we know that they have brought happiness to many people in the project target "A beautiful day to remember".



Songtsen Group- Area Cleaning



Nyamley- Elderly people's home



Dunkyoe Group (Visited Nyingtobling)



Lhakar Group (Visited a slum area)

DAY 6, MAY 14TH

The 8th Annual Buddhist Nun's Empowerment Programme came to an end after six full days of intensive training with various empowering sessions. On May 14th we wrapped up the programme by taking the nuns for a visit to Gadhen Choling Nunnery in Mcleod Ganj and then to Tsuglakhang before lunch. After lunch we concluded the BNEP 2016 with a very warm and inspiring speech given by Kasur Rinchen Khando la. Her presence during the farewell added an immense spark and light to the gathering. The afternoon included certificate distribution, feedback sessions and playing games for the last time together, followed by a farewell dinner. We really hope that this one week of training session organised by the Tibetan Women's Association could make a difference, however small, to the individual lives of the nuns who participated in the programme. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavours and shall never forget the special bond we weaved during the workshop.



CONCLUSION

The Tibetan Women's Association remains ever thankful to our financial partner Science meets Dharma, based in Switzerland, for supporting us financially and making TWA's annual project possible. We are also thankful to the 28 nuns who participated in the programme, without their presence the Eighth annual Buddhist nuns empowering programme would not have been possible. We also send our gratitude to all the nunneries who accepted our invitations and gave the nuns the opportunity to participate in the training. Last but not the least, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Kasur Rinchen Khando la for supporting our project with wonderful hospitality at Dolma Ling Nunnery, and to the whole working committee of Dolma Ling whose members have worked equally hard to support us in our one week programme. We are grateful to each and every person connected with the 8th Buddhist Nuns Empowerment Programme.

TWA is looking forward to organising more empowerment programmes and to leading on the issue of Women's empowerment through various approaches that will reach out to Tibetan women and nuns.

“Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impacts lasts in your absence”

—Sheryl Sandberg

A TRIBUTE FROM THE TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

TWA's outstation Executive Ms. Dechen Dolker paid sincere condolences to the family and associates of our long time friend Marco Pannella.



TIBETAN Women's Associations' outstation Executive Ms. Dechen Dolker, who resides in Italy, paid heartfelt condolences at the demise of Mr. Marco Pannella, who passed away on May 19th at the age of 86 after a prolonged battle with cancer. He was a long time Tibet supporter and a close friend of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people. We will remain grateful for his contribution to the Tibet cause and he will be always remembered in our prayers. Tibetan monks and nuns in Italy also paid their condolences and prayed for the departed soul.

Marco Pannella (born Giacinto Pannella; May 2nd, 1930-



May 19th, 2016) was an Italian politician, journalist and activist. He was well known in his country for his non-violence and civil rights' campaigns such as the right to divorce, the right to abortion, the legalisation of cannabis and the definitive abolition of nuclear power. Internationally he supported human rights and self-determination causes like Tibetan independence and persecution of Christians in Vietnam.

He was the historic leader of the Radical Party (the first expression of the Radicals in post-World War II Italy when the Italian Radical Party was founded in 1955). Between 1979 and 2009 Mr. Pannella was a Member of the European Parliament where he sat as a full member in the Committee on Legal Affairs, in the Committee on Budgetary Control and in the Delegation for relations with Israel. He was also President of the Nonviolent Radical Party. He is considered an example of left-libertarian and was a liberal socialist.



MAY 18TH: OBSERVING THE 21ST YEAR SINCE THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HIS HOLINESS THE XITH PANCHEN LAMA



THE Tibetan Women's Association marked 21 years since the abduction of His Holiness the XIth Panchen Lama Gedun Choe kyi Nyima by the Chinese government. This very inhumane imprisoning of Panchen Rinpochen is largely unacknowledged by the world as an act of enforced disappearance. Therefore, to spread awareness internationally and remind the world about this wrong that has been committed, and of our fight for his freedom, the day was observed with a special event. The Tibetan Women's Association Central and RTWA Dhasa, organised an open marathon "Run for 11th Panchen Lama, Run for Justice" on May 17th. 28 runners, including two women, participated. The race started from Mcleod square to TCV Cantt and then back to Mcleod Square.



The marathon winners were:

- 1st position: Yunhi Morimoto (Japan) - completed the marathon in 21 minutes.
- 2nd position: Tenzin Tendar (Namgyal monastery).
- 3rd position: Dorjee Tsering (SFT).
- 4th position: Tenzin Nyingjey (Namgyal monastery).
- 5th position: Tenzin Sonam (Namgyal monastery).

TWA STATEMENT

The Central Tibetan Women's Association stated that China is trying to usurp the Dalai Lama as the face of Tibetan Buddhism by raising the profile of their hand-picked Panchen Lama. TWA has demanded that the Chinese Government release the Panchen Lama and let him return to his rightful place, Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet, to carry out his religious responsibilities.

“China strived to bolster and has steadily raised the profile of its hand-picked Panchen Lama – Gyaltsen Norbu – through various means which promote Beijing’s choice to usurp the Dalai Lama as the public face of Tibetan Buddhism”.

Born on Apr 25th, 1989 in Lhari County in Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama at the age of six on May 14th, 1995. Regardless of the concerns expressed, and requests made, by numerous organisations including Human Rights organisations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, United Nation’s Human Rights Council and Tibetan non-government organisations, the Chinese authorities have disclosed no information at all about the well being and whereabouts of Tibet’s lost child. Even after 27 years, his whereabouts and condition still remain unknown. In his place, another child named Gyaltsen Norbu was appointed as the 11th Panchen Lama by the Chinese Government.

RTWA DELHI marked the 21 years of disappearance of H.H. the 11th Panchen Lama (Gendun Choe kyi Nyima). The executives arranged a mass prayer session for his wellbeing and quick release. The Central TWA statement both in Tibetan and English was read as well as being distributed to public. After the prayer session, they held a candlelight vigil.



RTWA NAINITAL On the morning of May 17th, our members and supporters participated in the prayers held by Nainital Settlements at Gaden Kunkyangling Monastery for the immediate release and long life of the 11th Panchen Lama. The event attracted local media and succeeded in spreading awareness about His Holiness the 11th Panchen Lama and his family’s abduction.



RTWA ORISSA in collaboration with Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC) organised a prayer service for the immediate release and long life of His Holiness the 11th Panchen Lama and in the evening held candlelight vigil in their respective localities.



RTWA RAJPUR supported and welcomed the participants in a cycle relay which ran from Dehradun to Delhi as publicity for the call for the release of His holiness the 11th Panchen Lama.

Participants. The relay, which was organised by the Tibetan Youth Congress, arrived in their locality on May 17th. They invited Shri. Ganesh Joshi (MLA, BJP) as a chief guest at the event.

JUNE MONTH

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY, JUNE 5TH



WORLD Environment Day is celebrated on June 5th every year to create global awareness and to take positive environmental action to protect nature and the planet Earth. It is run by the United Nations Environment Programme. The theme for this year's World Environment Day was "Go wild for life-Zero tolerance for illegal wildlife trade." The theme encourages people to celebrate all those species under threat and pushes them to take action to help safeguard the endangered species for future generations. These local actions can be about animals or plants that are threatened within one's own area as well as at national or global level as many local extinctions will eventually add up to a global extinction!

