

CHINA TODAY UPDATES

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3 Updates

1.

Tibet's PM-in-exile says China can't be a great power without morality

Deutsche Welle

24 November 2011

Tibet

Tibet's first elected prime minister-in-exile was sworn in last August. On his first official trip to Europe, Lobsang Sangay is trying to garner support for real autonomy. Deutsche Welle spoke to him in Berlin.

Lobsang Sangay was wearing a suit for his interview with Deutsche Welle, not a red monk's robe. The prime minister of the Tibetan Government in Exile has never set foot on Tibetan soil. He was born in India and later studied at Harvard where he is currently a senior fellow. He speaks for all Tibetans, in exile and in China.

Since his election in April, he has largely done the same as the Dalai Lama - going around the world to garner support for the Tibetans' peaceful struggle for more autonomy. This is a struggle that has recently caught the world's attention again because of a wave of self-immolations.

Acts of despair

In his interview, Sangay said these self-immolations were an act of despair committed by desperate people and that they were in reaction to the repressive policies of the Chinese government. However, "we do not encourage anybody to choose this form of protest," he insisted. "Life is very valuable," he said and pointed out that the Dalai Lama had also spoken out against them.

"The self-immolations are a sign of hopelessness because many Tibetans believe that the world is no longer interested in their fate," he said, adding that any sign of support from famous people or governments was important. He said such support could once again create hope.

But time is not on the side of the Tibetans. China's influence is growing and exiled Tibetans have less and less room for maneuver. Lobsang Sangay said he was very disappointed that South Africa had refused the Dalai Lama an entry visa in October to attend Nobel laureate Desmond Tutu's birthday celebrations. "A friend of the greatest South African leader, who worked so hard for democracy and Nelson Mandela's release, refuses him entry. That makes me very sad."

He said he had nothing against doing business with China but that one should not throw all one's principles overboard.

Investing in non-violence

In the past 50 years, Lobsang Sangay explained, Tibet has invested in non-violence, democracy and dialogue. If the Tibetans are dropped the message sent out to others struggling for autonomy will be devastating - that violence does not pay.

Lobsang Sangay pointed out that it would be in China's own interest to help Tibet find a "middle way" for autonomy within a Chinese state structure. He even said this would work with the current Chinese constitution. "The 'one country, two systems' model is already practiced in Hong Kong and Macau. Beijing even seems willing to grant Taiwan more autonomy," he said but added that this was perhaps because Chinese people live there, whereas Beijing is wary of Tibetans.

Generally, he said that China's moral authority in the world hinged upon it finding a solution to the Tibetan question. Without morality, Beijing will be feared perhaps but it won't be respected, he said, and yet this is intrinsic to great power status.

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2.

Berkeley Reveals Plan for Academic Center in China

The New York Times

By **DAVID BARBOZA**

16 November 2011

SHANGHAI

The University of California, Berkeley announced this week that it plans to open a large research and teaching facility here as part of a broader plan to bolster its presence in China.

The public university, which is struggling under budget constraints imposed by the state of California, said the Shanghai center would cater to engineering graduate students and be financed over the next five years largely by the Shanghai government and companies operating here. The program is expected to begin in July 2012.

Berkeley's announcement comes as other prominent American universities are racing to build closer ties to China, hoping to attract new students, deepen research capabilities and set up sites to train business professionals to succeed in the booming Chinese market. New York University and Duke University are each building a campus in the Shanghai area, and Stanford is building a \$5 million research center on the campus of the elite Peking University in the city of Beijing.

"This will be a platform or base of operations for us" said Tsu-Jae King Liu, a professor of electrical engineering and computer sciences at Berkeley, and the associate dean for research at the College of Engineering. "A major reason to do this is to enhance the opportunities for our students. We want them to be better prepared to become global leaders."

China is eager to attract branches of world-class universities in the hope of upgrading its own universities. And big cities like Beijing and Shanghai are pushing for partnerships with prestigious American institutions to attract top students and to create research and development centers that they hope will form the base of a modern, high-tech economy.

The scramble to set up American programs here is happening at a time when Chinese

students are flocking to America's best colleges and universities and elite boarding schools. Chinese student enrollments in the United States are strengthening university budgets because many of the students are paying full college tuitions, which can range from \$15,000 to \$50,000 a year.

Last week, the Institute of International Education, a nonprofit group in New York, said nearly 158,000 Chinese students were enrolled in American colleges and universities this academic year. That figure was up about 23 percent from the previous year and was the second consecutive year China topped India on the list of countries sending international students to the United States.

American college administrators say creating programs here will help support fundraising efforts that target wealthy Chinese alumni; it could also help recruit undergraduate students and strengthen research programs by utilizing resources at Chinese institutions.

Some education experts warn, though, that the universities could damage their reputations if the programs in China came to be viewed as lowering standards or profiting from charging high tuition, but relying on local, low-cost teaching staffs.

