

# FREE TIBET

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[www.freetibet.org](http://www.freetibet.org)

Don't forget to buy  
these Free Tibet  
Christmas cards

See inside for more gift ideas!



freeTIBET

• InterContinental Hotels in Lhasa • Tibet Watch • A desperate plea for change •



Free Tibet Director Stephanie Brigden

## Dear friends

News from Tibet that a second monk, Tsewang Norbu, felt his only choice was to set himself on fire came as a terrible blow. Given Tsewang's act was clearly aimed at exposing the desperate situation inside Tibet, we worked hard with journalists and broadcasters, ensuring that news of his self-immolation spread across the globe.

When faced with such tragedy, raising public awareness can sometimes feel inadequate; on this occasion, the media exposure limited China's ability to respond as harshly as it had in Ngaba months earlier to a similar situation. For almost 25 years, Free Tibet has been working tirelessly to expose the true conditions in occupied Tibet; we will not stop until Tibet is free.

We cannot realise our ambitions without your support – you can help right now by signing up to be involved in our campaign against InterContinental Hotels' expansion into Lhasa (page 4) or, if you'd like to give your support in a different way, we are asking supporters to think of Free Tibet in the future by leaving a gift in their will. Enclosed in the magazine is a short leaflet about how you can go about doing this; it couldn't

be simpler and leaving a legacy gift ensures your beliefs live on.

As we inch towards Christmas, I know some of you may already be thinking about what to give and perhaps even receive! Enclosed is our Christmas Catalogue which has wonderful stocking fillers, gifts for grandchildren and even one or two gifts you may want for yourself! The proceeds from the sales go straight into our campaigning work, so each gift you buy is also a gift for Tibet.

And let's not forget that for just £1 today, next year you could be enjoying a holiday courtesy of Free Tibet's raffle. If you do buy some tickets we can't guarantee you'll win, but I can promise your chances are better than with the National Lottery!

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Free Tibet stands for the right of Tibetans to determine their own future. It campaigns for an end to China's occupation of Tibet and for the fundamental human rights of Tibetans to be respected. Founded in 1987, Free Tibet generates active support by education about the situation in Tibet. It is independent of all governments and is funded by its members and supporters. Views expressed in *Free Tibet* are not necessarily those of Free Tibet.

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**Prints:** Crucial Colour



**Front cover photograph:** Caravan of yaks crossing the Ladakh range. www.rabouan-images.com



# Free Tibet will be 25 in 2012!

Letter from Sue Byrne,  
founding member of  
Free Tibet and current  
member of the  
Executive Committee

When Free Tibet was formed shortly after the 1987 uprising in Lhasa, the world was only just waking up to the true conditions in occupied Tibet. Foreigners gave eyewitness accounts of the suppression, countering for the first time the sanitised Chinese accounts of life in occupied Tibet.

But when the Dalai Lama applied to visit the UK in 1988, the UK government made it a condition of his UK visa that he did not speak about politics while he was here. Many of us determined that if the Dalai Lama could not speak then we would speak out about the suppression in Tibet and about our government's broken promises to Tibetans.

A rally was arranged at the Peace Pagoda in Battersea Park and after it, we felt it was important to maintain the energy generated and to direct it into a sustained grassroots campaign. We needed members. Hundreds of them, or maybe even a few thousand. And so it began.

Since that rally in Battersea Park, Free Tibet and more than 70,000 Free Tibet supporters have made a significant contribution to raising awareness of the occupation of Tibet. Last year, we demonstrated just how far we have come when an independent opinion poll carried out by ICM found that only three per cent of British adults believe Tibet should continue to be ruled by China.

We are a trusted, much quoted source of news and informed comment on Tibet with the media, policy-makers and

independent human rights monitoring organisations, including the United Nations, ensuring that China is held accountable for the rights violations that result from the occupation. Despite China's efforts to censor the thoughts, beliefs and actions of the Tibetan people, Free Tibet has been tirelessly ensuring that Tibet remains in the public eye. As I write, we have just been told that in Tawu Tibetans believe they were treated less harshly than the people of Ngaba because of the international media attention Free Tibet was instrumental in securing. Our work really can help protect Tibetans in Tibet.

