

## Documentaries on Tibet and Human Rights Violations: A Study

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### ABSTRACT

The Tibet – China discourse has been on global talk tables for long now. Tibetans have raised their voice to achieve self-determination and have peacefully fought for free nation. From establishing student bodies globally with the aim of restoring an autonomous statehood to organizing peaceful protests against atrocities by the Chinese government to writing for strengthening their protests, Tibetans in exile have attempted various measures to seek global help and support. Human Rights issues like death of political prisoners due to torture and lack of medical care, failure of People's Republic of China (PRC) to provide education, childhood mortality, forced sterilisation and maternal health in majority Tibetan areas, religious repression and Tibet's right to Self Determination have been covered by several documentary filmmakers. Documentary films have been an essential medium to highlight issues and draw attention of the policy makers. Several filmmakers have attempted to project this serious issue which requires global attention.

The study strives to analyze the documentaries made on the Human Rights issues in Tibet.

**Key Words:** China, Culture, Documentary, Human Rights, Language, Religious Freedom, Self Determination, Tibet

### INTRODUCTION

Tibet for long has faced repression by the People's Republic of China (PRC). Despite International pressure, human rights situation in Tibet remains grim. More and more issues involving Tibet have gained international attention. The protests against rising oppression and atrocities on Tibetans have forced PRC to highlight legal justifications before the international community. The Tibet in exile government and activists for free Tibet has made tireless efforts in raising issues of human rights violations in China occupied Tibet. (Democracy, 2016) However, because of strict surveillance by the Chinese authorities, it has been extremely difficult to establish information flow between Tibetans and Tibet population in exile. China ranks the lowest in the World Freedom Index (Classement de la liberté de la presse 2016 | RSF, 2016) which suggests its authoritarian characteristic. The two legal demands of Tibet; Right to Territorial Integrity and Right to Self Determination protect the nation's demand for economic, political, religious and cultural freedom. The International Commission of Jurists also recognises Tibet's historical claim to sovereignty. China believes the historical claim it makes and therefore, denies Tibet the right to determine its future. The right to self-determination in Chapter 1, Article 1 (2) of the UN Charter states: "The purposes of the

United Nations are: ...To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples..." and explains the logic behind Tibet's demand for self-determination. Importantly, Right to Self Determination is the right of the peoples and not of a group or an individual. Therefore, Tibet's characteristic as a distinct group supports its demand for self-determination. The United Nations on several instances like in 1961 and 65 has also asked China to respect Tibet's right to self-determination.

In 1980 Hu Yaobang visited Tibet and conducted a survey on the effects of 20 years of communist rule. He found forced collectivisation had reduced the economy to nothing. The inadequate infrastructure and total dependency on China reminded him of colonisation. His six point reform policies suggested that the Tibet Autonomous Region should exercise its autonomy, Tibetan farmers must be exempted from taxation, tailored economic policies for Tibet must be drafted, central government should provide more subsidies for the improvement of local economy, all efforts should be made to develop and preserve Tibetan culture, education & science and participation of Tibetans in local administration should increase and Han cadres must be withdrawn. (Schwartz, 1994) War propaganda has been an inseparable part of covert operations carried out by authorities. Tibet too has witnessed the same. From the beginning, the Chinese government has claimed that the People's Liberation of Army had liberated Tibetan nomads from abusive monks who ill-treated them like feudal serfs. (B.Roberts & A.Roberts,

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2009) However, it is worth noticing that as of December 2015, out of the total number of 2081 known Tibetan political prisoners, 967 are monastic including those detained, disappeared or sentenced. (Democracy, 2016)

More than 140 Tibetans have self-immolated as a resistance against Chinese repression (Democracy, 2016) Chinese authorities have accused the Dalai clique for inciting the immolations. Tenzin Phuntsok, self-immolated in December 2011 while protesting the Chinese policies and rule in the Karma Township Chamdo, Tibet Autonomous Region (Tibetan Dies after Self Immolation in TAR – Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, 2011) Chinese authorities have taken punitive measures against families and villages of self-immolators. (Annual Report | United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2016)

Some Tibetans have become frustrated because of the prolonged torture done by the Chinese authorities. After the execution of two Tibetan prisoners for attempting to escape from Drapchi prison in May 1990, several printed posters were pasted in the streets of Lhasa which threatened violence against government officials. "If directly or indirectly any harm comes to the life of one of the patriotic Tibetan heroes presently in prison, then we will not be able to forsake the unity of Tibetan race, and the Chinese who are chiefly responsible will receive retribution without hesitation. This is a warning to the communist Chinese invaders that they will have to bear complete responsibility." (Schwartz, 1994) The predominance of religion and the ideology of non-violence have prevented them from starting an effective independence movement.

