

FREE TIBET

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www.freetibet.org



free
TIBET

• Protests in London • Campaign success • Inside China's jails • Local Groups •

“The voice, support and activities of outside media and human rights groups are really helpful to those who are imprisoned or in detention in Tibet.”

Golog Jigme

Dear friends

It's been an exciting and productive few months for Free Tibet. As we discovered – and foiled – China's propaganda scam on Twitter, our campaign made the front page of the *International New York Times* – an incredible achievement which really put Tibet back in the spotlight. We also got great media coverage when we caught a group of politicians from the UK, Ireland, New Zealand and other countries allowing themselves to be used by the Chinese regime for propaganda at an event in Lhasa. This event coincided with a shooting in Derge, which is the first confirmed fatal shooting in Tibet since 2012. The research team at Tibet Watch are monitoring the situation closely and keeping us updated.

Tibet Watch have also shared an in-depth interview with Golog Jigme, the human rights activist and former monk who was jailed for helping Dhondup Wangchen produce the film *Leaving Fear Behind* in 2008. Golog Jigme's arrival in Dharamsala in May earlier this year was incredibly good news for all Tibet supporters, especially since he had been missing since September 2012. And this was followed in June by Dhondup Wangchen's own long-awaited release from prison.

Over the summer I had the chance to travel down to Guernsey and meet the team behind the Vale Earth Fair. They put on a fantastic music festival every year and are

long-term supporters of Free Tibet. It was also the perfect setting to showcase our campaign for Tibet's Jailed Musicians and attract a few new supporters. We'll be putting a lot more emphasis on grassroots activity over the next year. This magazine includes a feature on what some of our other supporters have been getting up to over the summer and also launches our new resources for local groups.

Finally, I hope you're looking forward to Christmas. Our new merchandise has proven tremendously popular over the summer and we've just welcomed two new suppliers from Dharamsala. I've no doubt you'll find some fantastic Christmas present ideas inside the enclosed catalogue.



Free Tibet Director
Eleanor Byrne-Rosengren

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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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Cover photo: Paul Golding, Tibet Society

Success!



Free Tibet stops Chinese bid to manipulate Western opinion.

When Free Tibet exposed China's use of fake personal accounts to spread propaganda online this July, the story made headlines across the world and the global social media platform Twitter pulled all the accounts within days. Our successful campaign and the spotlight it shone on China's dirty tricks were a humiliation and a setback for China's propaganda machine.

China's Western "friends"

As part of its global PR strategy on Tibet, China planned to pretend that attractive Western individuals were learning the "truth" about Tibet – that it is happy under Chinese rule – and using their fake identities to spread China's message to other people online. To do this, China set up numerous accounts on Twitter – which has 270 million users worldwide – featuring false names and photographs stolen from real people. Those accounts then posted articles and features from a Chinese website promoting Tibet as an idyllic and contented Chinese province.

The website also criticised the Dalai Lama and one tweet attacking him was shared over 6,000 times.

Unfortunately for China, Free Tibet discovered some counterfeit accounts and our research identified around 100 more – the first time China's use of such fake identities to deceive Western audiences has ever been exposed. We took the story to *The New York Times*: its front page feature exposing the scam

was called "It's another perfect day in Tibet!" and the story generated more than 100 further news articles across the world.

Free Tibet also submitted a dossier to Twitter about the scam and demanded the accounts be removed. The company pulled a handful straight away and after receiving more than 1,000 tweets and emails from Tibet supporters, suspended all the accounts within two weeks.

The propaganda war

China is highly sensitive to international support for Tibetan freedom and has declared its intention to "win over" Western public opinion on the issue. Its constant message is that Tibetans have benefited hugely from Chinese investment and that the environment, religion and culture of Tibet are safe in China's hands.

This massive but often subtle PR offensive is more than hot air. With international media banned and Tibetans severely punished for revealing the truth about their situation, China has a space it can fill with its own propaganda. If it succeeds, international support for the Tibetan cause will suffer. Global public opinion helps to restrain at least some of China's crimes in Tibet (see the Golog Jigme article on p4) and, no less importantly, Tibetans themselves gain hope and motivation from knowing that so many outside Tibet support their cause.

Our exposé and the worldwide media attention resulting from it struck a blow against China's lies. The quick response of Twitter to our campaign also showed that Tibet's supporters can have an impact on even the biggest companies.

STOP
THE
#China
Spam

Action | Visit our website to support our latest campaigns.



www.freetibet.org/get-involved



RSF

The . survivor

“I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped me escape from danger.”