The Tibetan Women's Association, in line with the theme of WED 2016, held a photographic exhibition of the wildlife of Tibet, and it the immense effort invested by our team paid dividends as the event was a great success. The event was held at the gateway of Tsuklhakhang temple, Mcleod Ganj, and since it was a Sunday and the temple was crowded, this proved to be an ideal location as we were able to attract the attention of many tourists; our sole target was to spread awareness and to make people understand the urgency of the issue. We explained about the wildlife of Tibet

and how they are being traded and slaughtered. We distributed free postcards showing different pictures of the wildlife of Tibet.

Many of the tourists and local people showed immense interest in the photo exhibition, coming up with many questions around politics and humanitarian issues. They eagerly listened to us and also expressed support and good words. One of the tourists said "If I were the Prime Minister, I would imprison each and every smuggler and poachers of wildlife."

TWA'S MESSAGE FOR THE DAY:

"It is the responsibility of each and every individual to protect Tibet's environment because Tibet being the roof of the world, if something hinders Tibet's environment then the whole world is bound to suffer because Tibet's rivers are Asia's lifeline and due to the unavoidable dependency on nature, it comes out that we must stand together to protect our cultural heritage. We must save our wildlife and stand up in unity against the violation of animals' rights happening in and around the globe. The universe is not complete without the existence of humans, animals and plants, all the three plays a vital role to complete the mother earth as it is."

TWA'S REGIONAL CHAPTERS ALSO OBSERVED WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LOCATIONS.

RTWA DEKYILING organised a talk and workshop on the importance of preserving the environment for children to mark the World Environment Day. The following picture is the kids' message to save the earth.



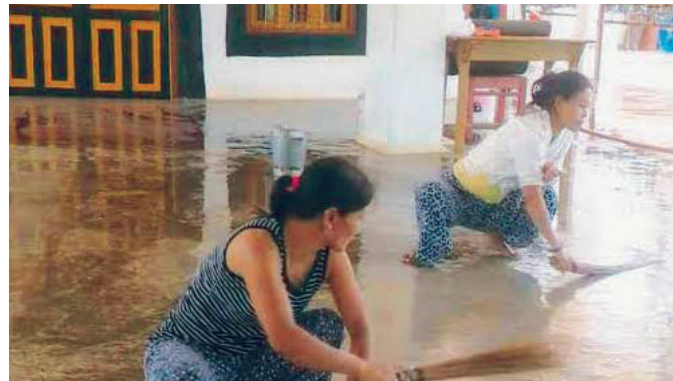
RTWA KALIMPONG planted trees in their locality.



RTWA BANDRA marked the environment day by becoming involved in a mass cleanup. They cleaned a monastery and elderly people's home.



RTWA DELHI executives initiated a mass cleanup of Samyeling settlement, including the new camp, old camp and Yamuna area. We also raised different slogans on importance of the environment.



RTWA SHIMLA organised a mass cleanup to mark the World Environment Day. They cleaned the elderly people's home and assisted them with their daily work. They also cleaned up their surroundings.



RTWA POKHARA initiated a mass cleanup in their settlement on WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY with a message "keep your surrounding clean to save our planet-Earth".



JULY MONTH

HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA'S 81ST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT DHARAMSHALA



TWA STATEMENT FOR HIS HOLINESS' BIRTHDAY:

"The Tibetan Women's Association, with due reverence and prayers extend our warmest greetings to His Holiness the great 14th Dalai Lama on his 81st Birthday. May His Holiness live long to spread His message of Peace, Love and Compassion throughout this Universe and benefit all the sentient beings."

Every year, in honour of the auspicious day of His Holiness' birthday (trungkar) the Central Tibetan Women's Association participates in various services for the community of Dharamshala and beyond. This year, TWA's Executive members thanked and distributed sweets to various Indian offices, Banks, NGOs and Police stations in and around Dharamshala, and also donated clothes to Indians living in poverty.

On the jubilant occasion of His Holiness' birthday, the Tibetan Women's Association has made a pledge to His Holiness: The TWA pledges to uphold Your Holiness's most precious advice and guidance, and will work towards fulfilling your wishes. May Your Holiness return to the Potala Palace and all Tibetans reunite soon in Tibet under your great leadership.



THE REGIONAL CHAPTERS OF THE TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN FOUR CONTINENTS ALSO CELEBRATED HIS HOLINESS' 81ST BIRTHDAY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE PLACE. WE HAVE SHARED SOME OF THEIR REPORTS AND PHOTOS HERE.

RTWA RAJPUR celebrated His Holiness' birthday by honouring Mother Nature and planted trees to make our earth a greener and healthier place to live in.



RTWA MUSSOORIE celebrated His Holiness' birthday by visiting schools and distributing stationery, pens and books among the students.



RTWA DHONDUPLING celebrated His Holiness' birthday with sangsol and prayer for His Holiness's long life. The Tibetan Women's Association women undertook to do kind works on this auspicious day,



taking time out to nurture elderly people at the elderly people's home.

RTWA HUNSUR celebrated His Holiness' birthday by participating in a Tibetan cultural show organised by Hunsur Settlement.



TIBETAN HEROES DAY IN MEMORY OF TULKU TENZIN DELEK



ON July 12th, Dharamshala marked the inauguration of “Tibetan Heroes Day” on the first anniversary of the death of human rights defender and Tibetan Buddhist leader Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, who died on July 12th, 2015. The Tibetan Women’s Association, together with the International Tibetan Network and Students for a Free Tibet inaugurated the “Tenzin Delek Rinpoche Medal of Courage”. This first award, in memory of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, was presented to a Tibetan political prisoner and retired doctor, Mrs. Yeshe Choedron, in recognition of her courage and dedication for promoting Tibetan human rights and justice for the Tibetan people. Mrs. Choedron was one of nine nominees.

The day was attended by the chief guest Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok (Deputy speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile), Mr. Ajay Mankotia Singh (President of ITFA), MPs of the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, Mr. Dawa Rinchen (Representative of Dharamshala), Ms. Dhardon Sharling (Co-Chair of ITN), Mrs. Dolma Yangchen (President of TWA), Mr. Dorjee Tseten (former Director of SFT India) and former Tibetan political Prisoner.

The award was received by Mrs. Dolma Yangchen, President of TWA, on behalf of Mrs. Yeshe Choedron, who is currently serving 15 years in prison in Tibet. She was accused of leaking state secrets to “the Dalai clique’s security department”. Despite foreign governments repeatedly raising Mrs. Yeshe Choedron’s case, the Chinese government has not responded.

Tibetan sources who know Mrs. Yeshe la personally have reported that they are concerned for her health.

Mrs. Dolma Yangchen said, “By honouring Yeshe Choedron we pay tribute to her courage and the courage of thousands of other Tibetans in or from Tibet who have spent years of their lives unfairly imprisoned for the important role they have played in the struggle for Tibetan Freedom”.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche was widely known for working to develop social, medical, educational and religious institutions for Tibetan nomads in eastern Tibet, as an advocate for environmental conservation in the face of indiscriminate logging and mining projects, and as a mediator between Tibetans and Chinese. He was convicted for alleged involvement in unrest activities in Tibet by the Chinese authorities and sentenced to death in December 2002 along with Lobsang Dhondup, his 28-year-old assistant. Lobsang was executed in January 2003. Tenzin Delek Rinpoche sentence was changed to life imprisonment on January 26th, 2005 and he died on July 12th, 2015 in Chengdu, China at the age of 65. Prior to his death Tibetans and human rights groups worldwide had called for his release on medical parole. His death was followed by calls for the release of his body in order to determine the cause of his death and to carry out traditional funeral rites; one such demonstration was met by China’s security forces opening fire and injuring several Tibetans. The Chinese authorities cremated the body without any autopsy.