Of course, in an ideal world Free Tibet would no longer need to exist, but until that time we will continue to stand for the right of Tibetans to determine their own future. As we look to the future, our mission remains the same but the landscape in which we are working has changed. China has assumed a much larger role on the international stage, which presents both challenges and opportunities. Free Tibet will continue to raise awareness of rights violations in Tibet with traditional media, but the internet is enabling Free Tibet to reach, engage and influence much larger audiences in new ways. We will also be reaching out to moderate Chinese voices who, when change happens, will be instrumental in helping to secure a free Tibet.

Change can and does happen – we need only look to the Middle East and North Africa to remind ourselves of that.

# InterContinental Hotels moves into Lhasa



**The presence of these hotels legitimises and entrenches China's occupation of Tibet**

The first internationally-owned hotel – the Four Points Sheraton – opened in Lhasa, Tibet, in 2007. Four more international hotel chains are following hot on its heels, eager to stake a claim on the ‘roof of the world’. One of these, a flagship 2,000-room resort from InterContinental, is part-owned by the British public. Lloyds Bank, which was ‘rescued’ by the British government during the 2009 banking crisis, has a 4% stake in InterContinental and the British public still owns 41% of Lloyds Bank.

Free Tibet is opposed to these international hotel chains in Lhasa because their presence implies that the situation in Tibet is normal. On top of this, the presence of these hotels further legitimises and entrenches China's occupation of Tibet, while any corporate social responsibility policies the hotels may have are impossible to implement or monitor in occupied Tibet.

The presence in Lhasa of international hotels with well-known brands, established reputations and well-publicised corporate social responsibility strategies sends a message to the world

that all is well in Lhasa. The international community is being invited to view Lhasa just like any other tourist or business destination.

The reality of the situation in Lhasa is that the Tibetan population lives in a culture of fear and intimidation; a highly visible Chinese military presence, pervasive surveillance, military road blocks and armed personnel stationed on rooftops give Lhasa the appearance of a conflict zone. This is hardly “one of the happiest cities in China” as Chinese state-owned media calls it, nor is it the idyllic, peaceful destination the international hotels would have their guests believe in. Whilst the hotels will lure guests with Tibet's culture, religion and environment, Tibetans themselves will not benefit from their commodification by an international hotel chain in partnership with a Chinese developer.

The international hotels not only help to legitimise China's brutal occupation, they also help to entrench the occupation. The Chinese businessman developing the hotel with InterContinental, Deng Hong, has made it clear that his business

Above: The planned InterContinental Hotel Resort, Lhasa (inset) is not sympathetic to the local Tibetan architecture

depends on his relationship with the Chinese government. To do business in China, businesses must operate within the system and curry favour with the Chinese Communist Party. The hotels will generate revenue for the owners, which will encourage them to continue to support the system within which they are profiting.

The hotels' owners argue that the hotels will benefit the local Tibetan community, for instance by providing employment. However, Tibetan employees from the Shangri-la construction site (see below) who were interviewed expressed concern that most of the people who gained employment in the projects were Chinese; Tibetans who had gained employment were being paid less for doing the same jobs. This is common in Lhasa.

To participate in the 'economic revolution in Tibet', Tibetans must be fluent in Chinese. While under Chinese occupation most education in Tibet is conducted in Chinese, many Tibetans struggle to complete their education in their second language. So, many Tibetans will be unable to meet the likely recruitment criteria for employment in the InterContinental resort in Lhasa – especially for management posts. The people who benefit most from the InterContinental Hotels Group Lhasa Resort are unlikely be Tibetans.

Tibetans who were interviewed expressed concern that the hotels may act as a catalyst for increased Chinese migration into Tibet as they create opportunities for employment for those with the right skills – often skills that Tibetans in Tibet have not had the opportunity to develop because of their level of education. Increased migration into Tibet will fuel Tibetans' sense of being marginalised inside their own country.

InterContinental has a well-publicised corporate social responsibility policy to ensure that their developments benefit and do not harm local communities. However, there are many reasons why these policies are impossible to implement or monitor in any meaningful way in Tibet.

Given the culture of fear and intimidation in Tibet and the severe consequences Tibetans risk if they express their opinions, it is unclear if and how InterContinental met its own commitment to undertake a social impact assessment before any building works began. Nor is it clear how it plans to engage regularly with local community leaders to identify and resolve any rights issues, as it also commits to do.

