

FREE TIBET

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freetibet.org

Bringing Tibet to Olympia



free
TIBET

• Olympia action reflections • Tibetan representation at COP26 • How to stop Hikvision •

Dear friends...



The importance of the Tibet struggle being a movement is what stopped me from jumping out in front of the car. We were in Olympia and I was waiting for Thomas Bach, the President of the International Olympic Committee, to pass on the way to the Olympic Torch Lighting Ceremony. I was in a cafe with my hand in my bag – clutching a Tibet flag. I was about one metre from the road – even the police officer on the next street corner wouldn't have been able to stop me.

Chinese intelligence agents were everywhere – trying to intimidate any potential protesters in Olympia by taking photos of them. I felt bulletproof though, as our team had successfully snuck into the site of the ceremony and were about to gate-crash China's shining moment as the 2022 Olympic hosts (see page 8).

That's when I heard that our court support team had been arrested. Chinese intelligence demanded that the Greek police arrest them for no reason. And, spinelessly, the Greek police had complied. Our team would need someone to get them out of jail and I was the only one left.

I sat quietly, unmoving, as Thomas Bach's car drove by. It was the most frustrating moment in my time with Free Tibet. But, ultimately our movement's needs were far greater and I prioritised supporting those brave team members that were about to stage one of our most impactful actions in years.

We all have our role to play in this movement. The impact of the Olympic torch disruption was amplified by global media coverage but it was also thanks to our supporters raising awareness about it. And we would have never been able to afford to do this sort of demonstration without the financial and motivational support that comes from you, our supporters.

Thank you for being part of this movement at this crucial time.

Sam Walton, Free Tibet Chief Executive

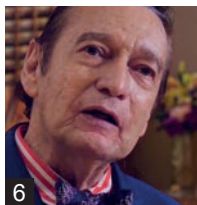
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Our vision is a free Tibet in which Tibetans are able to determine their own future and the human rights of all are respected.

Free Tibet campaigns for an end to China's occupation of Tibet and for international recognition of Tibetans' right to freedom. We mobilise active support for the Tibetan cause, champion human rights and challenge those whose actions help sustain the occupation.

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Front cover: Chemi Lhamo being taken away by Greek security after protesting the Beijing Olympics in Olympia.
© AP/Thanassis Stavrakis



Protesters unite against the CCP

Multiple organisations, including Free Tibet, joined protesters for 'Resist the CCP Day' in central London last October.

As the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) celebrated its 72nd anniversary on 1 October 2021, roughly a thousand protesters from Tibetan, Hong Kong, Uyghur and Chinese activist groups came together in central London to demonstrate against the party and its campaign of human rights abuse. The global event, known as 'Resist the CCP Day', brought some nine organisations, including Free Tibet, together in solidarity.

The protest started as a static event at Piccadilly Circus from 6:30pm, with speeches from Finn Lau (Stand with Hong Kong) and Benedict Rogers (Hong Kong Watch). This was followed by a march across London, ending at the Chinese Embassy in Portland Place. Along the route, and at their final destination, the protesters spoke with one voice, chanting: "Free Tibet! Free Hong Kong! Free East Turkestan! Resist the CCP!"

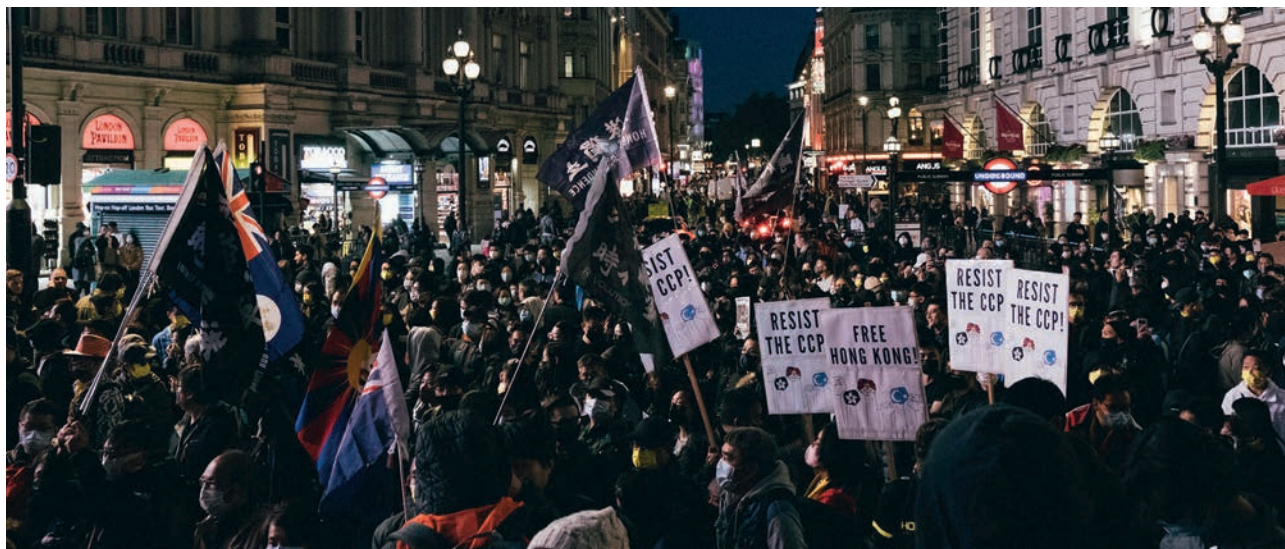
Addressing the crowd outside the embassy, a 15-year-old Tibetan spoke in solidarity with those under CCP occupation; giving a powerful voice to those who are persecuted for speaking out in Tibet, and condemning the CCP's actions in Tibet as cultural genocide. They were joined by Free Tibet CEO Sam Walton, who extolled the energy, passion and drive of the crowd – exclaiming that the flag of the People's Republic of China is one of