On August 31st, the Tibetan Women's Association met Jigme Damdul, Mrs. Yeshe Choedron's youngest son. It was indeed a pleasant moment to have him in our office and to handover his Mother's Medal of courage.

THE MEDAL OF COURAGE NOMINEES:



NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

PALDEN GYATSO པལ་དྲུག་རྩ་མཆོ།

MONK BORN IN TIBET IN 1933. DURING THE CHINESE INVASION OF TIBET IN 1959 HE WAS ARRESTED FOR PROTESTING ALONGSIDE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS AND SPENT 33 YEARS IN CHINESE PRISONS AND LABOUR CAMPS. EXTENSIVELY TORTURED.



TIBETAN
FREEDOM



NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

**GEDHUN CHOEKYI NYIMA,
THE 11TH PANCHEN LAMA**

འགྲུ་གཤམས་པུ་ཆེན་འོ་ཆེད་ལུང་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཉི་མ་

**JUST 6 YEARS OLD WHEN RECOGNIZED
BY THE DALAI LAMA AS THE 11TH
PANCHEN LAMA, ONE OF TIBET'S
MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS
LEADERS, TAKEN INTO CUSTODY
WITH HIS FAMILY AND NOT SEEN
SINCE 1995.**



TIBETAN



NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

DRUKLO (PEN NAME: SHOKJANG)

འབྲུག་ཡི་ཞིགས་ལྷན་

A YOUNG, PROMINENT TIBETAN WRITER AND BLOGGER KNOWN FOR HIS THOUGHT-PROVOKING ARTICLES ABOUT THE SITUATION IN TIBET. SENTENCED IN 2016 TO 3 YEARS IN PRISON FOR "INCITING SEPARATISM".





NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

RUNGGYE ADAK རྩུག་པོ་འདུག་པོ།

A TIBETAN NOMAD SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON IN 2007 AFTER MAKING A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE DALAI LAMA TO AN AUDIENCE OF THOUSANDS, KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN TORTURED AND HELD IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. BELASEED IN 2015.





NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

TAKNA JIGME SANGPO ལྷན་ ལྷ་འཕྲིགས་མེད་པ་བཅང་པོ།

**FORMER PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER AND
LONGEST-SERVING TIBETAN POLITICAL
PRISONER. SPENT 37 YEARS IN
PRISON. RELEASED ON MEDICAL
PAROLE IN 2002 AT THE AGE
OF 76. NOW LIVES IN EXILE
IN SWITZERLAND.**



A black and white portrait of Wangdu, a Tibetan man with dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt.

NOMINEE : 2016
TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE
MEDAL OF COURAGE

WANGDU བཟང་དུ་

TIBETAN AIDS AWARENESS CAMPAIGNER
 SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR
 "ESPIONAGE" AND INCITING A
 "TIBETAN PEOPLE'S UPRISING."
 PREVIOUSLY IMPRISONED DURING
 MARTIAL LAW IN 1989.
 REPORTEDLY TORTURED
 AND IN ILL HEALTH.

A circular logo featuring a stylized figure of a person with long hair, possibly a Buddhist figure, in the center. The figure is surrounded by a ring of text. Below the circle, the word "TIBETAN" is written in a bold, sans-serif font.

TIBETAN



NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

GOLOG JIGME གཤོག་ཡོན་འཛིན་ཀུན་མཁེད།

BUDDHIST MONK AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST WHO WAS JAILED AND TORTURED IN 2008 FOR JOINTLY MAKING THE DOCUMENTARY "LEAVING FEAR BEHIND" WITH DHONDUP WANGCHEN. HE ESCAPED INTO EXILE IN 2015.



NOMINEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

LOBSANG TENZIN ལོབསང་བཟུན་འཛིན།

SERVED 18 YEARS IN PRISON AFTER ARREST DURING PROTESTS IN 1988. IN PRISON CONTINUED TO PUSH FOR TIBETAN FREEDOM. REPORTEDLY TORTURED. RELEASED IN 2013 BUT REMAINS UNDER HOUSE ARREST.



AWARDEE : 2016

TENZIN DELEK RINPOCHE

MEDAL OF COURAGE

YESHE CHOEDRON དེ་ཤེས་ཆོས་ལྷོངྟ་

TIBETAN MEDICAL DOCTOR AND POLITICAL PRISONER
HAS BEEN AWARDED THE FIRST "TENZIN DELEK
RINPOCHE MEDAL OF COURAGE" IN RECOGNITION OF
HER COURAGE AND DEDICATION TO
PROMOTING TIBETAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND
JUSTICE FOR THE TIBETAN PEOPLE.

SENTENCED IN 2008 TO 15 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR ALLEGED "ESPIONAGE". YESHE
CHOEDRON IS KNOWN TO BE IN ILL HEALTH
AND HAS BEEN DENIED VISITS BY HER
FAMILY SINCE 2012.