Interviews with Tibetans in Lhasa exposed that knowledge of InterContinental's planned resort is very sparse. This may indicate that the Tibetan population is not being consulted or involved in the project to a great extent.

**With their international scope and reputations, these international hotel chains must re-think their presence in occupied Tibet. By being there, they are endorsing China's brutal policies in Tibet and providing legitimacy and support for the occupation of Tibet.**

#### What is Free Tibet doing?

Free Tibet has written to InterContinental and attended the Annual General Meeting to raise our concerns. Free Tibet also lobbied shareholders attending the meeting.

Free Tibet's director, Stephanie Brigden, has requested a meeting with InterContinental's Corporate Social Responsibility division to advise them to stop InterContinental's operations in Lhasa.

## Action

### No InterContinental in Tibet!

- Sign the enclosed action postcard urging InterContinental Hotels Group PLC to withdraw from operating in Lhasa.
- For those of you who want to be more involved, please email [Sophie@freetibet.org](mailto:Sophie@freetibet.org) for opportunities to campaign at InterContinental hotels across the UK and internationally.
- We would be extremely interested in hearing from any of you who are shareholders in InterContinental or in the following companies: Lloyds Bank, Fidelity International, JP Morgan, Cedar Rock Capital, Capital Research Globe Investors and Blackrock Investment Management (major shareholders in InterContinental).

 [www.freetibet.org/campaigns](http://www.freetibet.org/campaigns)

## International hotels in Lhasa



InterContinental Hotel  
2,000 rooms,  
Opening 2012.



Starwood – St Regis  
169 rooms,  
Opened November 2010.



Four Points Sheraton  
102 rooms, 4 star,  
Opened in 2007.



Carlson Park Plaza  
87 rooms,  
Opening 2011.



Shangri-La  
350 rooms,  
Opening 2012.

# Get involved

## 25 years of Free Tibet: join us in the celebrations!

Next year Free Tibet will celebrate 25 years of campaigning to raise awareness about Tibet. As a membership-based organisation, none of the work we do would be possible without your generous support. This is why we would like to invite you to celebrate with us! We

are planning a series of activities for next year in order to raise Free Tibet's profile, making the Tibetan cause visible to people who might not otherwise know about Tibet. Find out how to become involved by reading the January 2012 edition of Free Tibet's magazine.

## Tibet supporter wins Tour de France

Free Tibet is delighted that Australian cyclist Cadel Evans is the 2011 Tour de France champion. In the 2008 Tour de France, Evans wore a t-shirt featuring the Tibetan flag in support of Tibet.

Evans said: "Trying to bring awareness of the Tibet movement is something someone in my position can do. I don't want to see a repeat of what happened to Aboriginal culture happen to another culture."



## How far can £1 get you?

The Free Tibet raffle has lots of amazing prizes: it gives you the opportunity to win a holiday for only £1 while supporting Free Tibet's campaigning work. Opposite, you can see just how far £1 can get you – from tickets to see the National Ballet to a special dinner in Umbria, Italy.

Please contact us at [raffle@freetibet.org](mailto:raffle@freetibet.org) or call 020 7324 4605 to order tickets over the phone.

**Thank you to the generous donors who offered these exciting prizes.**

**Closing date:**  
**13 December 2011**

**Draw date:**  
**15 December 2011**

Raffle only open to residents of the UK excluding Northern Ireland.

If you think you may have a gambling problem please seek advice and support at [www.gambleaware.co.uk](http://www.gambleaware.co.uk).

**1st Prize:** A four-night stay for two at the **Spirit of the Knights Boutique Hotel** set in the medieval old town of Rhodes, Greece. [www.rhodesluxuryhotel.com](http://www.rhodesluxuryhotel.com)

**2nd Prize:** A two-night stay for two at boutique hotel **Sončna Hiša**, Slovenia. This holiday includes unlimited use of the spa garden, a romantic dinner and many other treats! [www.soncna-hisa.si/en](http://www.soncna-hisa.si/en)

**3rd Prize:** Three nights of luxury for two at **The Four Seasons Hotel**, Scotland, including breakfast and dinner at their award-winning restaurant. [www.thefourseasonshotel.co.uk](http://www.thefourseasonshotel.co.uk)

