

BANNED IN TIBET

SUMMER 2010



MONKS LEAD KYEGUNDO QUAKE RELIEF EFFORTS

On April 14th, a powerful 6.9 magnitude earthquake struck Kyegundo in eastern Tibet (Ch: Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Region, Qinghai Province), killing thousands and leaving 100,000 homeless. The official death toll has reached 2,698 – though Tibetans from the area say the true number is much higher.

The international media initially reported the quake as having struck in western China. But, the heartbreaking images from the quake zone revealed the true story that has been hidden behind China's redrawing of the Tibetan map: Kyegundo is a stubbornly Tibetan town with a 97% Tibetan population.

Just hours after the quake, Tibetan monks led the recovery efforts, rescuing survivors from the rubble, assisting the injured, and performing burial rituals for the dead. They were not shown on Chinese state media, which instead focused the camera on Chinese relief workers as Beijing tried to turn the disaster into a propaganda opportunity. While relief operations were under way, Chinese officials ordered thousands of monks from outside of Kyegundo to return to their monasteries.

Days later, a heartfelt letter posted on a Chinese blog appealed to Chinese leaders to allow the Dalai Lama to visit the region. The Dalai Lama also expressed his desire to visit. Moving footage from the quake

zone showed Tibetans openly praying to him and respectfully touching his photo to their head.

As Tibetan communities worldwide raised much-needed donations for the relief efforts and organized prayer ceremonies for the victims, SFT also invited people to send condolence messages to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, the true representatives of the Tibetan people. In an incredible show of international solidarity, hundreds of people sent heartfelt messages to Dharamsala, India. Tibetans and their supporters worldwide also urged their government leaders to support the wishes of the Tibetan people by calling on China to allow the Dalai Lama to visit the quake zone.

Amidst the tragedy, it became obvious that Tibetans looked to their monastic institutions for comfort and relief, not to the Chinese state. Beijing might control the administration and bureaucracy of Tibet, but it doesn't command the loyalty and allegiance of the Tibetan people.

Support the quake relief effort:

www.studentsforafreetibet.org/earthquake

Read Jamyang Norbu's informative article about Kyegundo: www.jamyangnorbu.com



Monks were among the first to join relief efforts in Kyekundo. Photo: NYTimes.com



Tibetans carry a photo of His Holiness through the rubble

TIBET'S OWN SATYAGRAHA

WHAT IF GANDHI-STYLE SATYAGRAHA WAS WAGED IN TIBET?

I'VE BEEN ASKED THIS QUESTION FOR YEARS.

WELL, HERE IS YOUR ANSWER: LHAKAR.

Despite China's totalitarian rule, Tibetans have embraced the power of strategic nonviolent action. This grassroots revolution is being called Lhakar, which means "White Wednesday" or "Pure Wednesday." Not surprisingly, the Dalai Lama was born on a Wednesday.

Every Wednesday, a growing number of Tibetans are making a special effort to wear traditional clothes, speak Tibetan, eat at Tibetan restaurants and buy from Tibetan-owned businesses. They channel their spirit of resistance into social, cultural and economic activities that are self-constructive (promoting Tibetan language and culture) and non-cooperative (refusing to support Chinese institutions and businesses).

Since 2008, Beijing has locked down the streets to deter protests. But the resistance has not abated; it has simply moved indoors. Lhakar participants nurture Tibetan tradition in their homes and daily lives, strengthening their cultural identity, social networks and political impact. Through Lhakar they are saying, "We are Tibetan."

This cultural revival is also ushering in the Tibetan equivalent of the Renaissance. Musicians, writers, and painters are changing the landscape of Tibetan arts and literature, producing an endless stream of songs, essays, and other artwork that express the Tibetan people's unfathomable pain, occasional joy, and constant yearning. The courage that fueled the 2008 uprising has emboldened the vision with which this new Tibetan art is bursting into the world. The political movement is feeding the arts, and the arts are feeding the movement right back.

Exiled Tibetans have started campaigns to mirror these activities. Tibetans in Boston, USA hold vigils every Wednesday, making a Lhakar pledge to continue the vigil until Tibet is free. SFT HQ has launched our monthly Renaissance Series: amplifying everything banned in Tibet. Tibet supporters have pledged to educate their political representatives on Tibet, while others have pledged to boycott made-in-China products.

This gathering storm – a combination of cultural renaissance and political revolution – will ultimately wipe out China's oppression, leaving in its wake a Tibet ruled by Tibetans. Half a century after Gandhi died, his satyagraha is reborn in Tibet. This time its name is Lhakar.



Mahatma Gandhi, Pioneer of Satyagraha



Tibetans in Boston holding weekly Lhakar vigil



A LETTER FROM SFT'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TENZIN "TENDOR" DORJEE

Dear Friends, Colleagues, Fellow Tibetans, and Fellow Supporters;

I don't know how to start this letter. I've started it five times and deleted it five times already. Whatever I write will be out of date by the time you read it – this is how fast the story of Tibet is changing. Almost daily I am overwhelmed by a feeling that we're living in the midst of history, that the tide of change is rising and turning in our favor.

