

# Tibet Society Newsletter

March 2018

*"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito"*  
His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

*News of the Tibet Society, what's happening in Tibet and the Tibetan Exile world, and news of His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

## Tibetan Uprising Day: Global Solidarity

Tibet Society, in collaboration with other Tibet groups, organised a demonstration on 10 March to mark the 59th anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan National Uprising—the day Tibetans rallied in Lhasa to resist communist China's brutal occupation of their country.

The protests and marches that take place today reaffirm Tibetans' opposition to this occupation with its military rule, tight surveillance and grave human rights abuses. Also remembered is the uprising which took place in Tibet in 1988.

The [Society's events in London](#) included a wreath-laying ceremony, Tibet Lobby Day to put pressure on Parliament, a Tibet freedom march and rally, and a cultural evening.

The London events were



organised jointly by Free Tibet, Students for a Free Tibet, Tibet Society and Tibetan Community UK. Hundreds of Tibetans and fellow protestors gathered for a rally outside Downing Street followed by a march to the Chinese Embassy where the demonstration included a one minute's silence and a prayer ceremony. Tibetans and supporters then went on to enjoy a cultural event.

Meanwhile, the Tibet

Society President Norman Baker spoke at an Uprising Day rally in Geneva.

In advance of Uprising Day, on 7 March, Tibet Lobby Day saw hundreds of Tibet supporters putting pressure on their Members of Parliament to take action for Tibetans.

The Tibet Society and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet (APPGT) UK held a [wreath-laying ceremony](#) on 7 March at the Innocent Victims' Memorial at Westminster Abbey at an event attended by MPs, representatives from diplomatic missions and civil society organisations as well as representatives of Tibet support groups in the UK.

The British Tibet support groups presented a [joint letter](#) to the Chinese embassy and [another](#) to the Prime Minister, Theresa May.

## Other News...

### Tibet Society Interns

Tibet Society, working with Members of Parliament, is working on an exciting Tibetan Internship Programme—a comprehensive 6 week programme which aims to build the capacity of Tibetans within the UK parliamentary system and to ensure a greater representation of Tibetans in Parliament. It offers an excellent, paid opportunity for Tibetans to gain experience into the parliamentary process by spending time in the office of an MP in the House of Commons. They may also assist the Tibet Society in developing and implementing advocacy and campaign strategies and they may choose to extend their experience by continuing to work with the Tibet Society on a voluntary basis.

### Parliamentary News

As the secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet (APPTG), Tibet Society works closely with Members of Parliament. On 13 March MPs submitted a written question to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office: *If he will request from the Chinese authorities a detailed report on the recent fire damage to the UNESCO-listed Jokhang temple in Lhasa, and if he will make a statement.* Tibet Society will update members when we receive a response on this urgent matter.

The Society is working with MPs on a letter to be sent to Liverpool FC—more on this next month! And finally....monks from Guyto Monastery in India performed prayers at a Losar celebration for the APPTG.

## Liverpool Fans Say “NO” to Tibet Water



A [campaign](#) launched by Tibet Society, in partnership with other Tibet groups and international consumer group SumOfUs, calling on Liverpool Football Club to scrap a controversial deal with a Chinese water company, has been backed by almost 90,000 supporters. The campaign aims to persuade giant premier

league Liverpool FC to pull out of their deal with the Chinese water bottling company Tibet Water Resources Limited.

5100 Tibet Glacial Spring Water, Tibet Water Resources Ltd's flagship product, is extracted 5,100 metres above sea level in the Tibetan Himalayas and sold internationally for large profits. Liverpool FC's deal is lucrative for both them and Tibet Water, especially as Liverpool FC has a growing Asian fan base.

The campaign highlights the ethical issues around working

with a company operating in occupied Tibet and which is subject to human rights abuses as well as major exploitation of its resources. And Tibet's water is needed by the millions of people who live downstream in neighbouring countries and for whom Tibet's rivers are their only source of water.

Tibet campaigners have written to Liverpool FC and are [handing out information](#) at Liverpool matches—and Liverpool FC fans have been proactive in contacting the club and Tibet groups to express their concerns about the deal.