oppression and does not represent the people forced to live under its rule, while a sea of Hong Kong, Tibet and Uyghur flags being waved in response.

For 72 years now, the CCP has ruled over China and its occupied territories with an iron fist – overseeing a plethora of human rights abuse. In Tibet, which has been colonised by the CCP since 1950, basic rights and freedoms are revoked. Tibetans cannot express any political thought, other than what the party approves of, nor can they practice religion on their own terms. Instead, Tibetans have to follow a CCP-approved and 'sanitised' version of religion, which centres on party leaders. These restrictions extend to Tibetans being forbidden by law from owning a photograph or painting of His Holiness the Dalai Lama – Tibet's primary spiritual and cultural leader.

The CCP has also carried out human rights abuses against Hongkongers, Uyghurs, Mongolians and many more occupied groups – including the majority demographic of Han Chinese people. Free Tibet will continue to stand together in solidarity with all those living under the CCP's oppressive regime – striving, always, to elevate the voices of those living on the front lines of injustice and diligently report news from Tibet to ensure that the world knows of the CCP's crimes.

Below: Crowds of protesters rally against CCP's abuses.



Raising the roof

Tibet was everywhere at COP26 in Glasgow.

Glasgow turned Tibetan for a few days last November as Free Tibet, its partners and members of the Tibetan community travelled up to the city for COP26 with an urgent message: the roof of the world is melting.

COP26, the common name for the 26th United Nations Climate Conference, was billed as the most significant of its kind since the Paris conference in 2016. But as governments from around the world touched down in Glasgow to present their plans to cut emissions by 2030, the mood among environmental experts and communities most affected by climate change was sceptical, if not bleak. Many of those directly affected by climate change could not be present at these pivotal negotiations that would determine their futures. Other frontline and indigenous groups were locked out of key meetings, which were conducted by governments who they feel do not represent them.

Tibetans fit into this latter category. It is one of the great tragedies of our time that the people who, for centuries, stewarded the glaciers, rivers and pastures on the Himalayan plateau have no official representation at international climate summits like COP26. Yet the Himalayas are warming three times faster than the rest of the Earth and shedding eight billion tonnes of ice

each year. By 2100, even if temperatures remain the same, climate scientists forecast that a third of the ice on the Tibetan plateau will be gone. As Tibetans never hesitate to point out, the effects of these changes will not just be devastating for them: at least 1.4 billion people across Asia depend on water from the rivers fed by Tibet's glaciers. If Tibet dries, Asia dies.

Despite China accelerating the effects of the crisis by tearing up the pastures to mine precious minerals, throttling the rivers with mega dams and having forced over two million Tibetan nomads from their lands, President Xi Jinping did not attend the Glasgow climate summit. China also claims to speak on behalf of Tibet, which is wrong. Tibetan people must be given a platform to speak for themselves, and this is exactly what our mission was at COP26.

The campaign started nearly two years ago as we began attending the growing Fridays for Future marches and reaching out to climate activists present. At the same time, we began building up our content online, with infographics and interviews spotlighting Tibetan climate researchers and encouraging supporters to contact Alok Sharma, the President of COP26, and the UK government, encouraging them to

Tibetan activists in Glasgow at COP26.



give Tibet a platform. At every stage our motivation was to highlight that Tibetans are on the frontline of the climate crisis and have a rightful place in the climate movement, not merely as subjects, but also as experts and thought leaders.

Our campaign may have been timely but it also could not have been more unfortunately timed. Shortly after its launch in January 2020 the world's attention had shifted to the Covid-19 pandemic and COP26 was delayed by a year. As recently as summer 2021, we had no idea whether or not it would be taking place. Nevertheless, we helped gather a team of five Tibetan climate researchers, advocates and campaigners, who would each bring their skills to Glasgow.

The early signs were worrying. A billboard we had arranged to be in a prime location near the COP26 venue, highlighting the lack of Tibetan representation, was pulled at short notice. When COP26 opened, civil society groups, who were locked out of key meetings and attendees, including the Tibetan delegation, were made to queue for hours to get their accreditation.