When the Kyegu earthquake killed thousands of Tibetans, we all cried together. But from the ruins emerged a nation united in action. The monks were the first to bring relief to ground zero, pulling people out of the rubble, offering food and shelter, cremating the dead, and comforting the survivors. Until the Chinese authorities forced the monks to leave, we witnessed a parallel society in which Tibetans conducted relief work with the efficiency of a first-world administration.

We can see this parallel Tibet in other events too. When Amdo nomads rode into Bora in March 2008 and replaced the Chinese flag with the Tibetan flag, a part of Tibet was liberated. As Tibetans in Kardze observe Lhakar, eating only in Tibetan-owned restaurants and buying only from Tibetan-owned shops, they are carving power away from the decaying Chinese empire.

There is nothing Beijing can do to stop this momentum. But there is a lot we can do to strengthen it. Even as you are inspired by the risks Tibetans in Tibet take to speak out for freedom, they are in turn inspired by your advocacy for Tibet. Hundreds of political prisoners, languishing in Chinese prisons, dream the same dream: that somewhere in a foreign land, somebody is uttering their name, holding their photo, and demanding their release.

SFT members have been amplifying Tibetan voices through creative events such as poetry nights and film screenings, while using social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to multiply the impact of our actions. SFT networks are growing in new regions – Japan, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Hong Kong – and maturing in movement strongholds – North America, India, Europe. Our newest chapter just started in Australia!

Here at SFT's International Headquarters, we're preparing for Free Tibet! Action Camp XI, our flagship activist training program. The importance of youth leadership training is evident now more than ever. In the coming months, we will train a new generation of activists who will carry the torch of Tibetan freedom into the future.

This issue of *Banned in Tibet* provides a window into our work. As you flip through the articles and photos, please consider how you can make a difference for Tibet.

Sincerely,
Tendor

INTERVIEW WITH SFT HQ INTERNS YVONNE & MORGAN

What's it like to work behind the scenes at our International Headquarters? Who are the unsung heroes of the office, making sure the dirty work gets done? We sat down with our interns Morgan and Yvonne to find out more about what they've learned, their interests, and more...

SFT: How'd you hear about SFT?

M: I heard about SFT by accident, searching for non-profits to work at during my last semester of college. I wanted to work somewhere where I could make a difference instead of making photo-copies and getting coffee. I really liked the vibe from the people in the office and I was interested in learning about Tibet.

Y: While working at the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, they recommended I look into SFT. I knew about the Tibetan Issue before working here, but didn't know about the internal struggle within the movement [Independence vs. Middle Way]

SFT: What's been your favorite part of the intern experience?

M: I've learned so much about Tibet. I am able to teach others about the movement and I feel like I can spread the word about the issue more confidently.



Morgan Jeziarski, recent graduate of Wagner College

Y: I enjoyed doing outreach for the film *Sun Behind the Clouds*. I was also really inspired learning about the filmmaker, Dhondup Wangchen. It takes so much courage to do what he did. It really struck me, and I hope he gets out of prison as soon as possible.

SFT: Any Interesting fact about yourself that most people might not know?

M: I'm half Cape Verdean. My mom is from Cape Verde. Also, I can ride a bicycle with my hands.

Y: I was born in Japan, lived in Italy, Taiwan, and in Beijing.

SFT: Well that's pretty cool...but Morgan can ride a bicycle with her hands. You can't top that?

Y: Um, I guess, but I have really long toes...if I drop something on the floor, I can pick it up with my toes...creepy, I know.

SFT: ...So what was it like living in Beijing?

Y: It sparked my interest in human rights issues. It made me understand how precious democracy is. Living in a totalitarian country you feel uncomfortable speaking what you want. Luckily I went to an American school, but still I had to be careful about what I said.

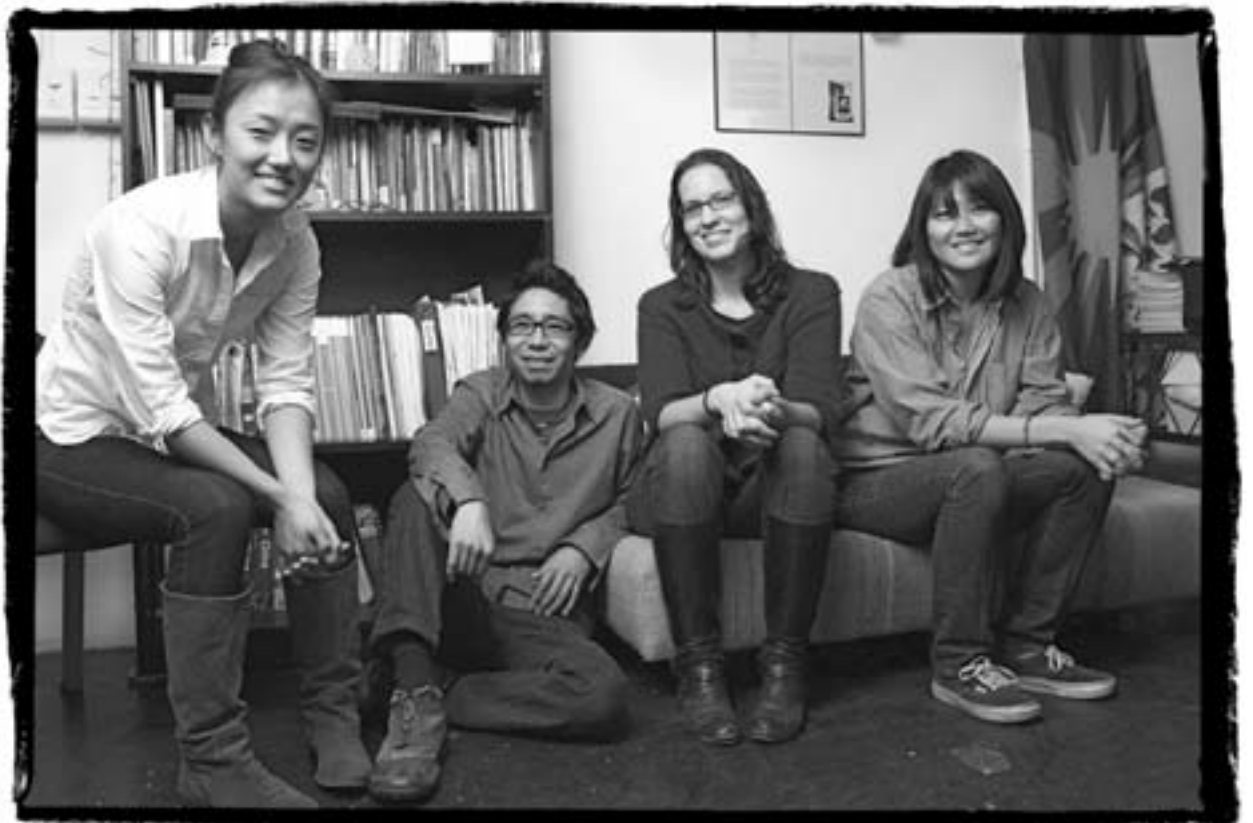
SFT: What are your future plans, post-SFT internship?