TIBETAN
MEDICAL CENTER

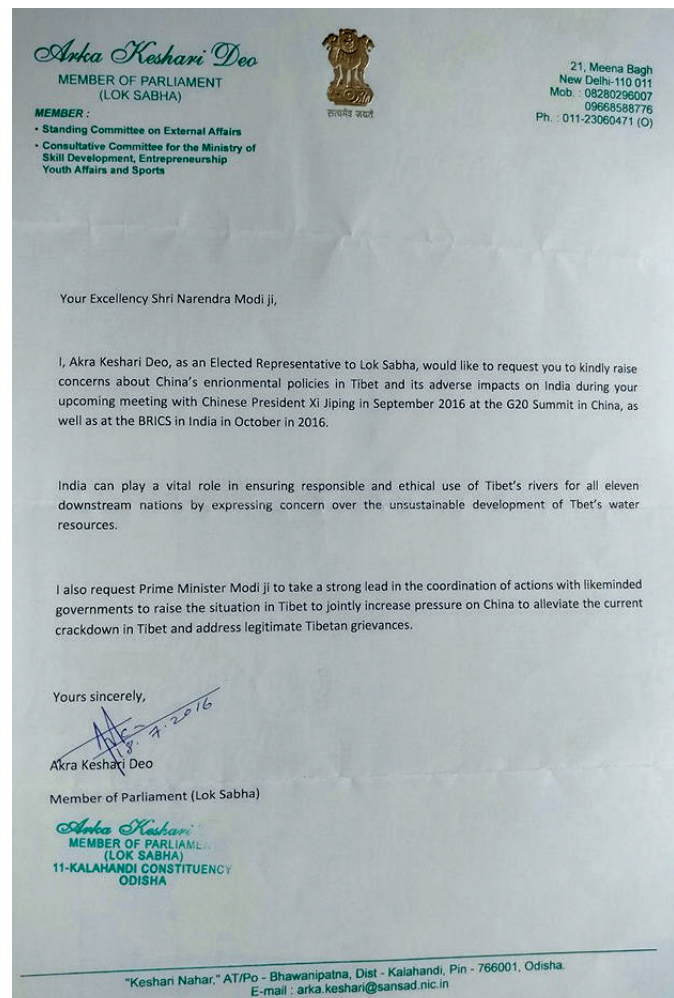
TIBET ADVOCACY COALITION TEAM RAISED CONCERNS ABOUT TIBET'S RIVERS

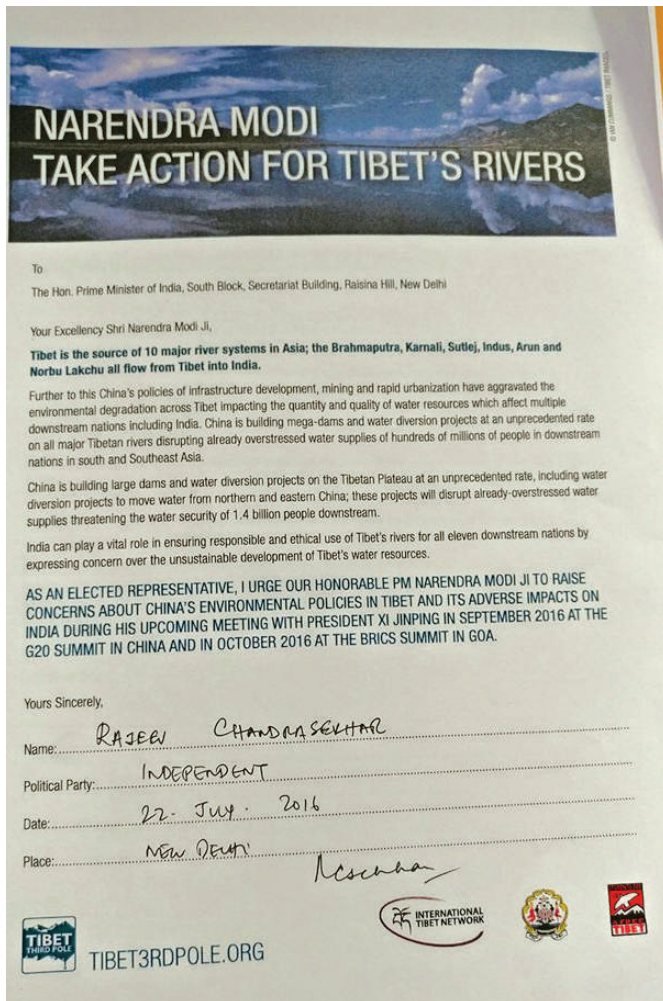


THE Tibet Advocacy team met 23 Members of the Indian Parliament and Senior Diplomats in this year's India Advocacy Week on July 18 - 23 in New Delhi. The Tibet Advocacy Coalition team is a collaboration of three organisations (Tibetan Women's Association, Students for Free Tibet and the International Tibet Network). The team briefed the Indian elected leaders on China's damming of the Brahmaputra River and its consequences for Tibet's environment.

Tibet's rivers are being polluted, dammed and diverted with serious consequences for those living in the downstream countries. Thirteen members of the Indian Parliament attended, and five signed the Petition urging Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to raise the Tibet's Rivers issue with his Chinese counterpart President Xi Jinping during the forthcoming G20 summit in China and at the BRICS summit this year.

As a result, the India Advocacy Coalition team urges Prime Minister Narendra Modi to raise concerns about China's environmental policies in Tibet and their adverse impacts on India during his upcoming meeting with President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit in China. Though Mr Modi did not raise the issue of





Tibet's Rivers, he showed concern about climate change by saying we have to safeguard climate justice, which requires affordable financing and environmentally sound technology for developing countries. The PM also said, "We must uphold principles of equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) and curb reckless consumption and encourage lifestyles in harmony with nature."

Zero-Hour question 22/07/2016

Madam Speaker, through your kind self, I would like to bring to the notice of Honourable Minister of External Affairs that China has recently operationalized its Zangmu Hydropower Project on the Brahmaputra river. This project is located in Gyaca in Tibet Autonomous Region. As we do not have river water sharing agreements with China, I am worried mainly because the project could be used to regulate and control water downstream leading to scarcity in my home state Arunachal Pradesh affecting Siang river and the whole North-Eastern parts. China have also proposed construction of three more dams namely Dagu, Jiexu and Jiacha in their plan. If all these dams are constructed then the results would be devastating for India.

I urge the Hon'ble Minister to register a strong protest against this Chinese move in bilateral talks. Through diplomatic channels specially in September 2016 at G20 Summit in China and in October 2016 at BRICS Summit in India, this issue must be brought up and we must talk on Brahmaputra with China and solve the coming problem beforehand proactively and pragmatically.



Prior to the G20 submit, Shri Ninong Ering, Lok Sabha Minster of Parliament from Arunachal Pradesh raised concerns about the Zangmu Hydropower project on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet. He demanded the Centre to convey its concerns to the Chinese Government at the highest level to ensure that the downstream states in India are not harmed by this mega dam. Raising the issue during Zero Hour in Parliament, Ering expressed serious concern over the impending threat posed by the dam as the project could be used to regulate and control water downstream, leading to water scarcity in entire North-Eastern region, including Arunachal Pradesh. He urged India to start diplomatic talks with China and also to raise the issue during the forthcoming G20 Summit in China and the BR1CS Summit in India in October this year and to resolve the issue pro-actively and pragmatically.



INTERFAITH COALITION FOR PEACE, WOMEN'S JOURNEY TO VARANASI, U.P.

JULY 20TH TO 23RD

Central Tibetan Women's Association's Vice- President Ms. Tsering Dolma and Joint secretary Nun Tenzin Tselha took part in the programme "Women's Interfaith Journey" organised by the Interfaith Coalition for peace. The programme aims to honour the feelings and opinions of all communities and to uphold their religious and human rights.



The Interfaith Coalition for Peace is a secular non-profit organisation. It aims to enable people from different faiths to fully realise their rights as human beings and to attain and sustain an equitable and dignified life. The organisation constantly works on peace, reunion and impartiality among the different faiths. The Interfaith Coalition for Peace dedicates itself to the creation of a family across the world that honours the sovereignty of God and respects human dignity.

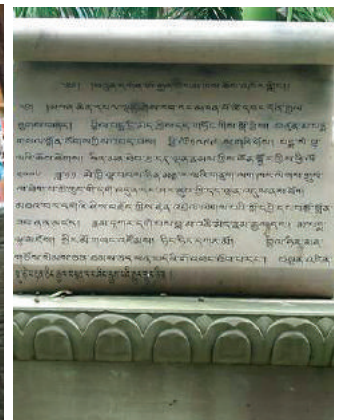


ARRIVAL IN VARANASI:

The group arrived in Varanasi in the mid-morning of

July 20th. An hour's drive from the Airport through crowded streets and narrow lanes brought us to the Hotel. Like most of the lanes and streets of Varanasi, the entrance of the Hotel stood on the edge of a dirty narrow lane. But, inside the Hotel, the rooms were clean and pleasantly decorated. The accommodation for the participants was on a twin-sharing basis and, as usual, participants representing different faith group and from a different state shared rooms with each other.

This year the programme was held in Varanasi, and TWA received the privilege of participating and advocating Tibetan and women's issues to the participants from Indian communities. The journey included eight women representing Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Tibetan Buddhism. They were taken on tour to visit different religious places, heritage sites and some important historical sites in the city. The participants also had interactive sessions and an exchange of knowledge on their respective religions.



The programme wrapped up with a message that women can be the agents of change in building peace between different communities and religions. The Tibetan Women's Association appreciate the Interfaith Coalition for Peace for initiating such a platform for women to learn and share. We found this journey educational and inspiring and hope to participate again in the future.

“A KALACHAKRA BY TIBET’S PANCHEN LAMA, GEDHUN CHOEKYI NYIMA”-OUR VISION!

DHARAMSHALA, June 21st: At the Martyr’s memorial in Tsuglag khang, the Tibetan Women’s Association along with Gu-chu-sum Movement, SFT and the National Democratic Party of Tibet staged an event of scarf offering to the Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima’s portrait, as a symbol of opposing the Chinese Panchen Lama, who is initiating the Kalachakra, the most sacred Buddhist ritual, in Tibet. Many Tibetans and non-Tibetans gathered to support our cause.