We rose to every challenge. Once the delegation had access to the venue they worked as a team to lobby those in attendance, presenting their briefing to everyone from journalists and climate scientists to some of the glitzier attendees like John Kerry and Leonardo di Caprio. Journalists began to take interest in their work and, between them, the team spoke to a range of outlets including the BBC and Reuters. Their expertise was put on full display in two public events – the first was a scientific overview of Tibet and how it is being affected by climate change and the second talked about the occupation and how the Chinese government's colonial policies are exacerbating the problem.

The best was still to come. Huge back-to-back demonstrations marched through the centre of Glasgow on the Friday and Saturday, with the latter made up of at least 100,000 people. Representatives of Brazil's Quilombola people walked alongside Scottish students, while well-known

activists such as Greta Thunberg and Vanessa Nakate stood shoulder to shoulder with anonymous activists dressed as everything from trees to dinosaurs.

The protest was noisy, colourful and packed with people but Tibet still managed to stand out. Tibetans from across the UK, bussed up to Glasgow with support from Free Tibet, chanted and danced in the heavy rain, waving Tibetan flags, which appeared in almost every piece of media coverage about the march. Throughout the march, we handed out small flags to curious onlookers and orchestrated interviews with journalists. Our billboard may have been cancelled but now it took pride of place at the very front of the march, held by Tibetans including former political prisoner Golog Jigme.

As the protest ended and the rain died down, we reflected on a triumphant climax to an intensely busy week. There is still plenty of work to be done to establish Tibet as a key concern in the global climate justice movement, but many of those present in Glasgow – whether or not they attended our talks, marched alongside us or who saw the media coverage – will know a little more about the Third Pole than they did before COP26.



Left: Panellists from the second event, L-R: Drukthar Gyal, Pema Doma, Golog Jigme, Cy Wagone, Tenzin Choekyi and Tenzin Choedon. Below: Marching in Glasgow.



Give the gift of freedom with a Gift for Human Rights

As the perfect present for someone special, each gift brings Free Tibet's work to life. Every Gift for Human Rights bought will support powerful campaigning, lobbying and the self determination of the Tibetan people.

- **Cultural Freedom** This gift helps ensure the protection of cultural freedom for all Tibetans.
- **Environmental Protection** This gift helps call for international recognition of Tibet within climate talks.
- **Religious Expression** This gift supports the protection of religious freedom for Tibetans.

You can find out more and purchase a Gift for Human Rights through our shop website, our winter shop catalogue or by contacting us at Free Tibet.

shop.freetibet.org/collections/gifts-for-human-rights





Left: Fredrick "Riki" Hyde-Chambers. Below: Riki's hat on his coffin.

Remembering Riki

Friends, former colleagues and His Holiness the Dalai Lama pay tribute to the life of Fredrick "Riki" Hyde-Chambers OBE, who sadly died at the age of 77 on 31 October 2021. Riki was a friend to the Tibetan movement for many years and was known throughout the Tibetan community in the UK as a fervent supporter and for getting the Tibetan message to policymakers in the UK parliament for many years.

"It would be hard to overestimate Riki's impact on the Tibet movement. From the 1960s onwards he was a passionate and tireless advocate for Tibet through his role at Tibet Society. He brought the occupation of Tibet to the attention of countless MPs through his parliamentary work, and was a figure of great respect and fondness among the Tibetan community and the Tibet movement. Only last year, he played an integral role in the merger between Tibet Society and Free Tibet, joining our Board and bringing his trademark passion and energy with him. He leaves a hole in the movement that cannot be filled, but also a legacy of great deeds and memories that will never be forgotten."

– **Daniel Russell, Chair of Free Tibet and Tibet Society**

"I knew Riki for some 20 years, beginning with roles I had at the Tibet Society and the Tibet Relief Fund, and I can think of few people it gave me such pleasure to meet during those years. He was truly an exceptional man, gentle and kind, of huge integrity, often very funny, and profoundly knowledgeable. He had a particularly dapper style of his own, with those bow ties, and he carried a massive reputation and status in Tibetan, Buddhist and also parliamentary circles – from his work in Africa, Georgia and Moldova, as well as with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet (APPGT). He was always interested in other people and was reticent in talking about himself. He was a friend you could depend upon. He had great commitment, continuing working into his late 70s, and he leaves an unfillable hole behind him." – **Nigel Smith**

"[I am] truly saddened to be saying goodbye to Riki. My friend, a friend of Tibet and a great personal friend to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In recent years I had the privilege

of working with him on the Tibet Society. Riki cared deeply about the world and he was truly a citizen of [it]. He more recently was involved with the campaign for justice of the Gurkas and he has also done work in Georgia and elsewhere. I will sorely miss Riki as will the rest of the Tibet movement, where he leaves a huge gap. The rest of us will need to work extremely hard to ensure we pick up the baton and ensure that we continue [Riki's] lifelong fight [to] ensure that the Tibetan movement goes from strength to strength." – **Pempa Lobsang, Board member of Free Tibet and Tibet Society**

"Riki was a truly unique person who dedicated so much of his life to Tibet. I first met him in 1997 and it is down to him that I became absorbed by Tibet. During my early days in



GUFENG

Campaigns update...