M: At first I was thinking about going to law school, but this internship showed me I'd rather get started working with grassroots orgs, and I'd love to continue working for Tibet in some way!

Y: I hope to travel and do field research in Southeast Asia, and continue working for human rights. Hopefully something that incorporates art and politics.



Yvonne Shen, Master's graduate in non-profit management from NYU



Left to right: Tenzin Dolkar, USA Grassroots director; Tenzin Dorjee, Executive Director; Kate Woznow, Deputy Director; Schuyler Swenson, Operations Director (Not pictured: Mary-Kate Oreovicz, Development Manager)



SFT Taiwan makes March 10th heard in mainland China



SFT UK amplifies Tibet's struggle in front of Parliament



Third generation in exile and still in love with Tibet

MARCH 10TH 2010

LHADON TETHONG'S SPEECH: ACTIVISM THROUGH TIBETAN IDENTITY

On March 10th, Tibetan National Uprising Day in front of a crowd of 500 Tibetans and Tibet supporters in New York's Union Square, SFT's former Executive Director and current Director of Tibet Action Institute, Lhadon Tethong spoke about the upsurge in assertion of Tibetan national identity as a form of creative resistance. The following are a few excerpts from her speech:

"There's a movement inside Tibet where young Tibetans are saying, 'I am Tibetan and I am proud of that.' It's a simple statement to say "I am Tibetan," it doesn't sound very revolutionary, but it is. Because the Chinese government has spent the last 50, 60 years trying to make Tibetans inside Tibet turn into Chinese or snuff out all of their pride and individual strength; yet even after all these years there's a generation of young Tibetans who have grown up in the Chinese system and they have not given up and now they are feeling a new strength and a new pride. They're writing blogs, poetry, rap lyrics, books, they're speaking openly on camera, in videos and they're saying 'We're Tibetan, we'll never give up' and that for us is the light."

"There's a new Tibetan hip-hop song that can be found online [<http://vimeo.com/10058460>]. It's by a group called the Green Dragon. I will read some of the lyrics, just to give a sense...

Get used to me, I am the deactive breath to your uncontrollability.

Get used to me I am under your limitless, uncontrollable watch.

Get used to me, I am the manifestation of today and the substance of tomorrow.

We are the sharp wisdom that your speeches and lectures haven't reached.

The new generation has the resource called the youth.

The new generation has the pride called confidence.

The new generation has an appearance called the playfulness.

The new generation has the temptation called freedom."

"This new pride, this new force that we are seeing --'Because I am Tibetan'-- in itself is a revolution, and one that the Chinese government has no power over. And as long as Tibetans inside move forward in this spirit and as long as Tibetans outside keep walking the path that we've been on for all these years and never give up, the Chinese government will ultimately fail... Things will change, and as long as we have kept the support and kept the movement alive Tibetans will have a chance of freedom again... Our job wherever we are in the world, people inside Tibet, is to keep moving forward... be uncontrollable and in the end we will win."

Read Lhadon's full speech on the SFT Blog: <http://blog.studentsforafreetibet.org/2010/05/lhadon>

BREAKING BOUNDARIES ON THE WEB: THOUGHTS FROM BLOGGER ACTIVIST, DECHEN PEMBA



Dechen Pemba makes writings from Tibet accessible to global audiences

SFT HQ interviewed Dechen Pemba, editor of the highpeakspureearth.com. Below is an excerpt from the interview.