After 20 months on the run from China, Tibetan monk and human rights activist Golog Jigme (also known as Jigme Gyatso) escaped to India in May 2014. He had endured years of constant surveillance by the Chinese state, been imprisoned three times and experienced torture so brutal it almost killed him. His crime? Making a film featuring the voices of Tibetan people speaking frankly about life under Chinese rule at a time when the eyes of the world were focused on the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Dhondup Wangchen, Golog Jigme’s partner in that project, was released from prison after six years this June but is still in Tibet and cannot speak freely (we wrote about Dhondup Wangchen in the last magazine). In India, Golog Jigme is able to bear witness to his experiences and shortly after his escape from Tibet, gave a lengthy and sometimes hard-to-read interview to Tibet Watch.

Inside China’s jails

After the two men completed the film, *Leaving Fear Behind*, and it was smuggled out of Tibet, Golog Jigme was arrested for the first time in March 2008. He was brutally tortured. Hung by his handcuffs from a hook in the ceiling for an entire day, he was beaten by his interrogators. Worse was to come: handcuffed to the chimney of a lighted stove and unable to move, his arms, chest and face were burned and blistered. Afterwards, he was shackled to an iron chair and tortured continually with beatings, electric shocks and by being hung by his chains from the chair itself.

“Whenever I remember that chair I feel scared, even to this day. I felt like it would be better to die than survive being tortured on that chair. I was kept on the chair days and nights. At one point, my feet got swollen and, to my horror, all my toenails fell off.

“Besides the iron chair, the pain of thirst was the second worst torture. Due to the blood loss from my body, I felt like I was dying from thirst, but was only given a very small amount of water. Over time, I got used to hunger and sleep deprivation, but never to being thirsty.” He was released after seven weeks.

“I believe my release was solely due to international pressure even though [the authorities] pretended otherwise. China’s violent reaction to the non-violent protests of the Tibetan people was attracting new levels of sympathy and attention. And as they approached the Olympic Games they were increasingly aware of the gaze of the world.”

A year later, Golog Jigme was arrested again, this time for sharing information with the outside world about the repression following Tibetan protests in 2008. Although he was beaten, his treatment was far better than during 2008 – something he attributes again to the support of the international community and campaign groups – and he was released in September 2009.

Escape from Tibet

Under constant surveillance for the next three years, in 2012 Golog Jigme was arrested again. Accused of “inciting” self-immolation protests, he was not tortured but feared something far worse. His jailers told him he would be taken to a distant

Above: Golog Jigme after his arrival in India

“China’s violence was attracting new levels of sympathy and attention.”

hospital for medical checks and “the necessary injections” but other sources had warned him that they planned to kill him. After praying to the Dalai Lama he slipped his chains and escaped.

“For one year and eight months I hid and ran ... and I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped me escape from every danger and assisted my coming into exile.”

From his place of safety, Golog Jigme explains how he survived the torture he endured:

“I thought about the thousands and thousands of our forefathers who were killed for Tibet. I feel immense pride in their memory and I was determined to carry forward their legacy and be the true next generation. I also felt stronger when [my torturers] reviled His Holiness the Dalai Lama.”

For Golog Jigme, though, freedom is a double-edged sword:

“Now I have left Tibet I feel blessed and happy. On the other hand, my body has arrived in a land of freedom but my heart feels greater anxiety because in Tibet I could at least involve myself in activities to revolt against injustice ... My biggest hope is that a day will come for me to safely return to Tibet.

In the meantime, my future plan is to be a voice for Tibetans inside Tibet, to bring their aspirations and difficulties to the world stage and make sure that governments, NGOs and individuals hear it.”

Read the full interview at

 www.tibetwatch.org

TIBET



WATCHERS

Do you believe in the power of truth?

Tibet Watch aims to promote the human rights of the Tibetan people through monitoring, research and advocacy, and works in close partnership with Free Tibet. With its main office in London and a field team based in Dharamsala, India, Tibet Watch obtains reliable information directly from Tibetans about events in Tibet. All of its reports are verified and corroborated and they are Free Tibet’s main source of information.

You can make a real difference to the work of Tibet Watch by becoming a Tibet Watcher and giving a regular gift to support its research team. As a UK-registered charity, Tibet Watch is also able to benefit from Gift Aid and claim an extra 20% on every donation you make. The team do not receive any government funding and rely on the generosity of individual supporters to continue to gather reliable eye-witness accounts from inside Tibet’s closed borders and employ state-of-the-art online security tools to protect its sources.