China had recently announced that their appointed Pachen lama, Gyaltzen Norbu would initiate the Kalachakra from July 21-24, at the official seat of Panchen Lama, Shigatse. This is not the first time that China has interfered in Tibetan religious affairs despite the fact that China itself is an atheist, communist country. The authorities made it compulsory for each Tibetan household to send two members to the Chinese government’s Kalachakra. This demonstrates China’s intensification of its persecution of Tibetans’ religious freedom.

It has been 21 years since China abducted the Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and who is seen as the world’s youngest political prisoner. Despite the international pressure by human rights organisations, and repeated

appeals for his release, China has remained silent on the Panchen Lama and his family’s whereabouts. We will fight on until China releases our Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.



AUGUST MONTH

TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS' 12TH WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

AUGUST 8 - 13

This year the Tibetan Women's Association held its 12th Working Committee Meeting at Rabgayling settlement, Hunsur from August 8th to 13th. 105 regional executives from regional Tibetan Women's Association chapters across India and Nepal gathered to attend the meeting.



The opening ceremony was a grand start to the meeting, with invited chief guests Kasur Mrs. Gyari Dolma, Rinpoche Lobsang Phendey (Gyurme Monastery) and Settlement Officer Mr. Gelek Jugney. Other guests of honour were Yeshe Dolma (A former Member of Parliament), settlement leaders, local assembly members, and Tibetan Youth Congress members.

The first Working Committee Meeting took place in Dharamshala in 1985, the year after the re-establishment of Tibetan Women's Association in exile. Midway through each term, executive members of the central and regional chapters of TWA congregate to assess the initiatives undertaken since the prior meeting and to plan strategies for future endeavours.

During the meeting the executives of TWA central and regional discussed the various activities their respective chapters have accomplished. In keeping

with the principles of transparency and accountability, representatives disclosed their project and financial reports. The members also envisioned and planned future agendas.



In addition, the executives discussed their views on the amendment of election rules and regulations which is taking place since the notice which was issued on June 24th asking for suggestions from Tibetan public for reforming the Tibetan electoral process.





“TWA honoured two inspiring women, Ama Jetsun Pema la, for her lifelong dedication and indomitable role in the cause of education, rebuilding Tibetan lives in exile and strengthening the future for Tibet and the Tibetan People. Gyalthong Tsering Dolma la is a tireless advocate for Tibetan women, for her incredible work in being one of the key architects and builders of a new life for Tibetan women in-exile. Since they couldn't make it in our meeting their awards has been presented to their close one.”

After the successful completion of the meeting at Hunsur, members toured around the various monasteries in Bylakuppe and visited the RTWA Bylakuppe. The members had the privilege to honour Mrs. Tsewang Palmo la, a patriotic woman who took part in the protest on March 12th, 1959, when Tibetan women from all three provinces of Tibet stood united for the first time in Tibetan history and challenged the



brutal clampdown by the Chinese government in their country. She is currently residing in the Bylakuppe settlement.

TWA appreciates the warm hospitality they received from the Hunsur settlement and Bylakuppe Tibetan Cooperative Society. They were also glad to meet the representative of Lugsum Samdupling and Dickyi Larsoe, and the TYC coordinator.

“The strength of the team is each individual member.
The strength of each member is the team”

—by Phil Jackson

TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION INAUGURATED IT'S 57TH REGIONAL CHAPTER IN REWALSAR (TSO-PEMA) ON AUGUST 1ST



TIBETAN Women's Association Central is happy to announce its newly formed regional chapter at Tso-Pema (Rewalsar). Mrs. Dolma Yangchen (TWA President), Ms. Tsering Dolma (Vice-President), and Tenzin Tselha (Administration Assistant) attended the inaugural function in the presence of Mr. Tenzin

Namgyal (Co-ordinator of the Settlement Office), the President of Tibetan Freedom Movement, Representative of Local Assembly. The executive members have been selected and the chapter has twenty members at its initiation.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”

—Margaret Mead

TWA CELEBRATES RAKSHA BANDHAN EVERY YEAR ON AUGUST 18TH

RAKSHA Bandhan is also called as Rakhi Purnima or simply Rakhi in many parts of India and Nepal, and is a Hindu religious and secular festival. In simple words, Raksha bandhan means “Bond of Protection”. Tibetan Women’s Association members celebrate this occasion to strengthen the relationship between Tibetans and Indians and also to seek support for the Tibet cause. They tie Rakhi and offer gifts to Indian officials, police and various other Indian personalities in their respective places. The following are pictures of the occasion.

RTWA DHARAMSHALA members with Mr. Ajay Singh Mankotia (President of Indo-Tibet Friendship Association).



RTWA RAJPUR celebrated Raksha Bandhan by tying Rakhi to Mr Harish Rawat (Uttarakhand Chief Minister) Mr Kishor Upadai (State President, Congress) Mr Ganesh Joshi (BJP MLA) and Tibet supporters.



RTWA PURUWALA/POANTA



RTWA NEW DELHI members tied a knot to Arvind Kejriwal (CM of New Delhi).



RTWA RAVANGLA



RTWA TSERING DHONDEN



SEPTEMBER MONTH

TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION MARKS 32ND RE-FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY IN EXILE ON SEPTEMBER 10TH



THE Central Tibetan Women's Association and its Regional Chapter celebrated the 32nd anniversary of its founding in Dharamshala. TWA paid heartfelt tribute to Tibetan martyrs for their supreme sacrifices which continue to keep the spirit of Tibet alive and hopeful even after 57 years of China's brutal suppression.



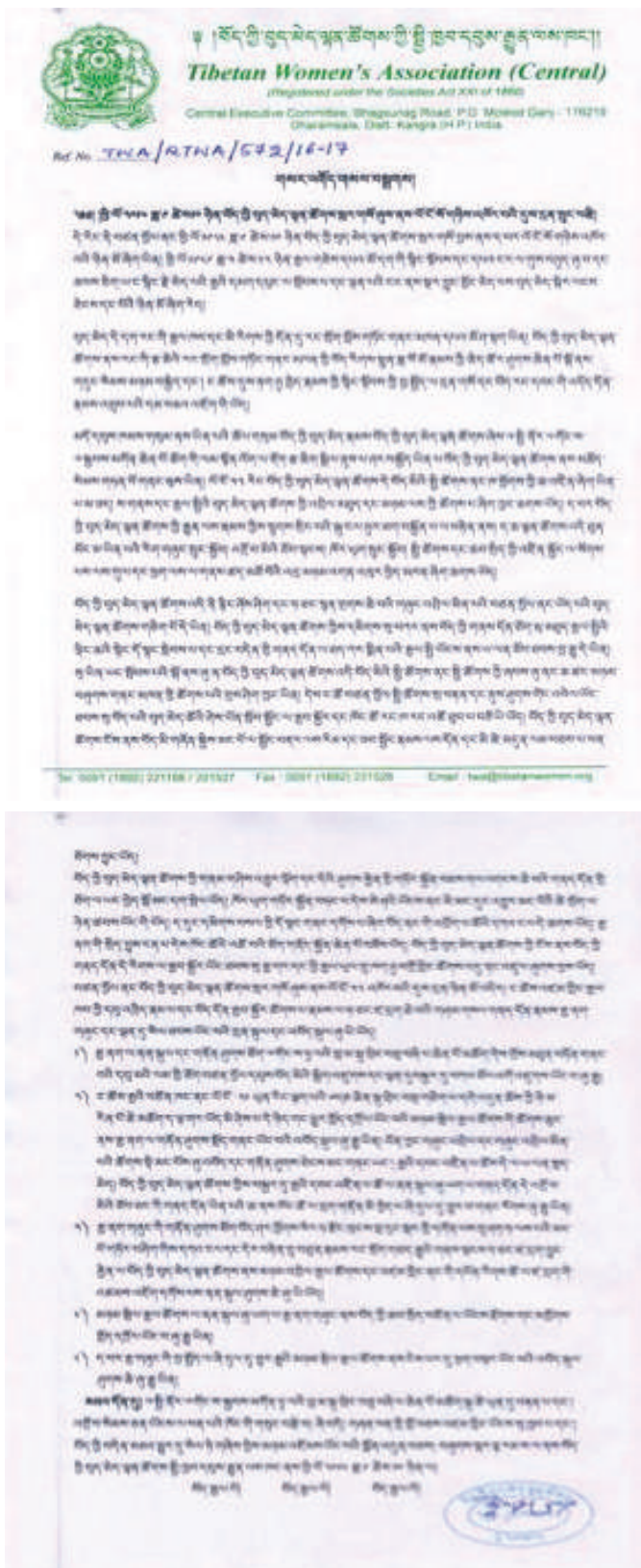
Today we are honoured to have Mrs. Rinchen Khando (The First President of TWA Dharamshala and The Director of Domaling Nuns Project), Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok (Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile), Mr. Ajay Mankotia Singh (President of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association), Mr. Dawa Rinchen (Representative of Welfare Office), Ms. Yeshe Dolma

