



Statement of Kashag on the 35th Anniversary of the Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Today, we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the conferment of the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. On this momentous occasion, the Kashag offers its profound gratitude and obeisance to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and also extend greetings to the members of the Nobel Prize Committee for the recognition of His Holiness's lifetime commitment towards world peace. The Central Tibetan Administration extend our warm greetings to the distinguished Parliamentary delegations from New Zealand and Fiji, the high-level delegation of the India Foundation, Delhi, led by its Chairman Shri. Suresh Prabhu, former Cabinet Minister of the Government of India, and Representative of the Regional Liaison of Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, Australia, and to Tibetan brothers and sisters living in and outside Tibet.

As a prelude to the celebration next year of the global *Year of Compassion* (6th July 2025 – 6th July 2026) to mark the 90th Birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Kashag in its statement on His Holiness's Birthday and on the Tibetan Democracy Day this year, highlighted His Holiness's principal commitments on the promotion of human values and religious harmony. Today, as we celebrate both the conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the International Human Rights Day, it is the appropriate that we speak on His Holiness's tireless efforts against all odds in preserving the Tibetan language, and also promotion of the rich ancient Buddhist wisdom & its cultural values. And also, His Holiness's role as a whistleblower for the protection of global ecology and environment.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee in its citation emphasised that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. "He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people... In the opinion of the Committee the Dalai Lama has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems." While the world at large admires His Holiness the Dalai Lama for all his selfless efforts, unfortunately, the central government in Beijing continues its anti-Dalai Lama campaigns and ignore the true aspirations of people of Tibet under its illegal occupation.

The CCP government is turning its back to the principles of universal values — the very foundation for individual and national progress, instead continues to relentlessly pursue violent revolution and oppressive authoritarian rule rejected by the world over. As a consequence, about 1.2 million Tibetans have died as a direct result of Chinese occupation and over 6,000 religious and cultural institutions in Tibet have been destroyed. The plot to harm the life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is known to all. Despite such heinous acts, His Holiness the Dalai Lama does not harbour any form of animosity toward the Chinese leaders, and instead prays that they gain the wisdom to distinguish right from wrong. In His compilation, 'Words of Truth', His Holiness prays: "Those maddened by violent afflictions, leading to the destruction of the self and others, are objects of compassion; May they achieve wisdom to discern right from wrong, and with a compassionate vision find bliss in human relations; May their Raksha nature be eliminated by warm-heartedness." As such, Tibetans with strong conviction in the power of compassion believe that even the hostile and incorrigible Chinese leaders will eventually be impacted by this universal truth.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his proclamation of the continuity of his government on arrival in exile in India, also envisioned a strong robust democratic administration to be the foundation for the survival of the Tibetan people in exile. To achieve this, His Holiness incorporated major changes and amendments from the traditional administration of the Gaden Phodrang towards a fully democratic administration. The four far-reaching reforms undertaken by His Holiness would be the establishment of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

in 1960; the adoption of the Charter of Tibetans in Exile in 1991 by elected representatives of the people; the introduction of the direct election of Kalon Tripa in 2001; and the Devolution of the political powers of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the democratically elected Tibetan leaders in 2011. Thus, His Holiness created a full-fledged and thriving Tibetan democratic system not seen in other exile communities in the world.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visionary leadership has opened a wide perspective for Tibetans in the freedom struggle and for the restoration and preservation of Tibetan religion, culture, and language based on non-violence and dialogue as a means to finding a lasting political solution.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama taking into consideration the importance of proper education for the young Tibetans in exile, to enable them to learn our own language, maintain our distinct identity combined with modern education, discussed the same with the Honourable Prime Minister Pandit Nehru which eventually resulted in the creation of separate schools for Tibetan children in India. As early as the 3rd March 1960, the first Tibetan school in India with about 50 students was established in Mussoorie. At the inauguration ceremony, His Holiness outlined an educational policy to equip Tibetan children with proficiency in modern and traditional education by learning modern subjects like Hindi, English, world politics, economics, and science alongside traditional subjects like Tibetan language and Buddhism under the Central Tibetan School Administration. Subsequently, the school system expanded by establishment of the Tibetan Children's Village School in Dharamsala, the Tibetan Homes Foundation in Mussoorie, the Snow Lion Foundation in Nepal, and the Sambhota School Administration under the CTA. It has produced many Tibetans who contribute to the Tibetan struggle and the promotion of Tibetan religion and culture, as well as those who take responsibility for the administration, education, and various social activities of the Tibetan exile community. Today, there are 13,575 students in 61 schools and 48 pre-schools across India and Nepal. These schools also provide educational opportunities to about 5,067 Indian students out of which 3,796 students are from the Himalayan regions who share similar cultural and religious traditions with us.