At present I run a translations blog called 'High Peaks Pure Earth' that monitors blogs and translates Internet writings from Tibet. Tibetan poet/activist Woesser's blog is one of the most important sources of information about news inside Tibet and China, including unreported arrests, detentions, deaths, protests and the thoughts and wishes of ordinary Tibetans inside. The motivation behind setting up 'High Peaks Pure Earth' is to introduce the Tibetan

blogosphere to an English language audience and to give voice to Woesser and other Tibetan bloggers in Tibet.

Blogposts don't always need to be overtly political; you can find many different styles of writing, including nuanced, subtle political commentary. For me, the best and most defiant blog posts are ones that are clever and creative. For instance, during the Dragon Boat Festival which everyone has to celebrate in China, a Tibetan wrote "let us celebrate a festival our forefathers had never heard of and let's celebrate by eating something our forefathers had never tasted before!" So through humor or irony, you can say a lot. Also many bloggers will write poetry and use metaphors to hint at the things they want to say.

The full interview can be read on SFT's blog: <http://blog.studentsforafreetibet.org/2010/06/dechen>

LOSAR: BECAUSE I AM TIBETAN

A MESSAGE FROM THE TIBETAN STAFF MEMBERS AT SFT HQ

Last year, Tibetans worldwide observed Losar – the Tibetan New Year – as an occasion of mourning for those killed in China's crackdown following the Tibetan uprising in 2008. In a remarkable grassroots civil disobedience campaign, Tibetans turned silence – generally a sign of submission – into a weapon of resistance.

This year, Tibetans around the world again greeted the New Year with an air of defiance – many chose to pray for those who have lost their lives fighting for freedom and many others embraced cultural traditions as an act of creative resistance to Chinese rule. The tactical approach aside, one thing is clear: Tibetans observed Losar for one simple reason: Because We Are Tibetan.

As Tibetans, Losar is a time to commemorate our history, our culture, our religion, and our future – because in spite of our present suffering – our future is bright. On Losar, we speak Tibetan, wear Tibetan dress, and observe Tibetan customs, thus strengthening our identity and our spirit. Through all these years of occupation one thing is clear: the Chinese government envies the spirit of the Tibetan people, which cannot be crushed by violence.

It is this spirit that is so beautifully and proudly asserted by the Tibetans in Amdo, eastern Tibet who made the remarkable video titled "I am Tibetan" that was posted on YouTube just before the New Year. View online at: <http://vimeo.com/9203330>

For Tibetans in Tibet who have been forced to negate their history, culture, and identity, declaring their pride in being Tibetan is a bold and subversive act. In advance of Losar, we witnessed an upsurge in Tibetans asserting their identity online through poems, videos, songs, and pictures – including "I am Tibetan" and "I (heart) Tibet" avatars.

To support this homegrown movement, SFT invited Tibetans to make a Losar pledge to take one action a week to help strengthen Tibetan national identity, promote our freedom struggle, and weaken China's control over Tibet. Tibet supporters were invited to take a pledge of action for Tibet in the coming year.

Hundreds of Tibetans and Tibet supporters responded, taking the Losar pledge and greeting the start of the Iron Tiger Year 2137, as a time for hope, change, and renewal.

To read the Losar pledges, go to: <http://blog.studentsforafreetibet.org/Losar>

To make your own pledge to take action for Tibetan freedom, go to: <http://www.studentsforafreetibet.org/Losarpledge>

For all of us who love Tibet, it is our Losar wish that the Year of the Iron Tiger will bring us even closer to the day that Tibetans can celebrate Losar in peace and freedom.

In hope,

Tendor and TenDolkar

A HISTORIC MEETING BETWEEN HEADS OF STATE: THE DALAI LAMA VISITS THE WHITE HOUSE



SFT USA's Tendolkar talks to media outside the White House

ON-THE-SCENE REPORT FROM TENDOLKAR

Ignoring China's protests against his meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, U.S. President Obama finally met with the Tibetan leader and fellow Nobel laureate on February 18th, 2010. Along with hundreds of Tibetans from the New York tri-state area, I boarded a bus to DC at 2:00am to welcome His Holiness and to show support for this historic meeting between the Tibetan head of state and the leader of the free world. Simultaneously, Tibetans inside Tibet lit fireworks and incense, and hung prayer flags in celebration, despite the heavy Chinese military presence in the region.

President Obama reads 10 messages from the public each day. By faxing more than 3,000 messages in the days leading up to the White House meeting, we made sure the Obama administration heard our message loud & clear: Tibet is a priority issue for Americans

and for the global community. Thank you to everyone who took action and let's keep the pressure on for Tibet in the halls of political power.

GOOGLE BREAKS UP WITH CHINA!



SFT breaks up with Google in 2006, makes up in 2010

Two months after Google's announcement that it would stop censoring search results in China, the company made history by replacing Google.cn with Google.com.hk, its uncensored search engine in Hong Kong.

Google's decision was a landmark victory for freedom everywhere. It also exposed the Chinese government as the insecure, authoritarian dictatorship that it is; afraid to allow even its own citizens to access information freely and draw their own conclusions about the world.

Xiao Qiang, Director of China Digital Times, said it best: "The fact that Google cannot exist in China, clearly indicates that China's path as a rising power is going in a direction different from what the world expected and what many Chinese were hoping for."

This development is a big step forward in the fight against China's criminalization of information sharing and is critical for Tibetans who continue to be jailed for sending information about the reality of Tibet within and across international borders.