On 6 March 1992, two days after the UNHRC voted against a resolution directly criticising China for human rights violations in Tibet, Tiger-Leopard Youth Association issued a letter addressed to the Secretary General of the UN, US president and the Tibetan government in exile hinting that Tibetans were considering violence in their struggle for independence. (Schwartz, 1994)

Documentary captures the actual, photographs it, edits it and shapes it. It then provides form and pattern on the basis of direct observation. (Gierson, 1946) When the filmmakers and critics in the first world countries during the 1920s and 30s started using the term documentary regularly as a discrete practice of filmmaking, it was perceived as a form of democratic and social pedagogy. (Kahana, 2008) The filmmakers are able to raise social discussion, address a public belonging to many spheres and impose itself as a

form of mass communication. (Chaney, 1993) It is essentially a transitional medium and carries fragments of social reality from one group to another, one time to another and from one place to another. (Kahana, 2008)

Several documentary films have been made on the Tibet issue by independent filmmakers as well as Tibet government in exile with the objective of highlighting the history, reasons and consequences of the Tibet issue. Several filmmakers have attempted to raise concerns of the Tibetan population inside Tibet and in exile.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out Human Rights violation issues addressed by the films
2. To examine the issue of Right to Self Determination addressed by the films

### **METHODOLOGY**

Thematic Content analysis of four documentary films made from 2004-2008 was done. The following films were selected for the study:

1. Buddhism What Remains of Us by Francois Prevost & Hugo Lattulippe (2004)
2. Dispatches - Undercover in Tibet by Tash Despa & Jezza Neumann (2008)
3. Leaving Fear behind by Dhondup Wangchen & Jigme Gyatso (2008)
4. Tibet – unveiling the Truth – the sufferings in Tibet by Golong Rinchen Sangpo (2008)

The above mentioned films were selected on the basis of a simple criterion i.e. 'Films made inside Tibet'. The period of study has been deemed essential in the history of Tibet as the country saw one of the biggest uprising in 2008 followed by several self-immolation instances and stricter surveillance in China.

During the analysis of each film, 4 broad provisional categories Religion, Freedom, Dignity of life and Culture & Language were identified. Each provisional category was further analysed and the following 8 themes emerged:

1. Tibet before and after annexation by China
2. Religious Freedom
3. Culture & Language
4. Torture
5. Nomadic Life and Chinese Rehabilitation Programmes
6. Exploitation of Natural Resources
7. Support from International community against human rights violations
8. Self Determination

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The themes that emerged after elaboration and refinement of categories have been analysed in detail below.

### Tibet before and after annexation by China

In 'Unveiling the truth – The sufferings in Tibet', the old interviewees have a common experience to share. They narrate how China exploited the rich and wealthy Tibetans when it annexed Tibet in 1959. The Tibetans were tortured and killed. "Our life became very much like that of a wandering dog in the distant places. There was not enough food or clothing. We faced many problems such as being subjected to the three punishments of squeezing, beating and rounding up. Therefore, forceful ruled and being made to plead guilty for something we were not responsible for." (Unveiling the truth – The sufferings in Tibet) The old generation share their stories about how their parents were arrested and killed by the Chinese authorities on no charges. Many of them were not allowed to even visit them. Many Tibetans were orphaned and were left to starve. "Hat of being an evil person" was put on several people and caused great suffering. They also agree that Machu (Yellow River) was blocked by human corpses in areas such as Dengshong, Denglag and Domdoe. Many sons were made to dance at the cremation sites of their fathers and vice versa.

Many interviewees told that the Chinese authorities confiscated their wealth and arrested them. Several lost their families and were orphaned at a very young age and have struggled for dignity of life since then. Scarcity of food compelled Tibetans to feed on grass and excreted dung. Many interviewees were sentenced to imprisonment soon after the annexation and they spent 7 years in the prison. The troops left them with no food, no clothes and no wealth.