To donate, visit:  www.tibetwatch.org/tibet-watchers



Promoting the human rights of the Tibetan people

Think global: act local!



We are very excited to let you know about the revamp of our Local Groups network. This includes updated web pages, brand new materials and a dedicated staff member to liaise and work with local Tibet groups.

Local Groups play a vital role in spreading the message about the critical situation in Tibet to as many people as possible. They are crucial for our campaigns and fundraising. There are so many ways in which they can help us, from organising events to lobbying local MPs, or from having a stall in the local high street to organising a sponsored event.

Free Tibet relies on the generosity of the public to keep our campaigns running and Local Groups help Free Tibet to reach out and fundraise in local communities.

How we can help

Free Tibet provides Local Groups with campaigning and fundraising materials containing information, up-to-date Tibet news and ideas for activities. We will promote your Local Group on our website and email our supporters in your area to let them know about it. When you have upcoming events or activities, we will help drum up interest on Facebook and Twitter.

For inspiration, have a look at our Local Groups web page at www.freetibet.org/localgroups where you can find monthly suggestions for actions groups can carry out.

Interested in joining a Local Group?

The more groups we have and the more members they have, the more we can do for Tibet. If you would like to join a Local Group, set one up or if you just have a query, please don't hesitate to contact Sonam, our Local Group contact, at localgroups@freetibet.org or give her a call on +44 (0)20 7324 4605.

www.freetibet.org/localgroups



From top: Hilary after finishing the monster swim; York Group with Lama Yeshe; a message from Norway supporters; annual flag raising ceremony in Northampton

Free Tibet would like to welcome new Life Members Robin Dowson and Jenny Miller.

UN takes action on jailed singers

The campaign for Tibet's jailed musicians received a boost when the United Nations forced China to reveal information about the imprisoned singers.

Earlier this year, the Special Rapporteur for Cultural Rights, Ms Farida Shaheed, joined with other senior UN officials to send China what is known as a "joint urgent appeal", demanding that it account for the whereabouts and legal status of Tibet's jailed musicians. Special Rapporteurs are high-level officials appointed by the UN to take responsibility for certain areas of human rights abuse.

In response, China had to confirm that most of the musicians have been jailed for "separatist" activities – in other words, because China believed their songs challenged its rule.

The communication followed a letter sent by Free Tibet to Ms Shaheed earlier this year, identifying the musicians and providing the information we had at that time about their circumstances. In many cases, there was no confirmation of the crimes they were

accused of. The appeal was sent jointly by UN offices covering areas such as freedom of expression, cultural rights, arbitrary detention and minority rights. Originally sent in February, the UN made the appeal and China's response public in July.

The UN's appeal named eight musicians featured in our letter and campaign – Gongpo Tsezin, Trinley Tsekar, Kalsang Yarphel, Lolo, Pema Trinley, Chakdor, Shawo Tashi and Achok Phulshung – plus two other musicians – Khenrap and Nyagdompo – whose detention had been reported but not confirmed.

While China did report on six cases, it claimed that there was "a lack of reliable information" about Kalsang Yarphel and "Achok" and made no reference to Khenrap and Nyagdompo.

The UN did not name Choksal in its communication. Free Tibet is looking into that omission and seeking further action on the other musicians.

Musicians released

Gongpo Tsezin's whereabouts following his arrest were previously unknown but China revealed that he had been released on bail because of "several illnesses he suffers". The UN's taking up of his case may have contributed to his release. Another singer, Gebe (or Gaybay), whose case we highlighted after he was detained in May, was released within a month of his arrest. China is now aware of the international spotlight falling on these cases, which we know can have a positive effect on prisoners' treatment and sentences.

Free Tibet staff Joel, Alistair and Sonam (l-r) with the campaign banner



 www.freetibet.org/singers

Free Tibet at Vale Earth

The campaign received further public exposure when our director Eleanor and her husband attended the Vale Earth music festival in Guernsey. The organisers of the festival generously donate a share of its income to Free Tibet every year and this year they gave us the opportunity to hold an information stall. Our campaign banner featuring inspirational song lyrics suggested by Free Tibet supporters was displayed prominently at the event – which was also blessed with fine weather. Thanks to Rob and all at the Vale Earth collective, everyone who sponsored song lyrics for the banner and, of course, to Eleanor and Mathias!



Unwelcome guest

Tibet demonstrations greet Chinese Prime Minister in London.

Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang is unlikely ever to have seen a Tibet flag or a Tibet protest in Beijing but that certainly wasn't the case when he visited London this June. While the UK government rolled out the red carpet for its distinguished guest, British Tibet groups joined forces to ensure he was left in no doubt of the support Tibet enjoys in the UK.

China's PM sneaked in through "side door"

Despite a counter-demonstration organised by the Chinese embassy, Tibet supporters were out in force on 18 June for Mr Li's arrival at Downing Street. In a humiliation for the premier, instead of the traditional route down Whitehall, his car was driven to Downing Street through the adjacent Foreign Office to avoid sight of protesters. However, campaigners from Free Tibet and Students for a Free Tibet were waiting for him there and proudly waved the Tibetan flag within feet of his car. Journalists later told us that the chants of Tibet supporters were clearly audible in Downing Street as Mr Cameron greeted his guest.

The joint protest featured handcuffed demonstrators wearing masks of Mr Li and a banner saying "Jail Li for China's crimes in Tibet". The protest and banner featured heavily in media reports about the visit, while a joint letter by Tibet groups calling on Mr Cameron to declare support for Tibet was published prominently in *The Guardian* newspaper.

More demonstrations met Mr Li throughout his visit. With other Tibet groups, Free Tibet protested at his prestigious banquet at the Natural History Museum, his visit to Parliament and a speech to business leaders at Mansion House – where Mr Li was unconvincing when he pretended not to see the Tibet flags just twenty feet from him.

Royal treatment

Mr Li is second only to head of state President Xi Jinping in China's political hierarchy and his visit – and the £18bn of trade deals that came with it – was given the royal treatment. According to media reports, China threatened to call off the visit unless Li met the Queen – an honour normally reserved solely for heads of state. Free Tibet's letter to the Queen asking her to cancel the meeting and instead extend an invitation to the Dalai Lama (who she last met in 1996) was reported in the BBC and international media. Eleanor, our director, wrote: "China's abuse of human rights and continued repression of its own people and of the people of Tibet are deeply at odds with British values of tolerance, rule of law, religious freedom and respect for civil, political, economic, cultural and fundamental human rights."

The protests and pro-Tibet publicity surrounding Mr Li's visit ensured that both he and the UK's own leaders were left in no doubt that, so long as China continues to repress and occupy Tibet, visits by its politicians to democratic countries will never be allowed to go smoothly.



Action | Email your foreign minister to demand they speak up for Tibet. www.freetibet.org/your-government

2014 Free Tibet Raffle

Buy your tickets today

With just a few weeks left of this year's annual raffle, we'd like to say a big thank you to our prize donors – you make the Free Tibet raffle possible. We'd also like to thank everyone who has already bought tickets. Our raffle is an important fundraiser for Free Tibet and helps us to continue our important campaigning work.

First Prize: The Highland adventure

A three-night stay for two, including dinner and breakfast, on the picturesque banks of Loch Earn, Scotland. This prize is perfect for enjoying the wide variety of activities in the local area, or for simply relaxing and enjoying the views of the Scottish Highlands – a beautiful backdrop to Free Tibet's first prize. www.thefourseasonshotel.co.uk



Second Prize: The Welsh retreat

Spend time deep in the Welsh Hills in a beautifully furnished canvas home, with a two-night Tipi retreat for two in Powys. This is a great opportunity to relax and feel the Earth again. www.ecoretreats.co.uk



Third Prize:

The chocolate lover's heaven

Twenty-four bars of tasty, award winning chocolate; with a variety of flavours such as Pure Pitch Dark, Goji and Orange, and Vanoffe – the real decision to be made is will you share?

www.therawchocolatecompany.com



Fourth Prize:

The sound of enlightenment

An antique Tibetan singing bowl with cushion and striker (worth £130). www.pinklotus.co.uk



Fifth Prize: Ethical threads

Three lucky people will each receive £50 to spend across Komodo's ethical range of clothing for both men and women. www.komodo.co.uk



Sixth Prize: Step into Tibet

Two individuals will each receive a pair of Free Tibet trainers, inspired by the Tibetan flag.

www.komodo.co.uk



Seventh Prize: Free Tibet goodies

£40 voucher for the Free Tibet shop. www.freetibet.org/shop

Deadline:
17 November 2014

Eighth Prize: What A Beautiful Story!