**4th Prize:** A spring or midsummer five-nights' dream holiday for two at the **Secret Garden** in Naples, Italy. [www.ilgiardinosegreto.org](http://www.ilgiardinosegreto.org)

**5th Prize:** Three nights for two at the luxurious **Hoopoe Yurt Hotel** in Andalucia, Spain. [www.yurthotel.com](http://www.yurthotel.com)

**6th Prize:** One night for two, with dinner and breakfast, at the **Relais Il Cantico Della Natura**, in Umbria, Italy. [www.ilcanticodellanatura.it](http://www.ilcanticodellanatura.it)

**7th Prize:** A brocaded Tibetan thangka donated by **Pink Lotus**. [www.pinklotus.co.uk](http://www.pinklotus.co.uk)

**8th Prize:** Two tickets to a performance of **Strictly Gershwin** by the English National Ballet at the London Coliseum. [www.ballet.org.uk](http://www.ballet.org.uk)

**9th Prize:** A £365 hamper of organic champagne from **Rainbow Wholefoods**. [www.rainbowwholefoods.co.uk](http://www.rainbowwholefoods.co.uk)



## New music video for Tibet

Free Tibet has teamed up with acclaimed British band Cornershop, who shot to fame with their number one single *Brimful of Asha*, to produce a music video for their new single *Don't shake it (Let it free)*. The video shows the unwavering spirit of Tibetans in their struggle for freedom, and contains original footage of protests in Tibet in 2008. It also has footage of the annual solidarity march in London in 2011. Many of you attended the march, so why not have a look at the video and see if you are in it? You can then share your moment of fame with your friends and at the same time raise awareness about Tibet! You can use email, Facebook or Twitter to share the link.

We are very grateful that Cornershop worked with us and also that NME, a prestigious and popular music website, chose to launch the video on their website. Many music fans who might not otherwise know anything about Tibet have now learnt about the situation.

Tjinder, the lead singer of Cornershop, said: **“As Tibetans risk life imprisonment for sharing footage or images of the repression in Tibet with the outside world, it’s important that Cornershop does what it can to help expose what’s really happening.”**



Please spread the word about Tibet and re-tweet the video or post it on your Facebook wall.

Watch the video at  [www.freetibet.org/campaigns](http://www.freetibet.org/campaigns)

## Perfect Christmas gifts

Free Tibet is delighted to present our Christmas merchandise range. There are some great ideas for that perfect gift, from the festive butter lamp to the very soft, natural cashmelon blanket: last year's favourite! We also have Christmas cards, Tibetan jewellery, children's babygrows and t-shirts. Gifts start from as little as £1 and all proceeds go to Free Tibet. We are committed to providing high-quality products, created ethically with source products which support Tibetan communities in exile. To order, please take a look at the Christmas catalogue enclosed with the magazine or visit the online shop.



 [www.freetibet.org/shop](http://www.freetibet.org/shop)



## Tibetan voices on the internet

High Peaks Pure Earth is a website that translates Tibetan blogs (written in Tibetan or Chinese) into English and provides analysis. The website was set up by Dechen Pemba in 2008.

After over three years of lobbying and campaigning for Tibet in Berlin, Dechen moved to Beijing in September 2006 to study Chinese. She lived in China until July 2008. Dechen completed an MA in Chinese Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, in September 2009.

Free Tibet interviewed Dechen about Tibetans and the internet.

### **What are the main topics and discussions among Tibetans on the internet?**

The recurring topics that reflect the concerns of Tibetans today include the loss of Tibetan language, the erosion of Tibetan culture and discrimination faced by Tibetans in Tibet and China. What never stops surprising me is how bold Tibetan netizens (citizens of the internet who communicate online) are. Being within China's 'Great Firewall' poses risks and dangers but Tibetan netizens are determined to use blogs and social media as a channel to air grievances about injustices.

### **Who are these bloggers and how widespread is blogging in Tibet?**

Tibetan netizens tend to be young and computer literate. Very often, Tibetans online are students based in urban centres all over China. There are far more Tibetans active online outside the Tibet Autonomous Region than inside. Internet controls and Chinese government policies tend to be stricter inside the Tibet Autonomous Region. Recently, more Tibetans have taken up micro-blogging (posting short, diary-like updates online) on Chinese language sites such as Sina Weibo (China's equivalent of Twitter).