The Chinese government requires foreign colleges and universities to form a partnership with a local institution, or be approved by the government. Such programs vary widely. In Berkeley's case, the university has signed a memorandum of understanding to open its Shanghai facility at the Zhangjiang High-Tech Park, a sprawling government-controlled campus that has attracted global companies like DuPont, Sony, Honeywell and Lenovo.

What is unusual is that the Shanghai government and the company that operates the high-tech park have agreed to build a 50,000-square-foot building for Berkeley at no cost, with a five-year rent-free lease.

The Zhangjiang High-Tech Park also agreed to raise at least \$10 million a year over the next five years to finance Berkeley research in collaboration with Chinese institutions.

The agreement was made with Berkeley's College of Engineering, which has a reputation for training some of the world's most capable engineers and computer scientists. The center will be established for graduate students who gain admission to Berkeley's main campus, as well as Berkeley-appointed researchers. There is no plan to establish an undergraduate or degree-granting program here.

Several other Berkeley professional schools, including the Haas School of Business and the Law School, are also considering initiatives in China. Berkeley's chancellor, Robert Birgeneau, and the dean of its engineering school, S. Shankar Sastry, were in Shanghai last weekend to sign the agreement.

* A version of this article appeared in print on November 17, 2011, on page A8 of the New York edition with the headline: Berkeley Has Plan to Start A Program In Shanghai.

3.

China's web users are powering dissent

BBC News Asia

11 November 2011

Damian Grammaticas - Beijing correspondent

This week has seen an extraordinary surge in support for the artist and government critic,

Ai Weiwei, from people around China.

By midday on Friday, one of his staff members says, 7.57m yuan (£740,000; \$1.19m) had been donated to help the artist fight his tax demand from the government.

That is over a million dollars raised in little more than a week.

Without a doubt it is the appeals for help that have gone out over the internet that are behind this.

They have been posted by Ai Weiwei and others on China's microblogs.

More than 26,000 people have come forward.

Many of them are convinced the tax demand is an attempt to silence Mr Ai and they want to show their backing for him.

Famous for helping design Beijing's Bird's Nest stadium for the Olympics, Ai Weiwei has become one of the most vocal critics of the ruling Communist Party.

Before his arrest the internet was the tool that he used to spread his thoughts.

He would spend hours avidly posting on Twitter or his Chinese microblogs.

Since he was held in secret detention earlier this year, then presented with his tax demand, he has been confined to Beijing and is officially banned from giving interviews.

But he has returned to the internet and that is what has enabled Ai Weiwei to reach out to those sympathetic to him.

The numbers responding seem to have surprised even the artist himself.

China's authorities have demanded that he pay 15.22 million yuan. To fight the claim he has to put down half that sum as collateral.

Not long after midday on Friday he had raised just about enough and announced that he would challenge the demand.

Without his internet fundraising it is almost certain he would never have had the cash to be able to keep up his defiance.

'Healthy internet culture'

A few hundred miles away near Linyi city, another campaign of internet-powered dissent is playing out.

The blind, self-taught lawyer Chen Guangcheng will spend his birthday on Saturday still confined to his home by local authorities.

The building is floodlit, all communication with the outside world severed.

Chen Guangcheng spent four years in jail, convicted of organising a group to disturb traffic and damage property.

Most believe he was really targeted for highlighting official abuses like a campaign of

forced abortions by local authorities.

Since his release more than a year ago, he and his family have been kept under unofficial house arrest, illegally, human rights groups say.

Chen Guangcheng's supporters will almost certainly use the occasion of his birthday to try, yet again, to visit him.

For weeks now they have been turning up in small groups at his village.

It is an unprecedented campaign by ordinary Chinese to reach someone the authorities have placed under detention.

All those attempting to get to him are intercepted by guards posted around the village - and many have been beaten up - but still they keep trying.

Again it is the internet and mobile phones they are using to co-ordinate and organise their defiance.

Last weekend, Communist Party officials called in senior executives from more than three dozen internet, telecommunications and technology companies to discuss controlling the flow of information on the internet.

They included the bosses of the main microblog services.

It was reported that they were urged to develop a "healthy internet culture."

And on Friday the General Administration of Press and Publications, the government department which regulates the print media, published new rules that ban news media from reporting any information on the internet unless it can be verified.

"Unverified reports are on an upward trend, and to a certain extent that has undermined the government's image, disrupted the information order, reduced the credibility of the media and brought a strong social response," the agency said.

Those new rules are designed to counter what officials say is the spread of "rumours" that can harm social stability.

That, of course, is a genuine concern for many governments.

But in two different parts of China, the supporters of Ai Weiwei and Chen Guangcheng are finding a new space on the internet to rally backers for their causes.

It is no wonder that the issue of how to control China's hundreds of millions of microblog users seems to be becoming more and more of a headache for the Communist Party.

* More from Damian

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/correspondents/damiagrammaticas>

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