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Tibetan leader: "The Dalai Lama tells Buddhists to follow the path of Mother Teresa".

by Nirmala Carvalho

Samdhong Rinpoche reveals the importance of the Blessed of Calcutta for Tibetan Buddhism. "For us, the Mother is the incarnation of Maha Karuna (immeasurable compassion). For her, no one was unreachable. The Dalai Lama had the deepest admiration and respect for Mother. "

New Delhi (AsiaNews) – Continuing our review of testimonies on Mother Teresa of Calcutta promoted by AsiaNews, a few days from the centenary of the birth of the Blessed. On August 26 the anniversary of the Missionary of Charity will be celebrated.

Samdhong Rinpoche, 71, has lived in exile in India since 1959, when he fled from Tibet due to Chinese government repression. On July 29, 2001, he was elected prime minister of the Tibetan government in exile by civilians who had fled from Tibet. Below his interview with AsiaNews:

- How was Mother Teresa viewed by Tibetan Buddhists?

She represents love without distinction and compassion for all humanity. For Tibetan Buddhism, the Mother is the incarnation of Maha Karuna (immeasurable compassion). Everyday love has a reason: we love our family, friends ... But the love of Mother Teresa is the divine love for all human beings. And Mother's love was expressed through humble service.

Mother Teresa served the people, she transfigured the face of suffering humanity through her love and compassion. For her, no one was unreachable, she touched the poorest of the poor with her soul and gave them a reason to live and dignity.

- What kind of relationship was there between Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama?

The Dalai Lama admired Mother Teresa and had the deepest respect for her. After meeting her, he said she was an example of a compassionate person. Often he told Buddhist monks and nuns to follow the example of Mother Teresa and serve the poorest of the poor in an imitation of her spirit, her compassion and her dedication.

The Dalai Lama also said that the spirit, compassion and dedication of Mother Teresa would continue to lead the human community.

Dalai Lama says there is no gender bias in Buddhism

21 August 2010 14:16:31

By Prem Thakur

Lahaul (Himachal Pradesh), Aug 21(ANI): Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama said in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul district on Friday, there is no gender bias in Buddhism and nothing prevents a woman from becoming his successor.

“So the purpose of the incarnation is to serve people about dharma (faith). If the circumstances are such, female form is more useful, then why not,” said Dalai Lama.

He also added that that the female Dalai Lama should be attractive.

“And I also mentioned in case Dalai Lama’s incarnation one female comes then must be very attractive female. So the very reason, you see more influence to others, an ugly female then may not much effective,” added Dalai Lama.

Dalai Lama is on a four-day-long visit to the region, to give discourses on Buddhism. (ANI)

More at : Dalai Lama says there is no gender bias in Buddhism

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/india-news/dalai-lama-says-there-is-no-gender-bias-in-buddhism_100416000.html#ixzz0xJV4V71g

Time Magazine

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2010

China Tightens Grip on Tibet's Business Class

By Austin Ramzy / Beijing

Weeks after a prominent Tibetan arts dealer was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges his supporters say were trumped up after he crossed powerful local officials, a second Tibetan businessman has been sentenced to life in jail. Dorje Tashi, a property developer and owner of the Yak Hotel in Lhasa, was convicted of funding overseas Tibetan groups, including the office of the Dalai Lama, according to Urgen Tenzin, executive director of the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy, an India-based NGO. Dorje Tashi had been arrested in the spring of 2008 following deadly unrest in the Tibetan capital and was sentenced in June, although details of his case have still not been officially released.

As one of China's richest Tibetans, Dorje Tashi was an unusual target. In the past efforts by Chinese authorities to root out dissent in Tibet has focused on groups whose political

loyalties were considered suspect, like monks and people who had recently made pilgrimages to India, where the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader, lives in exile. Tashi ran a business conglomerate involved in hotels, tourism and real estate, and was responsible for the employment of hundreds. He was noted in the state-run press for contributing to various charitable causes, and his financial success was a symbol of the type of prosperity and modernity China wanted to promote in the restive Himalayan region. (Watch TIME's 10 questions video with the Dalai Lama.)

His case has strong parallels to that of Karma Samdrup, a 42-year-old arts dealer who had also been touted in China for founding the Three Rivers Environmental Protection group. He was convicted in June of buying \$10,000 worth of antiquities looted from an archaeological site in the northwest region of Xinjiang, charges that had been dropped in 1998 after Samdrup showed he was allowed to trade in relics, and denied knowledge of any crime in acquiring the objects. Samdrup's supporters allege the old charges were reinstated to punish him for attempting to help his brothers, Jigme Namgyal and Rinchen Samdrup, who were arrested after accusing local police of poaching. Rinchen Smadrup was sentenced to five years for "inciting separatism," the International Campaign for Tibet reported, while Jigme Namgyal is serving a 21-month term in a labor camp. (Comment on this story.)