### **What would you say is the difference between the blogging cultures in China and in Tibet?**

There are far tighter controls on Tibetan blogs and online activities compared to the rest of China. Blog and blogpost deletions are common occurrences in Tibet, especially at times that are considered to be politically sensitive, such as on Tibetan Uprising Day. In the lead-up to these times blogs, social networking sites and online forums will be taken offline entirely as a pre-emptive measure.

### **In your experience, how have the 2008 uprising and the ensuing crackdown changed the way Tibetans express themselves?**

After the turbulent year of 2008, Tibetan netizens started to strongly assert their identity online through poetry, prose, images and videos. Whilst arguably perhaps politically less sensitive, this kind of activity is reinforcing

Tibetan identity and sense of nation. Later, very popular songs such as *The Sound of Unity* by Sherten started to make the rounds amongst Tibetans all over Tibet; these songs call for Tibetans to stay strong and united, a very powerful message.

At the same time, a new non-cooperation movement started to emerge. This movement is called 'Lhakar' and literally translates as 'White Wednesday'. The Lhakar movement calls for Tibetans to assert their identity every Wednesday, even if only in a small way, such as by wearing Tibetan dress, frequenting Tibetan businesses or speaking only in Tibetan.

### **Do you think blogs by Tibetans might contribute to changes in perception about Tibetan identity for Chinese readers?**

There is a lot of potential, particularly through Chinese-language Tibetan blogs, for Chinese people to learn about Tibetans and to see them more on a personal level as people who have legitimate concerns and grievances. Although Woesser's blog (Woesser is the most well known online Tibetan commentator and blogger, based in Beijing) is blocked in China, the blog has many Chinese readers and is also a platform for Chinese people who write on Tibet; in this way her work and the work of her Chinese dissident husband Wang Lixiong is very important.



[www.highpeakspureearth.com](http://www.highpeakspureearth.com)



High Peaks Pure Earth founder Dechen Pemba



## Free Tibet's view into Tibet

Have you ever wondered how Free Tibet, a London-based organisation, manages to report news from inside Tibet?

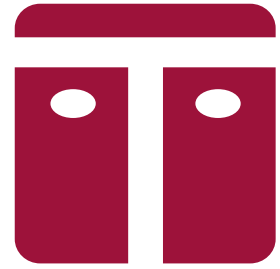
We do so by working with Tibet Watch, a UK-registered charity that monitors the human rights situation in Tibet. Tibet Watch gathers and analyses news and information, including the impact of Chinese policies on the everyday lives of Tibetans.

Over the years, we have built public awareness about events in Tibet by using information from Tibet Watch. In 2008, Free Tibet was instrumental in raising awareness with the media and the public about these historical protests in Tibet. As journalists were banned from the region it was only through information from Tibet Watch that Free Tibet was able to expose to the world what was happening inside Tibet, prompting widespread criticism of China's

response by international governments and the public. Such evidence included photographs of protestors who were fatally shot by security forces in Ngaba County in 2008.

In April, an undercover video filmed in Ngaba Town on the day that Phuntsog, a young monk from Kirti Monastery, had died after setting himself on fire was shown on BBC news as well as online; it depicted a massive military and police build up which clearly refuted claims by China's Foreign Ministry that the "local social order is...normal" in Ngaba.

Corroborated information and analysis provided by Tibet Watch guarantees that Free Tibet's campaign work remains evidence-based. With Tibet being closed to human rights monitors and journalists, Tibet Watch is vital in making sure that China's human rights abuses in Tibet don't take place behind closed doors.



TIBET WATCH

བོད་གནས་ལྟ་ཞིབ་

## Multiply your money

Tibet Watch is lucky enough to be involved in this year's Big Give. Every donation received online from 5-9 December will be matched, substantially increasing the size of your donation!

So, from 5-9 December, please visit the Big Give website, search for Tibet Watch and donate what you can to help expose the truth of what is happening inside Tibet.



[www.thebiggive.org.uk](http://www.thebiggive.org.uk)

## Protestors put Tibet on the map

Thank you to everyone who joined us at protests during Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to the UK in June. Despite the British public's view that protecting human rights in Tibet is at least as important as maintaining good trade relations with China, Mr Cameron failed to take a firm, public position on human rights concerns or Tibet. As the government remained silent, it was pro-Tibet protestors who ensured that the message about Tibet reached the public, the media and Wen Jiabao himself.