When Google launched Google.cn in 2006, SFT publicly opposed the move and initiated an online boycott of the search engine. More than 12,000 people agreed to "break up" with Google on Valentine's Day. Thank you to everyone who took action, - your emails, phone calls, and faxes made a difference.

Let Google's decision be a wake-up call to corporations and political leaders everywhere: colluding with Beijing's repressive policies does not bring about positive change or greater freedoms in China and Tibet. As we applaud Google's breakup with China, we call on other companies and governments to also stand up to Beijing's tyranny.

"HEAVENLY TIBET" OR HELL ON EARTH? THE SHANGHAI WORLD EXPO THAT OFFICIALLY OPENED ON MAY 1ST IS YET ANOTHER MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR PROPAGANDA SPECTACLE PUT ON BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT



Like the Beijing 2008 Olympics, the Shanghai Expo - the largest World Expo ever - is designed to make China's one-party dictatorship appear open, modern, and democratic. More than 70 million visitors are expected to visit the Expo, which runs until October 31st, 2010.

The Expo is like the World Fair with themed pavilions representing countries, corporations, and a handful of international organizations. As expected, China has set up a Tibet pavilion - called "Heavenly Tibet" - depicting the Tibetan people as happy and prosperous under Chinese rule.

Just last year, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that 60 years of China's occupation have turned Tibet into a "hell on earth." And Tibetans who have endured unimaginable suffering under China's tyrannical rule are risking everything to tell this truth to the world.

Join the global call to shut down the Tibet Pavilion at: <http://www.shanghaiexposed.org>



CHECK OUT LOG ON, TUN www.youtube.com

SFTtv was launched two years ago by former... and mobilize SFT's chapters and members worldwide and is growing! SFTtv rebranded... brought you this year's breaking news on Tibet... the historic meeting between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and President Obama on March 10.

SFTtv makes it easier for you to stay connected... and is your source for information, analysis, and... See for yourself: www.youtube.com/sfttv

BROADEN YOUR

The SFTtv episodes with the highest views feature... of Tibet. So, we encourage all of you, chapters, and... activities and events with grassroots@students.org

SFT TAKES THE CAPITAL BY STORM AT THE SECOND ANNUAL TIBET LOBBY DAY

The annual Tibet Lobby Day is an opportunity for Tibetans and their supporters to educate our U.S. Congress and to push for Tibet friendly legislation. As Tibetan youth inside Tibet are directly challenging the Chinese government's illegal occupation of Tibet, we can support their efforts by reaching out to our political representatives and lobbying them to increase their programmatic and political support for Tibet. This year, at the second annual Tibet Lobby Day, Tibetan youth from across 20 states in the U.S. met with their Senators and Congressional Representatives to highlight issues ranging from funding for the Radio Free Asia to the release of political prisoners, and congressional support for a U.S. consulate in Lhasa, Tibet's capital. Below are reflections from some of SFT's lobbyists!

The 2010 Tibet Lobby Day was one of the greatest activist actions I have ever taken. The Congressional representatives were really supportive and knew what was going on in Tibet. The two days that I spent on Capitol Hill were awesome! I can honestly say that I did something valuable with my time for my

country. FREE TIBET!"

– Khedup Dhondup, Wisconsin

"Each Senator/Representative said they were familiar with the Tibet issue and stated that they are "a friend of Tibet", but some were astonished to learn about the number of current political prisoners and the incredible significance of Tibet to the issue of global climate change." - Hillary Levin, Maryland

"This was my first time participating. I feel that lobbying is an action that directly raises Tibetan issues to our US leaders. As a constituent, it is our right and responsibility to express our concerns and raise awareness about the human rights violations in Tibet to our Congressional Representatives."

- Sonam Yangzom, Connecticut



Tibet day lobbyists break for a group photo in front of the State Capitol building



OUT SFT TV!
ONE IN, RISE UP!
n/sfttv

For SFT grassroots coordinator Kalaya'an Mendoza to connect worldwide. Today, SFTtv's youtube channel boasts over 150,000 subscribers. Season 2, produced by SFT HQ's Tendolkar & Schuyler, is now airing, covering events and activities around the world, including the Dalai Lama and President Obama to the Global Uprising on

Stay connected and up-to-date with SFT, the Tibetan freedom movement, and inspiration.

PODCAST YOURSELF

Share clips of what chapters and individuals are doing for the cause, individuals, and networks to share your videos and photos of your activism at forafreetibet.org.

TIBETANS & SUPPORTERS PROTEST HU JINTAO AT NUCLEAR SUMMIT



Hu Jintao gets an icy welcome from Tibetans and supporters

On April 12th and 13th, President Obama hosted nearly fifty world leaders at the Nuclear Summit in D.C. It was the largest gathering of heads of state organized by a U.S. President since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945. Much to the embarrassment of China, only one leader was protested: Hu Jintao. To the delight and satisfaction of every Tibetan and supporter present, Hu Jintao's motorcade, as well as President Obama's, stopped directly in front of our loud, flag-bearing, sign-waving crowd of activists. Our presence was noted, with Tibetan flags waving proudly, and our message heard: until Tibet is free we will continue to shame and embarrass China's leaders everywhere they go.