post at Tibet Society and Tibet Relief Fund, Riki quietly became my mentor, looking out for me, giving me good counsel and unceasingly gently boosting my confidence. I was always entranced by his reminiscences of the early days of Tibetans coming to the UK and his work at Tibet Society (his first job). Having been allocated a young Tibetan living in Darjeeling [India] as a pen friend whilst still at school, Riki went on to be part of the UK's history with Tibetans from that beginning up until [his passing].” – **Zara Fleming**

“I will never forget how we worked together in Tibet in 1988 when [Riki] travelled there with Lord David Ennals. After interviewing Tibetans [he] left Tibet with deep impressions and many documents pasted on [his] body. When we just recently reminisced about this moment [Riki] said that [he was] afraid to be strip-searched at the Lhasa airport when [he] left. [Riki] made it to the UK with all the information where [he] continued to be a great supporter of Tibet. I was planning to come and see [Riki] in London in October to go through a box of documents and tapes [he] told me [he'd] kept from that memorable trip. I was sad to hear [Riki] died before we could do so but happy we relived these special days before [he] passed on. Rest in peace.” – **Christa Meindersma**

“I'm extremely saddened by the demise of Frederick [Riki] Hyde-Chambers. He stood for the Tibetan people since [the] 1960s when very little was known of Tibet and has carried the voice of the Tibetan people since then. His contributions will remain unparalleled. Our prayers and condolences.” – **Sikyong Penpa Tsering**

To read more tributes, please visit freetibet.org

Making Tibet Hill a reality

There was more campaigns activity in late summer and autumn of 2021 than we could possibly squeeze into this magazine. Among the highlights was a well-attended gathering in August at the Royal Mint building in Tower Hamlets, east London. As we reported in earlier magazine issues, the Royal Mint is set to become the location of the largest Chinese embassy in Europe and, to counterbalance this, we have been working with the local council on a proposal to change the names of four streets around the embassy to Uyghur Court, Hong Kong Road, Tiananmen Square and Tibet Hill. The August gathering put further pressure on the council to follow through on this promise. Those present held up mock street signs, urging the council to “give us a sign you care”, while Hong Kong, Tibetan and Uyghur activists as well as several Tower Hamlets councillors addressed the crowd – stressing the importance of the proposal. We are expecting further news on the proposal later this year and will keep our readers informed.

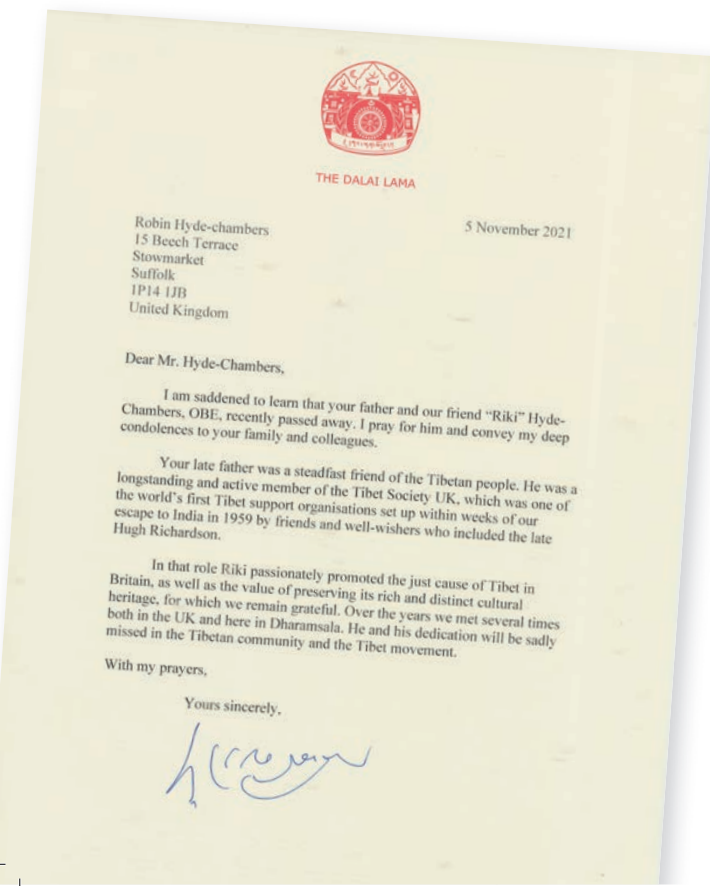
Free Rinchen Kyi

On 1 August 2021, Rinchen Kyi – a Tibetan school teacher – was taken from her home and arrested for ‘inciting separatism’, a crime with a minimum sentence of five years. Since then she has effectively disappeared, with her family – including her 13-year-old daughter – given no details about her health or whereabouts. Rinchen Kyi's arrest came one month after her school, one of the few remaining Tibetan-teaching schools, was forced to close by local authorities – a decision that reportedly left her devastated.

Free Tibet reacted immediately to the news of Rinchen Kyi's arrest by launching an online campaign, demanding her release and holding a vigil at the doorstep of the Chinese embassy in London on 30 August – International Day of the Disappeared. We are also working with the Teachers' Union (NASUWT) to raise awareness about her case.