Seeing the shortcomings of the modern education system, which focuses solely on material development, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has consistently underlined the need to cultivate human values such as compassion and warm-heartedness in children to develop inner peace and happiness. Today, schools in more than 130 countries are implementing the Social, Emotional, and Ethical Learning (SEE Learning), a groundbreaking educational program developed under the visionary leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Many democratic countries continue to adopt it as an essential curriculum.

Alarmingly, the Chinese government's education policy is targeted at producing tools to retain its control over Tibet. It has replaced Tibetan language with Chinese as the medium of instruction and around one million Tibetan children are forcibly enrolled in colonial boarding schools, denying them from growing up with their parents' linguistic and cultural tradition and forcing them to undergo military training and study communist ideology. It is a policy to make the future Tibetan generations bereft of their own identity, cultural and family values and further marginalise Tibetans within the Han Chinese society.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama pioneered the unique approach of integrating Buddhist wisdom with modern science to create a space for culmination of both great wisdoms for the betterment of the world at large. Classifying the Nalanda tradition into three categories — Buddhist religion, Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist science — His Holiness's interactions with eminent scientists on 38 occasions, discussed Buddhist philosophical concepts like cosmology, epistemology, philosophy of life and interdependence theory, cognitive science, neuroscience, contemplative science and psychology, has paved the way towards this goal. His Holiness also initiated dialogues amongst the different schools of Tibetan Buddhism and introduced study of modern science in the Tibetan monastic universities, thus laying the foundation for nurturing 21st-century Buddhists. With the unshakable unity of the heads of Tibetan Buddhism, His Holiness has fostered a deep spiritual bond with many of the world's religious leaders and also strengthened collaboration with followers of the Pali tradition.

The first monastic transit refugee camp was set up in Buxa Duar, West Bengal, with about 1,500 monks from different sects and regions of Tibet. Gradually these monks moved to their own newly re-established monasteries, which has become the foundation of today's major monastic centers established by the spiritual

heads of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Bon and Jonang under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Today, there are 292 registered monasteries with CTA's Department of Religion & Culture in India, Nepal and Bhutan, consisting of 256 monasteries and 36 nunneries with 34,835 monks and 4,604 nuns. Additionally, there are about 1,000 Buddhist centres around the world. These institutions not only preserve and promote the Buddhist tradition but have also been instrumental in protecting and developing the Tibetan language and culture and connect Tibet's spiritual and cultural values with the world.

In stark contrast, the Chinese government is carrying out cultural genocide under its policy of Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet, systematically undermining the monastic system and traditional educational practices, which are the soul of Tibetan culture and identity. With the ongoing policy aimed at fundamentally altering the traditional Tibetan educational and monastic systems, the administration of Tibetan monastic institutions is now entirely controlled by Chinese government officials. In Tibetan schools and monastic institutions, Tibetans are forced to study communist ideology and Chinese language courses as the main subjects. Moreover, not only is the atheistic Chinese government issuing so-called degree certificates to those graduating from these monastic institutions, but it is also conducting politically motivated registration of reincarnated lamas (Living Buddhas), thereby systematically dismantling the thousands-of-year-old monastic educational system.

Tibet, known as the 'Roof of the World', plays a crucial role in maintaining the earth's ecological balance, and it is the most sensitive region to global climate change. Referred to as Asia's 'Water Tower,' the rivers flowing from Tibet directly and indirectly impact the livelihoods of around 2 billion population of the world. During the last seven decades of the Chinese occupation, its destructive and exploitative measures like exploitation of minerals, deforestation, destruction of wildlife, forced resettlement of nomads, and large-scale infrastructure development in Tibet, has resulted in desertification of grasslands, rising temperature, landslides, and floods. Proper stewardship of Tibet's environment is central to climate change challenges, making it important not only for the Tibetans but for China and the world at large. Moreover, Tibet is warming at twice the global rate, resulting in melting glaciers, floods, food and water security risks in the downstream countries.

Under China's West-East Electricity Transfer Project, the Chinese government is constructing massive hydropower dams on the four Tibetan rivers, Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra), Machu (Yellow), Driчу (Yangtze), and Zachu (Mekong). It claims that the dams on Yarlung Tsangpo can generate around 80 million kilowatts of electricity, and the mega hydropower project in Metog County (Tibet) is to be carried out from 2030 to 2035 is scheduled for operation in 2045. Moreover, around eight dams are being constructed within a range of 100 kms of the Yarlung Tsangpo. Similarly, under the so-called Red Flag River Project, the Brahmaputra River will be diverted eastward, crossing the Gyalmo Ngulchu (Salween), Zachu (Mekong), and Driчу (Yangtze) Rivers and then directed northward to the intersection of China's Qinghai and Gansu provinces at the Liujiaxia Reservoir, from where it will be turned westward, passing through Gansu's territories to reach Hotan and Kashgar in Xinjiang (East Turkestan). The total length of this South-North Water Diversion is said to be 6,188 kms.