Tibet supporters protested in Birmingham and across London. Thousands of weekend shoppers and tourists in central London saw our protests and were handed leaflets about the situation in Tibet.

ITV and Sky News both broadcast the protests live, including interviews with Free Tibet's director, Stephanie Brigden. Images of Mr Cameron 'gagged' by China were published in the Evening Standard and the Metro newspapers.

Wen Jiabao was left exposed to pro-Tibet supporters at Downing Street and at the Royal Society in London where he was attending a banquet. Premier Wen was forced to listen to our slogans as we chanted "**Human rights – not for sale**" and "**Wen Jiabao – Free Tibet now**", an experience he is normally shielded from both in China and on official visits abroad.



### Committee that oversees UK foreign policy backs up Free Tibet campaign

"It is difficult for us to support the government's approach to human rights engagement with China in the continuing absence of any evidence that it is yielding results, and when the human rights situation in China appears to be deteriorating. We recommend that in its response to this report the government set out any hard evidence it has that its current approach is effective. We further recommend that it engages in more explicit, hard-hitting and consistent public criticisms of human rights abuses in China."

Foreign Affairs Select Committee: July 2011

**Thank you to everyone who lobbied on this issue!**

## Political prisoner's health critical

The health of Lobsang Tenzin, Tibet's longest-serving political prisoner, has deteriorated to a point where his life is believed to be in danger. Lobsang Tenzin has been in prison for 23 years.

Lobsang Tenzin was a student at Tibet University at the time of his arrest during protests in March 1988. He was charged, along with five other Tibetans, in connection with the death of a policeman, but the trials were not conducted with the appropriate legal safeguards so the truth of the charges is unknown. Initially sentenced to death, Lobsang Tenzin's sentence was then commuted to life imprisonment following international pressure. He is currently being held in Chushur (Chinese: Qushui) Prison in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Lobsang has remained politically active in prison, organising protests at his former place of detention, Drapchi Prison. He attempted to pass a letter listing the names of prisoners who had been tortured in prison to the visiting United States Ambassador, but the

letter was confiscated by the ambassador's Chinese interpreter. Lobsang Tenzin has become a hero amongst prisoners for his brave and courageous efforts to fight against all odds. He is currently scheduled for release in 2013.

### Action

Write to the new Party Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region and to Chushur Prison's Governor, calling for Lobsang Tenzin to be released.

"I call on you to authorise the immediate release on medical grounds of Lobsang Tenzin (Chinese: Luosang Danzen), currently being held in Chushur (Chinese: Qushui) Prison."

To take action online please visit:  [www.freetibet.org/campaigns](http://www.freetibet.org/campaigns)

Write to:

1. Chen Quanguo, Party Secretary, Tibet Autonomous Regional Office, No.1 Kang'angdonglu, Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region 850000, China

2. The Governor, Qushui Prison, Jianyuzhang, Qushui county, Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China

Alternatively you can send your letters to Free Tibet and we will forward them.

## China 'celebrates'

China celebrated the 60th anniversary of the 'peaceful liberation' of Tibet in July 2011. The regime tried to portray a positive image of its achievements in Tibet with features in the media and state-organised events. The military show in front of the Potala Palace (below) illustrates the true nature of China's occupation.



The military show in front of the Potala Palace

## Monks sentenced for self-immolation

China has sentenced three monks in connection with the death of Phuntsog, a monk from Kirti Monastery, Ngaba County, who died on 17 March after setting himself on fire in protest against China's oppression.

According to Chinese state media, Phuntsog's uncle, Tsundue, was sentenced to 11 years imprisonment for "intentional homicide" for delaying hospital treatment for Phuntsog. Tsering Tamding, 21, and Lobsang Tenzin, 20 were sentenced to 13 and 10 years respectively for "plotting and assisting" in the self-immolation. Lobsang Tenzin was also accused of sending a photograph to "a monk living abroad" with another monk who will be sentenced shortly. The charges have been rigorously denied by a spokesperson at Kirti Monastery in Dharamsala, India.