(Member of Parliament) and Mrs. Karma Dolma (Coordinator of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association) as chief guests of the day. We are also pleased to have the representative of non-government organisations, and the people of Dharamshala. At the beginning of the event, we commenced with a minute's silence, observed to mourn the Tibetan martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the Tibet cause.

"While we serve for our country, it should be the fondness and affection towards one's country that should drive us rather than self-interest and personal fame" said the founding President of TWA, Rinchen Khando, in her key address. She also reminded people of the 1959 Women's Uprising Day and the historic reformation of Tibetan Women's Association in exile.

Ajay Mankotia Singh, President of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association, congratulated the organisation on its 32nd anniversary and said, "TWA must maintain a good rapport with the numerous Indian women's organisations across India."

"As we celebrate 32nd anniversary of TWA, I applaud the organisation founded on the bedrock of the March 12th, 1959 women's uprising in Tibet and as envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama" said Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok.



Condemning baseless and unfounded accusations which are surfacing on social media platforms, he added, “These are what China desires, we should in fact study the charters and law proposed and established by the CTA for proper sustenance of our administration.”

While TWA celebrates the 32nd anniversary of its re-founding, we strongly urge and appeal to world leaders and Tibet support groups all over the world to join hands together in support of issues related to human rights, and of Tibet's endangered environment.

The following are the appeals and the demands made at the meeting:

1. We urge you to pressure on China to re-start the dialogue with the CTA in exile as per the Middle Way Approach proposed by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.
2. We urge United Nation's Committee on Enforced Disappearance to exert pressure on China to release His Holiness the 11th Panchen Lama who has been in Chinese captivity for over 21 long years.
3. TWA urges the United Nations and other world leaders to take immediate action to stop China from demolishing Tibet's biggest Buddhist Institute "Larung Gar" at Serthar County, eastern Tibet. The destruction has caused tremendous problem and led the suicide of three nuns of its residents.
4. TWA demands the Chinese Government to release all Tibetan political prisoners unconditionally.
5. Lastly, an appeal to the United Nations to take necessary actions to make the Chinese Government relent.



We concluded our celebration with the “Thank you” speech by Mrs. Tsering Yangkyi (President of RTWA Dharamshala), and a prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s long life and his message of Love, Peace and

Compassion which has become a tool to bring peace to this troubled world.

RTWA REGIONAL CHAPTERS ALSO OBSERVED TWA 32ND RE-FOUNDING DAY. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE REPORTS FROM OUR REGIONAL CHAPTERS.

RTWA POANTA SAHIB organised an event to mark TWA's 32nd re-founding day. They invited settlement people and some local officials where they spoke of TWA's history.



RTWA KALIMPONG organised a sangsol and prayer for everyone. They distributed Tibetan sweet rice and tea to the people who gathered to celebrate TWA's 32nd re-establishment anniversary.



RTWA TSERING DHONDEN celebrated TWA's 32nd re-establishment anniversary at Gyelem hall. Invited guests were representatives of NGOs and settlement people. The programme started at 7:30 in the morning by offering sangsol. The programme followed with the scarf offering to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's portrait. Meanwhile Tibetan sweet rice was served. Later the Regional Chapter's president read out TWA Central's statement to the public. The programme concluded with Tibetan traditional dance and a sumptuous lunch was served.



RTWA BYLAKUPPE celebrated TWA's 32nd re-founding day at TDL (Tibetan Dickyi Larsoe hall), where the regional chapter President facilitated the oldest member Mrs. Dorjee Bhuti, 92, who is a mentor of RTWA Bylakuppe. The statement from Central TWA was read out to the public.



RTWA POKHARA invited their Settlement Officer and some local officials to the celebration. The programme began with a prayer to all martyrs and Sangsol for all sentient beings. The function ended with a Tibetan traditional dance.



RTWA MINNESOTA celebrated with a briefing on the Tibetan Women's Association's history and its re-establishment in-exile India. They invited as many Tibetans as were able to be accommodated in the venue.



RTWA DHONDUPLING celebrated the day by inviting chief guest Mr. Tenchap la (Settlement officer). The other guests of honour were General Secretary Mr. Urgyen Jigme la and some other local officials.



RTWA DELHI marked 32nd re-founding at Majnu-ka-tilla, the Tibetan colony in Delhi.



“We are only as strong as we
are united, as weak as we are
divided”

—J.K. Rowling

TIBETAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OBSERVED WORLD RIVERS DAY ON SEPTEMBER 25TH AT TCV SUJA SCHOOL



WORLD Rivers Day is a global celebration of the world's waterways, and is celebrated every last Sunday in September. Established in 2005, it highlights the many values of rivers and strives to increase public awareness while encouraging improved stewardship of rivers around the world. Rivers in every country face an array of threats, and World Rivers Day promotes the active involvement of citizens to ensure the health of rivers in the years ahead.

Tibetan Women's Association's Environment and Development Desk Officer Ms. Norzin Dolma, Ms. Tsering Choezom (General Secretary) and Ms. Jigme Lhamo (Research and communication), organised an intensive discussion and activity for class 12 students of TCV Suja School. The activity took place on World Rivers Day with the theme "Tibet's Rivers, Asia's Lifeline". Mr. Karma Sherap Tharchin la (TCV Suja Principal) and his staff warmly welcomed us.

The following are the topics which were discussed with the students:

- * Significance of the Third Pole and its impact on the downstream nations. The Tibetan plateau is widely known as the Earth's "Third Pole" because it is the highest, largest and coldest plateau on Earth. Due to

its unique geographical location and high altitude, the Tibetan plateau faces swift changes in its weather patterns and ecosystems in more extreme ways than any others parts of the world. Tibet is the sources of major rivers flowing into Asia and which supply water to 1.4 billion people in 10 downstream nations including Indian, Bhutan, Nepal, Burma, and Cambodia.

- * Tibet's climate change. Tibet's climate change and its numerous consequences are a grave concern for the entire world, one that can no longer be ignored. Such a change is not an inexorable force of nature, but has, in fact, known human causes and available solutions.