THE RISE IN STUDENT PROTESTS INSIDE TIBET



Students in Labrang protest in the streets

On March 10th, 2010, when all areas of Tibet were under military lockdown, dozens of Tibetan students in Zoege County, in the north-eastern Tibetan province of Amdo, defied Chinese authorities by wearing traditional Tibetan clothing and lighting butter lamps in honor of the Tibetans killed in China's violent crackdown during the 2008 uprising. This peaceful act of defiance and solidarity was met with harsh punishment as Chinese authorities detained 16 students and expelled 3 Tibetan teachers.

Since then, there have been reports of at least 10 other protests by Tibetan students inside Tibet and China. As Tibetans inside Tibet continue to resist China's oppression, Tibetan students stand at the forefront of this resistance.

In Machu County of Amdo, Tibetan middle and high school students have protested, petitioned, and staged a hunger strike. In Sertha County of Kham in southeastern Tibet, students handed out pamphlets and raised slogans calling for the Dalai Lama's return and an independent Tibet. Even

Students for a Free Tibet feels a great sense of solidarity and pride with the young Tibetan – some as young as primary school age – students inside Tibet and China who courageously speak out despite risking detention, beatings, and expulsion. Their bravery inspires us and will not go unheard as we continue to do whatever we can to support these protests and the individuals involved.

As outspoken Tibetan hip-hop group of Amdo Machu, Yudrug righteously says, "The new generation has a temptation called freedom".



"SFT India co-director Choeying captivates India Action Camp participants



SFT Canada director Tenzin Lobsang delivers a speech at Tibet protest



SFT UK and the 'yaks' at the COP15 UN Climate Change Conference

SFT NATIONAL UPDATES

SFT INDIA

"It's been such a whirlwind since I first joined the SFT office in 2005. With a fantastic circle of staff and friends we built a strong team of young enthusiastic people working for Tibet. I enjoyed every moment of hard work towards our mission: learning the art of non-violence in an action camp, organizing huge protests in the streets of Delhi, making music a part of protest in our concerts, walking the Gandhi way in our march to Tibet. I have learned and experienced so much that I'm now convinced and confident that with the right strategy Tibet will be free one day. I would personally like to thank our core members Tenchoe, Ten-Sonam, Yungdrung, Shibayan, Karma Sichoe, Lobsang Army, Tenzin Tsundue, Tsering Dorjee, Legdup, Kelsang Tsewang, for their full support in building the best team we could ever have. BOD GYALO."

-Tenzin Choeying, Outgoing National Director

SFT CANADA

We've made big changes at SFT Canada, including myself stepping into the role of National Director. Tsering Lama, who did an amazing job bringing SFT Canada to the next level, stepped down in August 2009 to attend graduate studies.

Last summer, SFT Canada confronted Continental Minerals, a Canadian mining company operating unethically inside Tibet resulting in a showdown between SFT and the company's Vice-President on a popular morning radio show. Stay tuned as this summer we'll be escalating our campaign to stop Canada's destructive mining operations in Tibet.

SFT Canada is also making advances in our lobbying efforts; in December 2009, we took part in a press conference on Parliament Hill along with other notable China Human Rights groups to call on our Prime Minister to raise human rights and Tibet during his first trip to China. SFT was also instrumental in lobbying MP Gerard Kennedy to raise the issue of Tibetan political prisoner, Dhondup Wangchen, in Canada's House of Commons.

In April, we helped organize the Toronto Tibet Film Festival, which showcased 6 films, including a community screening of *The Sun Behind the Clouds* followed by a Q&A with acclaimed political activist and writer Jamyang Norbu. The film festival was held in honor of Dhondup Wangchen and included a free screening of his remarkable documentary, *Leaving Fear Behind*. We're now gearing up for Free Tibet! Action Camp XI with 10 Canadians planning to attend this week-long training program in Upstate New York. To read more about our activities, please visit: <http://sftcanada.org/>

In solidarity, Tenzin Lobsang, National Director

SFT France Highlights:

With 15 active board members and SFT chapters across the country, SFT France has been very active so far this year:

- * Organized the first Tibetan Film Festival in Paris with the support of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- * On April 25th, we organized a demonstration for the Panchen Lama complete with political street theatre demonstrating the knowledge and skills we gained from the 2004 and 2005 European Action Camps!
- * SFT France has many exciting projects in the works for the remainder of 2010 – stay tuned for updates! Contact: alexis@tibetlibre.org

SFT UK

2009-2010 has been a key year for SFT UK! We hired two staffers; participated in the largest climate change march in the UK; commemorated March 10 Uprising Day with hundreds of supporters in the streets of London and even personally delivered letters to China's Ambassador to the UK and Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Lobbying parliament, we pressured MP's to take actions on behalf of Tibet. In response to the massive earthquake in Tibet, we wrote to the UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband urging him to acknowledge that the earthquake

took place in Tibet and honor the wishes of Tibetan in Kyegundo by supporting the visit of the Dalai Lama to the Earthquake zone.

Check out our new website: www.sftuk.org for the latest updates and SFT UK news. With your support, SFT UK can become an unstoppable force for freedom and human

rights in Tibet. If you are in the UK, please join our Rangzen Circle – SFT UK's monthly giving program (<http://www.sftuk.org/donate-us/>)



Tendor with Tibetan youth in Melbourne after an SFT talk

WELCOME SFT AUSTRALIA!