We would love you to get involved too.

A postcard to the Chinese embassy is included in this magazine. Simply fill it out and send it back to us so we can flood them with concerned messages about Rinchen Kyi's case. Our hope is that we can put pressure on authorities before any trial takes place.





Herculean efforts to protest Beijing Olympics

Free Tibet's Digital Lead, Jason Leith, gives an overview of his experience taking part in the Olympia action last October and why nonviolent demonstrations like this matter. Jason was part of a group of activists arrested for bringing the "No Beijing 2022" message to the official torch-lighting ceremony.

Give us a brief summary of how you were feeling in the few days before the trip.

Due to the nature of the action, a lot of details were kept under wraps until it was absolutely necessary for it to be known. I was still pretty much in the dark even a few days before the trip. I knew I was going to Greece and that I would be taking part in an action but I had no idea how important the action would be.

Generally, I was very excited. The trip offered a unique opportunity to work as an ally to Tibet support groups from all over the world and to raise awareness of the hypocrisy of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to a global audience.

What previous experience do you have with this sort of activism?

My activism started in 2011 with the Occupy movement. Since then, I have taken part in various protests, demonstrations and nonviolent direct action (NVDA). In recent years, I have become very active within the climate movement and spend a lot of my free time organising actions and disrupting the broken status quo.

What were your thoughts just before the demo?

In the build-up to this action, I went through a wide range of emotions – from being nervous and apprehensive, to being confident and exhilarated.

However, in the moments just before the action, I felt calm. My thoughts were of all those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, under the oppressive rule of the Chinese Community Party (CCP). And anyone who isn't allowed a voice or the right to protest.

My final thought was that I knew that I was in the right place and about to do the right thing... And then there I was, walking down the hill towards the Olympic flame.

How did it feel to take such a physical stand against China hosting the Olympics, and the demo taking place where the Olympic Games originated?

Whether you call it NVDA, civil disobedience, people power or *satyagraha*, history has shown us time and time again that physical nonviolent action can bring about change.

Above:
Chemi Lhamo,
Jason Leith (back
right) and Fern
MacDougal being
taken away by
Greek security
while protesting at
the Olympic torch-
lighting ceremony.

I am also in the privileged position of living in a country where the right to protest is enshrined in law. If I do not use my privilege in a meaningful way, how can I say that I stand in allyship and solidarity with those who have been silenced?

Carrying out this action in Olympia brought the hypocrisy of the IOC into focus. The Olympic flame is meant to stand as a symbol of peace, unity and solidarity. How does the systematic eradication of Tibetan culture, freedom and rights, the genocide of Uyghurs and the destruction of democracy in Hong Kong symbolise peace, unity and solidarity?

What impact do you feel this demonstration and ultimate arrests will have in terms of Free Tibet's mission?

The demonstration made global headlines and the story was seen by millions of people around the world. In interviews with athletes, journalists started asking questions about the CCP's human rights abuses. This was followed up by basketball player Enes Kanter speaking openly about Tibet and East Turkestan and the brutality of the CCP.

What would you like others to take away from this demonstration and result?

That we are not powerless. By standing in solidarity with Tibetans, and all those under CCP oppression, we can and will bring about change.

Would you do anything differently?

Not hold the flag upside down! By the time I realised the flag was upside down, there were police and security running towards me and pushing me to the ground.



Chemi Lhamo, Jason Leith and Fern MacDougal arrive in Olympia, Greece to protest the Beijing Olympics.

Has this demo connected you even more with the campaign?

Definitely. The action gave me the opportunity to meet and work with inspirational Tibetan activists and allies from all over the world. Being able to discuss our successes and struggles, hopes and ideas for the future and build even stronger relationships with those within the movement was just as important as the actual action itself.

Would you do it again?

In a heartbeat.



Since our successful action in Olympia, our #NoBeijing2022 campaign has gone from strength to strength – with huge actions in the UK, at the IOC headquarters in Switzerland and online.

In December, we received the huge news that the UK and several other governments would be boycotting Beijing 2022. There will be further details in the next magazine.

We couldn't have done any of this without your support.

To keep up-to-date with all our latest campaigns, head to: secure.freetibet.org/take-action

STOP

HIIK VISION

Last November, we launched a new campaign asking the UK government to ban the purchase of CCTV equipment made by the Chinese company Hikvision in this country.

Hikvision is the largest manufacturer of video surveillance equipment in the world – making £30 million per year in the UK alone – and is controlled by the Chinese state, which owns over 40 per cent of the company.

Collusion in mass surveillance

In recent years, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has taken advantage of the expertise Hikvision's success around the world gives it – complimenting its efforts to create a massive surveillance state. In July 2021, UK Members of Parliament on the influential Foreign Affairs Select Committee said that Hikvision cameras are “deployed throughout Xinjiang [the name the Chinese government gives East Turkestan where a large number of Uyghur Muslims live], and provide the primary camera technology used in the internment camps”. Hikvision also proudly advertises its role in providing surveillance on the controversial Qinghai-Tibet Railway and there is strong evidence that Hikvision supplied the equipment that allowed the creation of Chen Quanguo's surveillance state in Tibet, which resulted in a police station every 500 metres in Lhasa.