- * Glacial melting and glacial lake floods. The rapid melting of glaciers is causing a great increase in the number of glacial lakes in Himalayan regions resulting in clacial lake outburst floods (GLOF), particularly in Nepal, India and Bhutan. According to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), there are 8,790 glacial lakes in selected areas of the Hindu-kush-Himalayas, of which more than 200 are potentially dangerous. In the recent years glacial melting and permafrost have greatly destabilised hillsides, resulting in large landslides.

- Construction of mega dams and its effect. Constructing mega dams on Tibet's rivers not only

disrupts the flow of water, they block the flow of silt which carries vital nutrients downstream. With less silt being deposited at the delta, salt water encroaches onto croplands. Upstream land is lost and communities displaced by dam reservoirs. Habitats are destroyed and species threatened. Downstream, ecosystems are profoundly altered, affecting fisheries and livelihood.



The students were excited and actively participated in our educational and creativity activities. 92 students participated in the programme and we divided them into groups. In our first activity, we tried to find out what strategies the students would instigate if they were an “environment activist”.

The students contributed these overwhelmingly impressive ideas:

- Raise Tibet’s climate degradation issue in UN environmental summits.
- Visit Tibet and undertake research on Tibet’s environment.
- Inaugurate an NGO to create an awareness of the destruction of Tibet’s environment.
- Invite Chinese environmentalists to a panel discussion on the importance of Tibet’s environment. Taking the opportunity afforded by their presence, they would request them to save Tibet’s environment.



In our second activity, we gave different topics to each group and we were pleased with the lateral thinking demonstrated by the students. The following are their suggestions:

- Slogan- “Tibet is a mother tank of Asia”.
- A peaceful dialogue with China to stop construction of mega dams on Tibet’s Rivers.
- Organise a panel discussion, integrated with TWA, on Tibet’s rivers and effect of the mega dams.
- Request Barack Obama (United States President) to investigate conditions which are affecting Tibet’s environment by sending their researchers and environmentalist to Tibet.



The programme was intended to educate students and test their creativity. The student’s active participation and their exceptional ideas made our programme a success. The session lasted for three hours and wrapped up with a “Thank you” speech by TCV staff and concluded with a scarf offering by TCV Principal Mr. Karma Sherap Tharchin la.

OTHER-ACTIVITIES

THE Tibetan Women's Association assigns great importance to meeting and interacting with national and international people to raise global awareness of the critical situation inside Tibet which also gives us the opportunity to introduce our association. Through meetings, TWA can increase international pressure for the improvement of human rights for Tibetans living in Tibet.

APRIL 5TH



Tibetan Women's Association's President Dolma Yangchen la and General Secretary Tsering Choezom la had an interactive session with the Sweden Tibetan Committee group.

APRIL 27TH



The 14th batch of TWA's Stitches of Tibet trainees and PRO Mrs. Kalsang Youdon had opportunity of an audience with His Holiness the 17th Karmapa, at Gyuto Monastery.

APRIL 7TH



Tibetan Women's Association's President and General Secretary participated in the three-day conference "Strengthening Tibetan Civil Society" in Dehradun, India which is organised by SOIR-IM, Tibet Fund and Tibet Relief Fund.

APRIL 28TH



Tibetan Women's Association's president Mrs. Dolma Yangchen la attended the "STRENGTHENING OUR ALLIANCE TO ADVANCE THE PEOPLE'S DREAM: FREEDOM, JUSTICE, EQUITY AND PEACE" conference in Dharamshala from April 28th to May 1st.

MAY 3RD



TWA's president Mrs. Dolma Yangchen la with other representatives from Tibetan NGOs exchanged their views on Tibet's issues with Paul Protic, Chief of Staff of the Congressional Executive Commission on China and Scott Flips, Communication Director, Congressional Commission on China.

Representatives of the Tibetan Women's Association took part in discussions with Dr. Teng Biao, Chinese Human Rights Activist and Lawyer, Co-founder of the Open Constitution Initiative (Gongmeng) organised by TCHRD and ITN.

MAY 5TH



Tibetan Women's Association's Women Environment and Development officer Miss Norzin Dolma la participated in an interactive session with Kachin delegates from Burma at Norbu House.

MAY 5TH



Tibetan Women's Association's President took part in an interactive session with an Israeli group.

MAY 12TH



Delegates from the Kachin state of Burma visited TWA. The group had an interactive session with TWA's President; the educational tour was led by the International Tibet Network.

MAY 5TH



MAY 24TH



TWA's president participated in an interactive session and discussion with a North America Group. The educational tour was led by SFT India.

MAY 24TH



The Taiwan Tibet Group participants led by Gu Chu Sum had an interactive session with TWA President.

MAY 27TH



TWA's President with a Thai group led by SFT-India.

MAY 30TH



Tibetan Women's Association's 11th Executive members wish Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay the very best in his endeavours. They congratulated Sikyong during the swearing-in ceremony for his second consecutive term.

MAY 30TH



Tibetan Women's Association members congratulating the Speaker of the 15th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Mr. Penpa Tsering, for being appointed as the new Representative for the Office of Tibet, Washington, DC.

JUNE 1ST



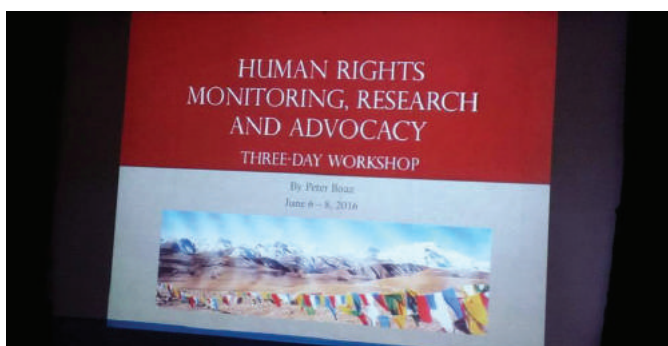
The Tibetan Women's Association welcome and congratulatory dinner is extended to the newly-elected 16th women parliamentarian of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

JUNE 4TH



The TWA President had an opportunity to share information about the current situation inside Tibet and the status of Tibetans in exile with Taiwan journalist Mr. Jung Shin Ho (Chief Editor) and his group, led by DIIR. They were also able to discuss the activities of the Tibetan Women's Association in the Tibetan community.

JUNE 10TH



TWA General Secretary Ms. Tsering Choezom and Project Officer Ms. Tenzin Choezin attended a workshop on Human Rights Monitoring Research and Advocacy organised by Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. The three-day workshop was led by Mr. Peter Boaz, an international humanitarian law and development professional from San Francisco, California with field research experience in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

JUNE 10TH -15TH

TWA led an Operation Groundswell June group on an introductory tour around NGOs in Dharamshala. Operation Groundswell is a Canadian non-profit organisation which organises educational backpacking programmes in many different countries, including India. Their programme "Gender and Religion" runs two-week sessions during the summer in north India. They aim to look at the complexities of the barriers faced by many women in India as they intersect with religion, caste, poverty, sexuality, etc.

Dharamshala was chosen as a location for their programme because it offers participants a particular political and religious perspective. Being the Tibetan capital in exile and the centre of Buddhism in India, their group is able to gain exposure to the unique community of activism here.



Dawa Tashi la of Gu-chu-sum and Tashi la (Bottom) from Tibetan Youth Congress, Dharamshala.



Geshe Lhakdor la, Tibetan Library Works and Archive and (Bottom) Tenpa Dhargyal la, from Tibet Policy Institute.