# Tibet News

## Another Self-Immolation in Tibet



**Tsekho Tukchak**, also known as **Tsekho Topchag**, in his early 40s, self-immolated in Meruma township in Ngaba county in Sichuan. As he set himself alight, Tsekho called out, “Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama and freedom for Tibet”.

Tukchak is reported as being someone who “paid great attention to Tibetan issues and was very capable of speaking out about the cause”. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and his mother. Tukchak is the 153rd self-immolation that has taken place in Tibet. Denied the right to practice the religion of their choice, to hold peaceful protests, or to have any say in how their country is run or their resources exploited, many Tibetans have resorted to self-immolation as their only means of protest against the oppressive Chinese regime in their country. The Chinese authorities now routinely detain and often imprison family and colleagues of self-immolators.

## Shokjang Released!

**Shokjang**, the highly regarded Tibetan poet, lyricist, short story writer and essayist, also known as **Druklo**, has been released from prison after serving his full term of three years, although he remains under extreme scrutiny with a further two years “deprivation of political rights” and Tibet activists have expressed concern for his welfare and say they will continue to press for his full freedom.

His case has been followed by the world, with calls for his release from the international community. Shokjang has always asserted his innocence in letters written from his prison cell. He was sentenced on charges of “inciting separatism” and “disturbing social stability” following his arrest on 19 March 2015. The “Free Shokjang” campaign has been conducting a countdown to his release.

Shokjang has a history of activism. He organised student protests calling for greater freedom for Tibetans during the mass Tibetan uprisings in March 2008 and was later detained and held for a month for this and for publishing a banned literary magazine that criticized China’s policies.



## Keeping You Up To Date!

This is the first issue of our new Tibet Society newsletter which will be emailed to you monthly.

We will bring you news of the Society and its activities as well as news of Tibet. We’ll include snippets of interest and links to more information. So, watch this space! Next month we will be giving you an update on our current fundraising campaign with information about how much has been raised and—most importantly—how we are spending your money to improve the lot of Tibetans in Tibet and here in Britain.

## Fab New CDs to Support the Cause!

Tibet Society President Norman Baker has released a new album Staying Blue which features an eclectic mixture of styles, from blues to jazz, folk to country and western, with top musicians playing a whole host of instruments. Buy your copy from the Society for £10 (see below), and £2 goes to the Society.

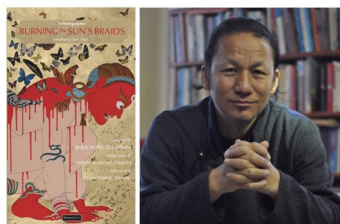
### Tibet Society Contact:

Gloria Montgomery,  
Head of Advocacy and Campaigns.  
Email: [advocacy@tibetsociety.com](mailto:advocacy@tibetsociety.com)  
tel: 020 7923 0021 / or 07377 890148

## Tibet Writings

The High Peaks Pure Earth website provides insightful commentary on Tibet-related news and issues as well as translations from writings in Tibetan and Chinese posted on blogs and social media from Tibet and the People's Republic of China—including that of the acclaimed Tibetan writer Woeser. Woeser’s blog is enormously popular – she is a Tibetan living in Beijing and is continually harassed by the Chinese government for her courageous writings, spending much of her life under house arrest.

Burning the Sun’s Braids: New Poetry from Tibet is a book of poetry by Tibetans, many of whom have been political prisoners, and translated by the



poet, writer, critic and translator Bhuchung D Sonam. Buy this exciting new book from the Society, price £5.

## HR Council in Geneva

The annual Human Rights Council is underway in Geneva and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, made specific mention of China during his report, saying “My Office continues to receive urgent appeals regarding arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, ill-treatment and discrimination, emanating from human rights defenders, lawyers, legislators, booksellers, and members of communities such as Tibetans and Uyghurs”.

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR) made a statement addressed to the President stating concerns about China’s revised law regarding Buddhism in Tibet which strengthens the Communist Party’s far-reaching power over people’s lives and beliefs. They said the law further threatens Tibetan Buddhism’s continued survival under Chinese rule.

In addition, a group of international HR organisations has written, “The Human Rights Council should take further steps to show China that undermining key legal protections for freedoms of expression and association and the rights to a fair trial, not to mention disappearing or arbitrarily detaining dissenting voices, is unacceptable behaviour”.