Chinese state media reports that the three monks confessed to their crimes raises the concern that they were ill-treated while in custody and may have been subject to degrading treatment or even torture in order to force them to "confess". Their families were not told of the monks'

whereabouts from more than five months; they were not allowed to hire a lawyer of their choice. Free Tibet is very concerned that the proper legal safeguards were not observed in these cases.

Free Tibet believes that these prosecutions are part of a wider pattern of abuses aimed at preventing further acts of protest as well as deterring people from disseminating information within Tibet or to the international media (who are unable to report freely from Tibet). Phuntsog's act secured global media coverage, exposing how desperate some Tibetans have become and contradicting Chinese propaganda about Tibet.

### Action

Please write to the UK Foreign Secretary. Urge him to raise these cases with the Chinese government and seek clarification on the legal processes the courts followed.

Foreign Secretary William Hague, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH

## A desperate plea for change

Tsewang Norbu was only 29 when he walked away from his monastery to Chume Bridge in the centre of Tawu Town, drank petrol, poured it over himself and set himself on fire. Witnesses said that before he set fire to himself he handed out leaflets and called out **“We Tibetan people want freedom!”**, **“Long live the Dalai Lama!”** and **“Let the Dalai Lama return to Tibet!”**. Tsewang’s tragic act shows just how desperate Tibetans are.

Free Tibet received information about Tsewang’s death within hours and immediately released this to the media, adding our concern that there would be a crackdown, similar to the one in Ngaba following the self-immolation of Phuntsog earlier this year. The news and analysis gained coverage across the world: in print, on the internet, radio and on television. Perhaps as a result of the



international media attention, the response from the Chinese authorities has, at the time of writing, been more moderate than it was in Ngaba.

## Communist Party policy revealed

Papers leaked from the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to Danish newspaper *Information* as Wen Jiabao toured Europe in June reveal China’s double-dealing on domestic and foreign policy. They expose how foreign governments, including the British government, have been completely taken in by the Chinese government rhetoric of visiting CCP officials. The leaked papers spell out how statements by Chinese leaders made outside China about aspirations for reform are designed purely to deflect criticism, while the real plan is to intensify repression in China and Tibet.

The papers detail how the CCP will extend **“the daily monitoring of the population”**, build a **“more efficient”** system of informants **“in schools, universities, workplaces, villages and housing estates”** and **“tighten the reins on foreign journalists and NGOs”**. **“All illegal and harmful information on Chinese and foreign web sites should be completely blocked”** and people who disseminate such information should be **“indicted and prosecuted quickly before a judge and be quickly convicted.”**

The directives instruct the ‘provincial governments’ and People’s Liberation Army headquarters that **“crackdowns must be imposed on any aggression against the party and its leaders as well as against the promotion of other political systems and a free press.”**

The leaked directives shed light on why Chinese military and police have responded with such disproportionate force to signs of dissent at Kirti Monastery in Ngaba, Eastern Tibet that began earlier this year (see page 10).

 [www.freetibet.org/newsmedia](http://www.freetibet.org/newsmedia)

### ● New Communist Party boss in Tibet

Zhang Qingli, the Chinese Communist Party leader of the Tibet Autonomous Region for the last five years, has been replaced with unknown Zhen Quanguo. Quanguo did not denigrate the Dalai Lama in his first public remarks since taking office, a shift from his predecessor who regularly vilified the Dalai Lama.

### ● Dalai Lama’s political successor inaugurated

Lobsang Sangay, elected leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile (known as the Central Tibetan Administration), was inaugurated in June. This event gained an unprecedented amount of media coverage worldwide, keeping the issue and dilemmas of Tibet in the international public’s awareness.

### ● Tibetans in Tibet defiant

Thousands of defiant Tibetans celebrated the Dalai Lama’s birthday on 6 July in Kandze Autonomous Prefecture in eastern Tibet, despite the Chinese government banning any celebrations for the Dalai Lama and banning the gathering of crowds a few days earlier. The celebrations took place on a sacred mountain in Tawu County, an area heavily populated by nomads.

### ● Insiders criticise regime

Dozens of elite Chinese political, economic and legal experts, including some with close ties to the government, criticised the Chinese Communist Party for its stranglehold on power and the deterioration of human rights. At the small gathering near Beijing, they also warned of a crisis of the Party’s legitimacy because of long overdue political reforms. The seminar was not reported by the Chinese media but excerpts from the speeches were published in Chinese blogs.

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