JUNE 16TH



Tibetan Women's Association members with the Little Lhasa 2016 group led by SFT.

JULY 28TH



JUNE 13TH



The Tibetan Women's Association warmly welcomed Michael Smith's 2016 group from Tulane University, New Orleans, LA and also students from LHA Charitable Trust. The TWA President briefed on TWA's history and objectives, and the current activities of the Association.

Deceased Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's niece Nyima Lhamo escaped from Tibet. She shared her heart wrenching story of her escape and revealed the bitter truth of Tulku Tenzin Delek's death.

TWA Mrs. Dolma Yangchen (President) and Ms. Tsering Dolma (Vice-President) welcomed Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's Niece Nyima Lhamo la, to Dharamshala.

AUGUST 1ST



TWA Project Officer Ms. Tenzin Choezin and Ms. Jigme Lhamo (Research and Media Officer) attended a workshop organised by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, at Norbu House. The morning session was an informal workshop “Power, Participation and Change”, and in the afternoon was a panel discussion “Statelessness, Citizenship and Refugee”. The discussion was interesting as well as helpful.

AUGUST 1ST- 5TH



TWA organised an interactive and informative meeting for the Operation Groundswell August Group with NGOs (ITN, NDPT, Lha Charitable Trust, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, TYC, Gu-chu-sum, Norbulinka Institute, Domaling Nunnery, TCHRD, Men-tsee-khang) in Dharamshala.



TWA President introduced Tibetan Women's Association and its history and the current activities. Nyima Lhamo introduced International Tibet Network organisation to the group.

Operation Groundswell had an interactive meeting with the members of National Democratic Party of Tibet and Lha Charitable Trust.



TWA concludes the Operation Groundswell group programme with a Conflict Resolution workshop led by Mrs. Sonam Dechen (Associate Director of Tibetan Centre for Conflict Resolution) at Hotel Tibet.

AUGUST 23RD



It was really inspiring to meet Tenzin Pema la from Gangtok. TWA President Mrs. Dolma Yangchen and Vice President Tsering Dolma, the executives and staff appreciate her hard work and are encouraged to follow her exceptional profession. We wish her good luck with her upcoming matches in New Delhi and also hope that she will be a role model for our youngsters in future.

AUGUST 24TH



TWA Central had a pleasant meeting with Ms. Debbie Carrani and also had a fruitful discussion on TWA and its activities.

SEPTEMBER 6TH



TWA's outstation central executive member Mrs. Tashi Chodon la, at a discussion on the Tibetan Women's Association with the members of TWA Regional chapter in Canada during her vacation.

SEPTEMBER 12TH



TWA's President Mrs. Dolma Yangchen la, was able to meet and talk to one of the great human rights Chinese activist Mr. Chen Guangcheng. He left the Chinese government and joined the Tibetan people in their freedom struggle against the Communist Chinese.

SEPTEMBER 12TH



RTWA Minnesota re-elected their Regional Chapter members for the term 2016-2018. From left Tenzin Lhadon (Vice-President), Nyima Lhamo (Accountant), Norzin Dolkar (Treasurer), Yangchen Lhamo (PR/Media), Dawa Yangzom (Merchandise/ Membership Coordinator), Passang Dolma (President) and Tsering Yangchen (General secretary).

SEPTEMBER 16TH



TWA's President Mrs. Dolma Yangchen and Joint secretary Nun Tenzin Tselha met with Tibetans in Belgium where they were pleased to meet the Mayor of Ornans in France. On September 13th, they were blessed to have an opportunity to attend His Holiness' public meeting in Paris.

SEPTEMBER 17TH



RTWA Deckyiling called for a public meeting inviting their Settlement Officer Mr. Norbu la, as their chief guest. They notified people about the resolution passed by the Tibetan Women's Association's 12th Working Committee meeting at Hunsur Rabgyaling Settlement.

SEPTEMBER 17TH



Members of RTWA Byalkuppe and Hunsur took part in Women's Achievers (WAR) Rally and a Real Man Campaign (RMC) organised by Odanadi Seva Samasthe, Mysore. It's an NGO that has been leading the fight against human trafficking over the last three decades.

SEPTEMBER 17TH



TWA's President and Joint Secretary took part in a Tibet solidarity rally which was organised by the Tibetan community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and the International Campaign for Tibet, during the session of the UN Human Rights Council on September 16th, in Geneva. The aim of the rally was to highlight the worsening human rights situation inside Tibet and to call on the UN to urge China to stop its clampdown on religious freedom.

SEPTEMBER 19TH



TWA's President Mrs. Dolma Yangchen and Joint secretary Ven. Tenzin Tselha at a meeting with Tibetan Women's Associations' regional chapter members from Switzerland.

SEPTEMBER 22ND



Tibetan Women's Association Vice President Tsering Dolma and General Secretary Tsering Choezom donate clothes at Tong-Len Charitable Trust.

SEPTEMBER 22ND



Tibetan Women's Association President Dolma Yangchen la and Joint secretary Ven Tenzin Tselha la were pleased to meet Birte Lundgreen, the Director of Danner Women's Shelter, Denmark and Lise Hjorth. They were inspired by Louise Christine Rasmusen's incredible story; she was also known as Countess Danner, the morganatic spouse of Danish King Frederick. After the king died she built this amazing building for women who were in need of help. Photo credit- Lise Hjorth.

SEPTEMBER 23RD



Photo credit- Lise Hjorth

TWA's President Dolma Yangchen la and Joint secretary Ven. Tenzin Tselha la at a meeting with Denmark Tibet Support group.

SEPTEMBER 24TH



TWA's Vice-President Ms. Tsering Dolma and the team met with Ms. Tenzin Palkyi and had a fruitful discussion on TWA's upcoming projects.

SEPTEMBER 27TH -29TH



Tibetan Women's Association hosted its first ever capacity building training for the Central Executive members and Staff which would not have been possible without the fund from Swedish Organization for Individual Relief (SOIR-IM). The training was led by Nandita Pradhan, from one of the most reputable Organization in India -Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) for three days. This intensive workshop specifically focused on Administrative Development, Strategic Goal Planning, Communication skills and on Gender Sensitization.

SEPTEMBER 30TH



RTWA Manali organised a public teaching on "Introduction to Buddhism" by Ven Phuntsok la.

TWA INTERN AND FAREWELL

MAY 31ST



The Tibetan Women's Association team wishes our Research and Media Officer, Ms. Lhamo Tsering la the very best in her future endeavours.

JULY 15TH



TWA celebrated a farewell to Ms. Rajeshwari Tikhile and Ms. Migmer Bhuti, who volunteered at TWA for two months. Ms. Rajeshwari has worked hard to teach English language to Tibetan women working at SOT (Stitches of Tibet) a non-profit vocational training programme initiated by TWA in 1995. Ms. Migmer also worked hard to assist the TWA administration. TWA wishes them a bright future and also welcomes people to support us according to their abilities and availability.

JULY 26TH



Farewell to one great employee Ms. Tenzin Dolkar la (TWA Office Accountant). Her hard work and dedication were an important part of our organisation. As you turn the page in your life's story, we join together in wishing you every success in all your future endeavours. We will remember the hard work and the happy moments we have shared. You have been a great team member. Best wishes and keep up the good work.

SEPTEMBER 6TH

TWA celebrated a small yet memorable farewell party



for our intern Georgia Jacobs, from Australia. We are thankful to her for teaching English to our SOT trainees and also for helping us in some of our projects and activities. We would be pleased to see her again in the near future as an intern and a friend of TWA.