A group of students and young Tibetans in Sydney including Yeshe, Tamding, Tenpa Dugdak, Sophie Coles and Brigid Annand have started the first SFT chapter in the country!

Tendor went on a five-day lecture tour of Australia, speaking at three universities, meeting with the Tibetan communities of Sydney and Melbourne, and conspiring with a number of Tibetan youth on how to turn the natural Australian sympathy for Tibet into political support. While in Melbourne, Tendor spoke on a panel at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology alongside longtime Tibet campaigner Susan Mizrahi, scholar and writer Gabriel Lafitte, and Dr. Simon Bradshaw of Australia Tibet Committee. The chapter can be contacted at ypelmo@yahoo.co.in.

SFT USA GRASSROOTS UPDATE

From USA Grassroots Director, TenDolkar

Since starting as SFT's USA grassroots director in November 2009, I have had many "firsts," but after six months in the position I am beginning to feel more settled and confident in my ability to further support and develop SFT's network in the US. As a former student organizer myself, I am honored to be in a position that allows me to reach out to the student chapters, Tibetan youth, and Tibet supporters. It satisfies me to no end knowing that I'm doing my part in helping the movement

by mobilizing our future leaders and providing them with the necessary skills and information. The following are some highlights from around the 50 states from the chapter leaders themselves!

REGION 1 & 2: NYC & NEW ENGLAND

"If you aren't familiar with the Tibetan freedom movement, or even if you've been involved for years you leave SFT conferences with some valuable experience. They include workshops that prepare you for real life situations that you'll encounter and address issues that are relevant to the cause. After the NYC conference I identified as

an activist." George Jean-Babets, participant

REGION 3: MID-ATLANTIC

"I wanted to do something closer to my community and age group; it's important to educate our future leaders about Tibet. I screened the film *Leaving Fear Behind*, and distributed copies of the film in the streets of DC with retro CD covers made in our basement. At the Hu Jintao protest I made cupcakes with an 'X' over his face and called some friends to give some out at their schools." Tenzin Namdol, Regional Coordinator (RC)

Continued next page



SFT Region 4 conference in Madison trained 40 students, including 6 who drove 9 hours from Kentucky!

REGION 5: SOUTHEAST

“In April, Tendolkar gave a talk at UNC-Chapel Hill about Tibetan women activists, which inspired students eager to learn more about the movement. With resources gathered from SFT and the local Tibetan community in nearby Raleigh, SFT members tabled in the center of campus, handed out info sheets, connected with students, and coordinated ‘Free Tibet Month.’” Julia Kimmel, RC

REGION 6: PACIFIC NORTHWEST

“Upon hearing of Tibet Awareness Proclamation in Portland, the Chinese Consulate leaders from San Francisco came to dissuade our city government from supporting it. We joined many other Tibetans and supporters to stand by our proclamation and chased the Chinese Consulate leaders back to the hotel! On March 10th, Tibet Awareness Day took place and members of the Tibetan community, SFT, and City Counsel gave speeches and proceeded to lead a protest across downtown Portland.” Tenzin Choetso Gyalnub, RC

REGION 7: WEST COAST

“The region 7 conference was held at Stanford and Berkeley. The conference tackled issues of Tibet’s sovereignty, its governance and possible solutions. SFT’s message resonated with students in the Bay Area and we plan to actively engage our youth to take part in raising awareness about the cause by establishing more active chapters. If you’re interested, please write to seldonsft@gmail.com.” Tenzin Seldon, RC

REGION 8: MOUNTAIN REGION

“SFT Utah has a small yet dedicated group of activists. In January, SFTers braved the blizzard in Park City to campaign on behalf of filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen during the Sundance Film Festival. During our Losar fundraising drive, we raised \$1301 for SFT HQ and are planning a summer fundraising event. Our most ambitious and most memorable event has been our first ever Tibet Workshop for young Tibetans in our community, attended by many of our future leaders and SFTers. Visit us on Facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/SFT.UTAH>.”

Zangma, Lala, Lhaksam, Thongdol, Samten, Thokme, Kyle, & Holdun



Lights, Camera, Prison? SFT Utah draws attention to jailed filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen at the Sundance Film Festival

SPOTLIGHT ON TIBETAN FILMS

NOW PLAYING: *THE SUN BEHIND THE CLOUDS*

Filmmakers Tenzing Sonam & Ritu Sarin are currently on a world tour promoting their newest film, *The Sun Behind the Clouds*, which prominently features interviews with SFT’s former Executive Director, Lhadon Tethong. With the help of SFT, the award-winning film enjoyed a successful two-week screening at in NYC to sold out crowds and secured distribution in major cities across the country and soon worldwide.

This revolutionary new film is the first to directly address the complexity and nuance of the Tibetan freedom movement and the core issue of independence from the Tibetan perspective. The film also includes extensive footage from the 2008 uprising in Tibet, the Beijing Olympics, and the historic March, For more information about the film & screenings, go to: www.thesunbehindthecLOUDS.com

COMING TO THEATRES THIS FALL: *TIBET IN SONG*

Tibet in Song, a compelling new documentary by filmmaker and former political prisoner, Ngawang Choephel, is screening in theatres across the US this fall. The film is both a celebration of traditional Tibetan folk music and a heartbreaking account of cultural repression and exploitation. It reveals how culture can be a powerful form of resistance and stresses the need for Tibetans to be free in order to preserve the musical traditions that play an integral role in their daily lives.