On 10th March this year, the Kashag raised its grave concern over the impacts of the construction of thirteen hydroelectric power stations along the Driчу River in Tibet. Subsequently, 13 United Nations Special Procedure Mandate Holders issued a statement, warning China of dire and irreversible environmental and climate impacts that these dams could cause in the Tibetan plateau, to China and the region. Despite the warning, the Chinese government has announced that it has already planned solar power installations along the Driчу River, with a solar capacity approximately three times the total power generated by the thirteen hydroelectric dams. And the Chinese government remains silent on the impact of these massive solar panel networks on the Tibetan plateau's fragile environment.

The Chinese government's projects are based on the whims of its authorities – short term economic and military gain rather than on the standard process of scientific research and comprehensive assessment of long-term benefits and drawbacks. The extensive excavation of mountains, construction of bridges, and damming of rivers on the high-altitude and earthquake-prone Tibetan plateau will not only cause irreparable damage to Tibet but also to China and beyond. It will inevitably result in the displacement of Tibetan settlers

from their ancestral land as happened in the case of the dam construction in Kamtok region in northeastern Tibet.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said we have to accept the fact that if we unbalance nature, humankind will suffer, and therefore people living today must feel concern for the well-being of future generations. His Holiness said we all have an equal right to enjoy a clean and beautiful natural environment. The Tibetan people are the custodian of the rich Tibetan plateau. The Chinese authorities who plunder and damage the Tibetan mountains and rivers to fulfill their insatiable greed must be held accountable for their actions.

Today marks the 76th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration states that the freedom of thought, religion, speech, and assembly are innate human rights that cannot be forcibly taken away from anyone; education shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

On 24th September 2024, the European Union raised grave concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet at the 57th International Human Rights Council session. Likewise, on 22nd October, during the 79th UN General Assembly's Third Committee, a group of fifteen countries, including Australia, issued a joint statement, calling on the Chinese government to allow independent observers, including those from the UN, unfettered access to assess the human rights situation in Xinjiang (East Turkestan) and Tibet. Recently in its statement on 26th November 2024, the G-7 Foreign Ministers expressed concern over the human rights situation in Tibet.

Although the population of Tibetans in exile is only 2% of the total Tibetan population, the exiled Tibetan community living in free democratic host countries has achieved remarkable results in preserving and promoting Tibetan religion, culture, and language. Over 61,949 Tibetans who later arrived from Tibet, of which 27,083 received education in the Tibetan monastic system, and 34,866 children had enrolled in Tibetan schools to study both traditional and modern education. Collectively under the guidance and blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all these helped elevate the international support for the Tibetan cause to a new level. In stark contrast, over 98% of Tibetans who are in Tibet are being subjected to the Chinese government's relentless and full-scale assault on their religion, language, and culture. With round-the-clock surveillance and severe restrictions on movement of Tibetans, Tibet is today under virtual martial law.

Under the steadfast guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to follow the path of non-violence, the Tibetan freedom struggle is, from the instances of demonstrations in the Tibetan capital Lhasa through the 1980s, the 2008 nation-wide protests in Tibet, and the 157 known cases of self-immolation (2009 – 2022) has been peaceful with the absence of violence. Tibetans inside Tibet continue to courageously fight to maintain their national identity without fear of arrest and imprisonment by the Chinese government.

The Central Tibetan Administration remains committed in finding a peaceful resolution to the Sino-Tibet conflict through the Middle Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for all Tibetans living in the traditional Tibetan areas to handle all its own religious, cultural, linguistic, education, health, and environmental affairs, as guaranteed by the Chinese Constitution and under the Law on Regional National Autonomy. Unfortunately, the Chinese government continues to bulldoze the Tibetan people's legitimate aspirations and continues to destroy our unique identity.

In conclusion, we fervently pray for the long and healthy life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We pray for the perpetual preservation of the Tibetan language and culture, which are the soul of our spiritual heritage. May the pristine natural environment of Tibet be protected. May peace prevail on earth.

The Kashag
10th December 2024

Note: This is a translation of the Tibetan statement. Should any discrepancies arise, please treat the Tibetan version as final and authoritative.