UK government buys Hikvision

Despite all the evidence of Hikvision's wrongdoing, there have been several reports in recent years that national and local governments in the UK have been purchasing Hikvision

equipment – which would mean the money that UK taxpayers give to the government is being used to support a company that helps create a surveillance state in Tibet. Some of that money could even go to the Chinese government to be used to commit atrocities against Tibetan people. The government-appointed UK Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner, Professor Fraser Sampson, has said that all public bodies should consider the ethics of manufacturers when purchasing CCTV equipment, asking the government to set “net-zero human rights abuse” targets.

With your support Free Tibet was able to investigate – using Freedom of Information requests to every government department – and discover that the Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Work and Pensions and Ministry of Justice all make use of Hikvision cameras, with hundreds of the cameras installed in Jobcentre Plus buildings used by the public every day. Our investigation also uncovered advice from the Ministry of Defence to another government department telling it not to use Hikvision equipment, meaning that several government departments are ignoring the advice of those responsible for keeping the UK safe from outside threats. In response to our findings, Professor Sampson said that government departments need to explain why they have gone against explicit security advice to spend tax-payers' money on Hikvision equipment.

Free Tibet is calling on the Foreign Secretary to ban Hikvision from the UK and stop funding the Chinese government's oppression. By signing our petition, you can bring us one step closer to ending the CCP's mass surveillance of innocent people.

Security concerns

It's not just Hikvision's activities in Chinese-controlled territories that our government must challenge. There have also been concerns about the potential for unauthorised remote access to Hikvision cameras since at least 2014, with regular stories about new vulnerabilities emerging. Most recently, in September 2021, a massive security flaw was found which allowed easy remote access to many models of Hikvision cameras. And, earlier in 2021, Italian state TV launched an investigation after Hikvision cameras were found to be communicating with unknown computer servers in China.

In response to these concerns, the US Federal Communications Commission has considered completely banning Hikvision equipment from the US and UK MPs have pushed back against the installation of Hikvision equipment in the buildings that house their offices.

Hikvision near you

Recently we published research by our staff and volunteers that found that more than half of the UK local authorities who were able to tell us if they used Hikvision CCTV do so. These local authorities are in every part of the country – from Cornwall to

Your local authority could be using Hikvision technology and your taxes funding genocide and the brutal oppression of the Tibetan people.

Hikvision, the world's largest manufacturer of video surveillance technology, plays a key part in the web of repression for the Tibetan people – who are subjected to intrusive surveillance every day. But disturbingly, Hikvision technology can now be found all over the world.

Donate now to ban Hikvision!

Terrifyingly we don't know how many there are but every camera could be a weapon in the hands of the CCP. Over half of UK local authorities use the technology but many more remain undiscovered. So we urgently need your help!

Your donation will:

- Fund more in-depth research into who is financing Hikvision in the UK.
- Pressure UK policymakers into banning the sale of Hikvision technology in the UK, stopping its infringement on privacy and human rights.
- Fund our work with MPs to stop public money contributing to the oppression of Tibetans and draw attention to CCP surveillance in Tibet.

For Tibetans in exile, the global expansion of Hikvision is a reminder of their 70-year struggle against Chinese oppression. With your support we will stand with the Tibetan community, no longer fund oppression and stop Hikvision.

Will you help us stop Hikvision? Donate now by visiting freetibet.org/hikvision-appeal or complete the form enclosed with this magazine.

the Scottish highlands. Wherever you live in the UK, there is a good chance that your council tax has been used to buy Hikvision equipment. But there is some good news. While there are some local authorities like Preston, which have hundreds of Hikvision cameras, there are others like Tower Hamlets in London – where the new Chinese Embassy is going to be built – that won't use Hikvision at all because of its collusion with the CCP.

We know that there are those in power that agree with us that Hikvision must be stopped and some have already taken action. Hikvision is endangering the lives of Tibetan people and should be banned from the UK. With your help we can strike a significant blow against this company that is instrumental in the oppression of Tibetan people.

UK local authorities using Hikvision

■ No
■ Still under investigation
■ Yes



**Inside Tibet,
everything is
watched. Outside,
nothing is seen.**

News from Tibet...



China works hard to keep news of their abuses in Tibet hidden. Here are some stories which Free Tibet, working alongside our research partner Tibet Watch, has brought to global attention.

Tibetan youth sent to military education camps

In August 2021, Free Tibet learned of the construction of new military education camps in Nyingtri, southeast Tibet. Created for those between the ages of eight and 16, these camps form part of an ongoing campaign of 'patriotic education' which has been growing since the 2008 Tibetan Uprising. Enforcing strict discipline and order, the camps aim to disconnect young Tibetans from their culture by fostering warped patriotic ideals that deny Tibetan independence.



Young Tibetans march with the Chinese flag at Tibet Rong He Military Training Centre.