The arrests and heavy prison sentences of these men indicates that two years after the deadly unrest in Lhasa and other Tibetan areas, Chinese officials' suspicion of Tibetans has spread to other levels of society, including to people generally thought to be closely aligned with the Chinese state. But while China's efforts to encourage development in Tibet has helped build a class of successful Tibetan businesspeople, that prosperity hasn't built unswerving loyalty to Beijing. "It does suggest that how ever much money you pour into Tibet, you can change the physical landscape and the actual social landscape, but it doesn't change the cultural topography," says Robbie Barnett, director of Columbia University's modern Tibetan studies program. "The fact is they can create people who say this system benefits us financially, but it may not change their sense of cultural values." (See photos of a new side of Tibetan culture.)

The convictions come as a prominent Tibetan writer is facing trial for writing a book that questions China's policies towards Tibet. Tragyal, who goes by a single name and writes under the pen name Shogdung, was a scholar and editor in the western province of Qinghai who had previously advocated the government line and criticized Tibetans' religious bent. But in the now-banned book "The Separation Between Sky and Land," which was published this spring in Tibetan in China, he wrote that the March 2008 protests moved him to speak out, even though he fears for his safety. While not calling for independence, he asked for a review of the government's Tibet policy. His trial on charges of encouraging separatism has been delayed, according to the International Campaign for Tibet, an overseas activist group.

But it seems unlikely he will avoid punishment. "I may lose my head because of my mouth," Tragyal writes in "The Separation Between Sky and Land." "But this is the path I have **chosen, so the responsibility is mine.**"

_Chinese Communist Party seeks to intensify reforms in Tibetan monasteries

Phayul [Tuesday, August 17, 2010 17:44]

By Phurbu Thinley

Dharamsala, August 17: In what appeared to be a fresh effort to further tighten government's control on Tibet's influential religious institutions, a top leader of the Communist Party of China has called for reforms in Buddhist monasteries by appointing monks and nuns who are "politically reliable".

In a move that could be seen as part of Chinese Communist regime's larger campaign to weed out pro-Dalai Lama elements in the Buddhist clergy, Du Qinglin, head of the United Front Work Department of the Party's Central Committee - the body tasked specifically to handle the Tibet talks - said greater efforts must be made to implement "democratic management in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries."

Du also called for "thorough" consultation in selecting "politically reliable" monks and nuns to monastery management committees.

"Concerted and solid efforts must be made to implement democratic management in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries," Du was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency.

"Competent Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns who are politically reliable, extraordinarily learned and widely respected should be selected to monastery management committees through thorough democratic consultation," he added.

Du, also vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, made the remarks during a two-day conference on "democratic management of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries" held in Shigatse, in the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region", from Aug. 14 to 15.

His sweeping remarks were timed even as another powerful Communist Party leader He Guoqiang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo undertook a tour of Tibet and visited the Potala Palace, which was the seat of the Dalai Lamas.

The so-called "Democratic Management Committees" (DMCs) were established by the Chinese Communist party since 1950s in every big and small monastery and temple to oversee the daily operations of major monasteries. Regulations restricted leadership of DMCs

to ‘patriotic and devoted’ monks and nuns, and specified that Government must approve all members of the committees. At some monasteries, government officials also sat on the committees.

Through DMCs and relevant local departments in charge of religious affairs, the government retained the management control of monasteries, though not required to contribute to the monasteries’ operating funds.

As per the prevailing rules, the posts of all the top monks known as Lamas have to be made with the approval of the Chinese government. In 2007, Chinese Communist government passed “Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism,” a controversial law that armed the Communist Party of China with sole authority to approve selection of Tibetan reincarnations.

China has long-considered religion as a key element of Tibetan identity and monastic institutions as hotbed of political dissidence.

Following widespread unrest against Chinese rule, largely led by monks and nuns, in 2008, Chinese Communist government launched renewed and intensified "Patriotic Education" campaign covering almost every sections of society and mainly targeting the monastic institutions.

Under the campaign, Chinese “work team” officials are sent to especially monastic institutes on a regular basis to “educate” monks and nuns to be patriotic towards nation and one's religion, and to oppose ‘splittist’ forces, which include denouncing the revered Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, whom China reviles as a “splittist”.

Meted out with serious threats involving imprisonment and expulsion from monasteries, monks are compulsorily forced to give their signatures or finger prints to express their non-allegiance to the Dalai Lama.

Reports have surfaced in recent years of monks succumbing to suicides in the aftermath of political indoctrination classes and in the face of growing religious oppression in the monastery.

Since March 2008, more than 17 known cases of suicides and attempted suicide among monks and nuns have surfaced. _____

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