In 1995, Ngawang Choephel, a musician and scholar, returned to Tibet to document the fast-disappearing folk-singing traditions of his homeland. He was accused of being a spy by Chinese authorities and sentenced to 18 years in prison. SFT joined forces with a coalition of Tibet organizations, waging an international campaign on his behalf, which led to his release in 2002 after serving 6 years in prison.



Ngawang Choephel, musician, filmmaker and former political prisoner

AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD: *FIRE UNDER THE SNOW*

Fire Under the Snow documents the life of Palden Gyatso, a monk who spent 33 years in prison. He was tortured, starved, and sentenced to hard labor, but his spirit endured. This film is a must-see to fully understand the severity of China’s illegal occupation of Tibet and is perfect for chapter film screenings. When you purchase the DVD through <http://is.gd/cyGjn>, 10% of the proceeds go directly to SFT.

FREE TIBETAN HEROES

JOIN THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE RELEASE OF TIBETAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

In March 2008 as protests swept across Tibet, the voices of Tibetans resolutely calling out for freedom were heard by the world. China responded to the Tibetan people’s uprising with brute force, flooding Tibet with troops, arresting thousands, banning journalists, and sealing Tibet off to the outside world.

Two years later, more than 700 Tibetans remain detained or imprisoned and over 1,000 others are missing. SFT has joined forces with the International Tibet Support Network and other Tibet Support Groups to launch the Free Tibetan Heroes campaign in order to amplify the voices and advocate for the release of ordinary Tibetans whose heroic actions have changed the course of Tibetan history.

We are currently profiling the cases of nine Tibetan heroes:

They were detained for a range of reasons: documenting the opinions of Tibetans inside Tibet (Dhondup Wangchen); sending information abroad about China’s human rights abuses (Norzin Wangmo, Gonpo Tsering); community organizing, promoting education and environmental protection (Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, Bangri Chongtrul Rinpoche); taking part in street protests and calling for the return of the Dalai Lama (Sangye Lhamo, Runggye Adak, and Lobsang Tenzin); and allegedly printing the banned Tibetan flag (81-year old Paljor Norbu); but the common thread

is that each of these individuals risked everything to resist Chinese rule and to strengthen the Tibetan spirit of resistance.

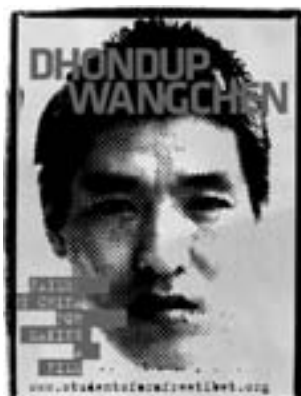
UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES:

-This fall, SFT is helping to coordinate a speaking tour with Lhamo Tso, the wife of imprisoned filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen, who is serving a 6 year prison sentence for making of the remarkable documentary *Leaving Fear Behind*. Learn more: <http://www.studentsforafreetibet.org/leavingfearbehind>

-August 2nd, 2010 marks 3 years since Runggye Adak, a nomad from eastern Tibet openly called for the return of the Dalai Lama in front of Chinese officials at a popular horse racing festival. He is serving an 8-year prison sentence for simply expressing his right to free speech. Take Action for his release on August 2nd. Learn more: <http://freetibetanheroes.com>



Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, social reformer and Buddhist teacher, sentenced to life on false charges



Dhondup Wangchen, imprisoned for making a film critical of Beijing’s policies

If undeliverable please return to:
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NY, NY 10009 USA



Karma and Sonam, new arrivals from Tibet, learn English at SFT HQ every Wednesday

banned in tibet

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Banned in Tibet is a semi-annual newsletter published by Students for a Free Tibet. SFT works in solidarity with the Tibetan people in their struggle for freedom and independence. As a chapter-based network of young people and activists in 35 countries around the world, we use education, grassroots organizing, and nonviolent direct action to campaign for Tibetans' fundamental right to political freedom.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

June 23-29: Free Tibet! Action Camp XI, Phoenicia, New York

July 6: His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 75th Birthday

Aug. 14: Longsho: SFT's Annual Benefit Event, New York

Sept. 2: Tibetan Democracy Day

Sept. 1-5: "Tibet Week" at Shanghai World Expo

Oct. 17: Anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's U.S. Congressional Gold Medal award

Dec. 2: Commemoration of the sentencing of Tenzin Rinopche Delek and Lobsang Dhondup

Dec. 10: Anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Nobel Peace Prize & International Human Rights Day

MESSAGE OF THANKS

SFT thanks the late Gawa Dondup Phala for his generous bequest. Gawa la, who lived in Santa Fe, was a lifelong Tibetan activist who participated in a 1995 hunger strike for the Tibetan cause organized by Tibetan Youth Congress in New York City. Gawa la's legacy lives on through his gift as we continue our nonviolent struggle for a free Tibet.

JOIN STUDENTS FOR A FREE TIBET

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

School: _____

\$25 Individual Student Membership \$45 Individual Membership \$100 Chapter Membership

I have also enclosed a donation of: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other _____

Please make your check payable to Students for a Free Tibet and send to:
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