Mass arrests at Dza Wonpo

Beginning on 22 August 2021, roughly 200 military personnel carried out a series of mass arrests in the town of Dza Wonpo, eastern Tibet. The raids, which took place over the course of two weeks, saw each home in the town invaded by police and led to at least 110 arrests.

On 25 August, all adult residents of Dza Wonpo were gathered for a so-called 'People's Meeting', where they were warned against engaging in 'illegal' activities. Furthermore, five orders were issued to the residents, including one which expressly banned the ownership of any photo of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and another which prevented the residents from discussing 'sensitive matters' in private WeChat groups.

Those arrested were targeted mainly due to their possession of Dalai Lama photographs and contact with Tibetans in exile. For up to one month, they were subjected to political re-education and torture; being denied adequate food, warm clothing and access to medical care.

By 23 September 2021, the majority of the detained residents had been released, with three remaining in police custody. A memorial stone in the town, which honoured Tibetan freedom fighters, has been destroyed and surveillance cameras have been installed *en masse* around the town. An anonymous Tibet Watch source also informed that a local institute to teach the Tibetan language has been forcibly closed.

The wellbeing and medical condition of the three Tibetans still in police detention remains unknown.



Dza Wonpo Monastery.

Architect of Uyghur genocide appointed to top role in Tibet

On 30 November 2021, Wang Junzheng – the former Deputy Party Secretary of the so-called Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and head of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) – also known as the 'Butcher of Xinjiang', was elected as Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party's so-called Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee.

As head of the XPCC, Wang was responsible for the administration and operation of Uyghur detention camps which have seen at least one million incarcerated.

The success of Free Tibet's 'Ban Chen' campaign has ensured that Wang is one of the most sanctioned individuals on Earth, being at the receiving end of punitive action from the US, UK, EU and Canada. His appointment to the role has been met with a mixture of outrage and concern, as it is feared he might introduce a new wave of detention camps across Tibet.



Wang Junzheng will take the position formerly occupied by Chen Quanguo.

Chinese state orders the destruction of a Tibetan school

A Tibetan Buddhist school at Drago Monastery in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region was demolished in late October 2021, on the orders of Chinese authorities.

Monastery officials were told that the school infringed on local land-use laws and were cautioned to destroy the school buildings within three days, otherwise the land would be seized by the state. As a result of the demolition, roughly 130 students were deprived of a Tibetan education and have since found it difficult to enroll with other schools.

Rather than an isolated incident, the destruction of this school is part of a larger ongoing campaign of cultural destruction and censorship across Tibet.



Tibetans were forced to destroy the school at Drago Monastery themselves, or risk having the land seized by Chinese authorities.

Tibetan language activist photographed for the first time since release from prison

Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan activist who was arrested in 2016 for speaking to international media about the state of language education in Tibet, was photographed for the first time since his release in January 2021.

On 16 October 2021, Tashi Wangchuk's lawyer posted photographs of the activist visiting cultural-religious sites in Tibet to Twitter. It is reported that he is in good health and is looking towards the future and new opportunities.



Tashi Wangchuk, October 2021.

Jonathan Mirsky obituary

Jonathan Mirsky, an American journalist who was a key critic of the Chinese Communist system and an ally to the Free Tibet movement, passed away at 88 years old on 5 September 2021.

Mirsky was a humane, straight-talking and independently minded academic-turned-journalist who specialised in Chinese affairs. He was on intimate terms with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, from whom he received a long letter a few weeks before he died.

Between 1981 and 1989 he made six visits to Tibet and Lhasa, where he found fault with the communist and racist imperialism of the Chinese government towards Tibetans. In 1989, Mirsky was named International Reporter of the Year at the British Press Awards for his coverage of the Tiananmen Square massacre. At 3am on 4 June 1989, as he went to file his report, a group of armed police, realising he was a journalist, savagely beat him up and he narrowly escaped being shot.

In 1991 Mirsky was barred from China but in 1993 took up the post of East Asia correspondent for *The Times*. He resigned and retired in 1998, believing the paper was cutting back on criticism of China – “I had 201 stories spiked” – to protect the commercial interests of proprietor Rupert Murdoch (a claim rejected by the then editor). Mirsky continued to write many erudite book reviews, particularly for the *New York Review of Books*.

When His Holiness the Dalai Lama first visited London in 1981, Mirsky interviewed him for *The Times* – which established the start of a long friendship – with the two sharing “a sense of humour” and often “a gossip and giggle”. They last met in Holland in 2020.

Jonathan Mirsky was born on 14 November 1932 and is survived by his wife and sister.



Jonathan Mirsky (left) with His Holiness the Dalai Lama (right).

IAN CUMMING

Letters



In this edition of the magazine, we have outlined some of the most frequently asked questions as we have so many similar questions pop into our inbox.

How do I change/cancel my donation amount?

Great question! Lots of people ask about how to increase, decrease or cease their monthly gift to us and there are different answers depending on how your recurring payment is set up. For standing orders, you need to contact your bank as we have no say in that. For regular credit card donations or direct debits, you can change the amount or cancel by simply emailing us with your supporter number/address – stating what change you'd like us to make – then we can deal with the rest!