An eye-catching selection of handcrafted fair trade bracelets by A Beautiful Story. www.freetibet.org/beautiful-story

Ninth Prize: Music to your ears

A pair of tickets to a gig of your choice at Bush Hall, London. www.bushhallmusic.co.uk

Remember: the raffle is only open to residents of the UK, excluding Northern Ireland. You must be 16 years of age or over to enter. **Draw date: 21 November 2014.** Please gamble responsibly. If you think you may have a gambling problem, please seek advice and support which can be found at www.gambleaware.co.uk.

News update...

Fatal shooting in western Tibet

At least six Tibetans died after security forces opened fire on a peaceful demonstration in Derge County on 12 August. The incident took place after Tibetans demonstrated for the release of their village leader, Wangdak, who had been arrested following a dispute with local authorities over the harassment of local women by officials. Seriously injured protesters were denied medical treatment in jail: four died of their injuries and another committed suicide in protest. The pregnant wife of one of those who died – eighteen-year-old Jinpa Tharchin – hanged herself after his body was returned to her. Four of those who died belonged to Wangdak's family.

These are the first fatal shootings in Tibet since 2012, though police have fired on other demonstrations this year and last.



Right: Wangdak;
Below: Protest for
Wangdak's release



Western politicians “praise” China at Lhasa meeting

As the shooting was taking place in Derge, a group of Western politicians were attending a Chinese government conference in Lhasa. At the end of the conference, a document was issued claiming that all participants agreed that Tibetans were “happy” and that negative portrayals of Tibet were a product of biased Western media and the “Dalai clique”.

A number of the attendees have now rejected the document, saying they were never told their names would be attached to it. At the time of writing, however, parliamentary spokesman for the UK's Labour Party Lord Davidson has yet to respond to journalists' requests for comment or make any statement condemning the Derge killings. Free Tibet has complained to the Labour Party, noting that even if Lord Davidson has been misrepresented, his decision to attend the conference allowed China to use his presence for propaganda purposes. The Labour Leader of the House of Lords has told us she understands our concerns and will pursue the matter.



Above: Lord Davidson;
Left: Losang Gyaltsen,
governor of Tibet
Autonomous Region

Children go hungry in Tibet

A review by the United Nations' Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights in May raised a range of concerns about Tibet, including ethnic discrimination, the mass expulsion of nomads from their land, environmental degradation and “severe restrictions” on Tibetans' freedom to sustain their language, culture and religion. The committee found that the worst area for child malnutrition in China is in Tibet. It also raised concerns over the link between Tibetan unemployment and the mass immigration of Han Chinese people.





UK raises Khenpo Kartse with China

Following lobbying by Free Tibet, the UK's Foreign & Commonwealth Office added jailed senior monk Khenpo Kartse to a list of political prisoners of concern submitted to China during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in London this May. As we reported in June's magazine, the highly-respected environmental and Tibetan language activist was arrested in December 2013. His health is reported to be very poor in prison. At the time of writing, China has yet to respond.



Injured Tibetans, demonstration, Dechen County



More mining protests

The exploitation of Tibet's environment continues to trigger protests in Tibet. In July, police beat protesters severely at a large mining demonstration in Dechen County, southern Tibet, and told them that they were within their rights to shoot them if they continued to protest.

In May, two Tibetans in Chamdo stabbed themselves in protest against Chinese rule and the arrest of community members at a mining protest. Phakpa Gyaltsen died, after shouting "We Tibetans don't have freedom. Tibet needs independence, let Gyalwa Rinpoche [the Dalai Lama] return to Tibet".

Five month gap between immolations

In the last magazine we reported the death of Tinley Namgyal, who set himself on fire on 15 April. There were no further self-immolations in Tibet until 17 September, when 22-year-old student Lhamo Tashi died of injuries sustained in a protest in Tsoe City, eastern Tibet. This is the longest gap since the wave of self-immolations began in March 2011. 130 of the protests have been confirmed inside Tibet in total, with another two deaths by fire likely to have also been self-immolation protests.



free
TIBET

**ANNUAL REVIEW
2013/14**

Annual Review

Free Tibet has resumed publication of its annual reports after a gap of several years. The Annual Review for financial year 2013/14 provides a breakdown of financial results for the year as well as an overview of the year's news from Tibet, a close evaluation of Free Tibet's campaigning activities and an introduction to the staff.

Digital copies of the Annual Review are available to download from the Free Tibet website. If you would be interested in receiving a paper copy, however, please contact Joel Llewellyn via email at annualreview@freetibet.org or call the office on 020 7324 4605.





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