Can I choose what communications I receive?

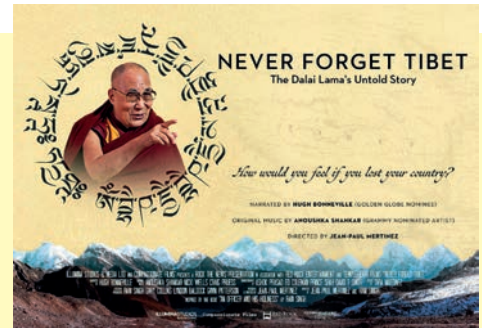
This is another really common question and the answer is, of course, yes! We know you might only want to receive certain forms of communications from us, so if you want to change anything just let us know – if you only want to keep in touch via email, we can stop your post and vice versa.

How can I get more involved?

This is one of our favourite questions to answer because of the passion it shows you have in the movement as our supporters. Lots of our supporters contribute monthly and/or buy from our shop, but still want to do more to support Free Tibet. Here are a few things you can do:

- Show up to any rallies or protests near you. You can sign up to receive emails from us about when they're coming up so you'll have the details in advance. The community is very welcoming of anyone there to support the cause!
- Join our list of potential volunteers by letting us know you're interested, then we can keep in touch with you about volunteering opportunities as and when they come up.
- The final and easiest way is to simply talk about Tibet and Free Tibet's work with as many people as possible. You could even start a local group to discuss our actions and how you can show solidarity with Tibetans.

If you have a question or comment that you would like to see published in the next magazine, do get in touch with us by email at letters@freetibet.org, by phone on +44 (0)330 016 8404 or by post to: Letters, Free Tibet, ER82, The Link, Effra Road, SW2 1BZ, UK Please note we cannot guarantee publication of each letter we receive. Thank you!



Major new Dalai Lama documentary

Never Forget Tibet is a major new documentary that features exclusive interviews with His Holiness 14th Dalai Lama – including the story of his escape from Tibet in March 1959, for the first time on film, with the Indian secret service officer who led him to safety in India, Har Mander Singh Padma Shri. Alongside interviews with the Dalai Lama's family members, the film is an important historical record. Narrated by Golden Globe Nominee Hugh Bonneville (*Downton Abbey*), it includes original music by Grammy nominated musician Anoushka Shankar and was produced and directed by Jean-Paul Mertinez. Executive producers are Red Rock Entertainment, Templeheart Films and correspondent Rani Singh – who wrote the book *An Officer and His Holiness* (2019), which the film takes inspiration from. In US cinemas 31 March 2022, UK dates TBC. For more information go to: neverforgettibet.com



There are always new ways to support Free Tibet in our shop



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Supporter Spotlight

Are you London based?
Would you like to support
our vital work?

We are currently recruiting
for a Voluntary Fundraising
Assistant to help the
team in the office. If you're
interested we would love to
hear from you. Please contact
mail@freetibet.org

Tibetans in Canada complete ultra-marathon for Tibet

In October 2021, three Tibetans living in Toronto, Canada took part in the Peace Rally Marathon for Tibet. During this ultra-marathon, which spanned 12 days, Pema Kunga, Tenzin Shedup and Dechen Wangdi covered an incredible 680km.

The three runners set off on their mammoth journey on 1 October 2021 in Montreal, running to Ottawa and finally arriving in Toronto on 12 October. The aim of their ultra-marathon was to raise awareness of the global 'No Beijing 2022' campaign and to increase support of Sino-Tibetan dialogue and Tibetan political prisoners.

The group explained that they wanted to "highlight the Chinese repressive policies inside Tibet which deliberately aim at destroying Tibetan culture, religion and identity". They went on to detail their desire to highlight "the deteriorating situation of human rights in Tibet [and the] inhumane plight of Tibetan political prisoners" and to spread the message "Free Tibet". The money raised was donated to four Tibetan charities.



Tibetan marathon runners raise awareness in Canada.

Art exhibition in Taipei highlights abuses in Tibet

Late last year, an art exhibition on Tibet opened at a bookstore in the capital of Taiwan, Taipei, aiming to raise awareness of the Chinese Communist Party's human rights abuses in Tibet. The exhibition featured charcoal sketches by Taiwanese artist and Students for a Free Tibet member Tung Ching-Jung. They included artwork of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetan political prisoners and Western allies such as Richard Gere.

Tung Ching-Jung said that a Tibetan friend once told her: "I don't want to be forced to become Chinese, I just want to be Tibetan."

The exhibition was hosted by the Human Rights Network for Tibet and Taiwan and Students for a Free Tibet (Taiwan).



Tung Ching-jung Fang.

PIN-CHAO, TAIPEI TIMES

**New look,
same mission**

The next issue of our magazine, and all other Free Tibet comms, will look a little different – as we begin to roll out our new branding for 2022. We hope you like our new look. As our supporters, we wanted you to be the first to know and we value any feedback you may have.

མེ་ཚོ།
Free Tibet
is delighted
to welcome new
Mi Tse (life long)
supporter:
Kenneth Cowling

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