Only about 5% of Tibet population survived around 1958. Many monks and layman Tibetans were arrested and tortured. "They kill the people they want to kill and arrest the ones they want to arrest." (Unveiling the Truth– The sufferings in Tibet) The Interviewees strongly feel that China will continue to torture them and their suffering will never end. They also feel unification with their compatriots in exile will help them attain freedom and only then will their suffering end. They suggest Tibetans inside and outside Tibet must act towards getting Tibet back into their own hands. They think collective action is the only method. (Leaving Fear Behind)

The older generation thinks if the Dalai Lama returns to Tibet, if all Tibetans are able to meet him, only then he could work towards attaining freedom for Tibet. It is also revealed that many young Tibetans under the Chinese have not heard the Dalai Lama. They are over whelmed to watch the video smuggled by the narrator. (What Remains of Us) On one hand the Old generation is deeply worried about the safety of the Dalai Lama if he returns to Tibet and on the other they also see his return as the only hope. The younger generation expressed their desire to escape from Tibet to either India or Nepal through the treacherous journey across the Himalayas. (Dispatches - Under Cover in Tibet) Every year at least 3000 Tibetans attempt to escape. One such interviewee who managed to escape with great difficulty sharing his experience said that on 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2006, 75 refugees including 13 children attempted the one month trek. Chinese bodyguards spotted the group. They were armed with guns and started to open fire at the group. The Western climbers recorded the action. They also helped Lobsang Chocden hide who eventually had a successful escape. One Jamyang Samten, was arrested and taken to prison where he alleges he was imprisoned, interrogated and tortured. "If I made a minor mistake during interrogation, they would beat me with chains." He was released after 5 months with a final warning. He then managed to escape to India. (Dispatches -Undercover in Tibet)

### Religious Freedom

In all the films, the interviewees are of the opinion that Religious freedom in Tibet is nothing but a blatant lie. They argue "If religious freedom was granted then Tibetans should be allowed to meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama." They are forced to forget the Dalai Lama. (Unveiling the Truth – The sufferings in Tibet) According to the Tibetans, it constitutes a breach of Samaya. Such official injunctions are unpalatable, yet nothing can be done about it. Every interviewee in the films expresses the desire to meet the Dalai Lama at least once before they die. "The Dalai Lama is the Buddha of the Land of Snows, he is the Lama of the Land of Snows. He is the Leader of the land of Snows. The manifestation of Avalokitesvara is the Dalai Lama. If we cannot have faith in him, then it is the same as having no freedom of religion." In 'What Remains of Us', majority interviewees hear the Dalai Lama for the first time in their life through the message the narrator secretly carries to Tibet. "Today I have met you! I feel the sun of the world shines once more. Keep me in your heart, have the strength to build peace in the world." The interviewees in 'Leaving Fear

Behind' consider the Dalai Lama to be the most precious for all Tibetans and they feel there is no religious freedom in Tibet because he is not in the homeland. They keep him in all their prayers and have tremendous faith in him. "I only have to hear his name and I am filled with faith, devotion and deep, deep sadness. The situation is hopeless, I feel exhausted. It is as though I were walking alone, with no destination, endlessly." (Leaving Fear Behind) Several interviewees share that they do not have the permission to possess the photos of the Dalai Lama so they keep them secretly. If the government finds them, they confiscate them or even arrest the person. The narrator in the film tries to find the photograph of the Dalai Lama at a road side shop but is unable to spot a single photograph. She spots the photograph of fake Panchen Lama and confronts the vendor if he is aware. There are instances quoted by the interviewees about the arrests of monks and nuns. "Gekyoe Nyima Woesser the head disciplinarian of the Tingkyab monastery was arrested for demonstrating his loyalty for Tibet. He was later sentenced to 8 years imprisonment in the reform – through-labour camp in Siling. He was even restricted to meet his family or relatives." Tibet has one religion and that is the mantra. The interviewees also spoke about how the local authorities and governors are taken to China and are forced to announce publicly that they do not wish for the Dalai Lama's return. Tibetans who agree to do this are highly paid and they have to sign legal document. The Tibetans agree that this helps China in painting the picture they want the world to believe.

"In Lhasa one is living on edge all the times. If I am in my room reading, I have to be constantly careful because the security officers in the monastery come to check regularly. If you delay in opening the door even by a few seconds there is trouble. They force their way in and interrogate you. If they find any speeches of the Dalai Lama in your room, they monitor the political stance and don't need a reason to arrest you."

### **Culture & Language**

The Tibetans are running associations that help them preserve the language and culture in the villages. The Interviewees say they were worried about losing their culture and therefore started such associations in Tibet. Despite unfavourable conditions, they have managed to run these associations. They teach Tibetan language as they feel it is under threat. They believe they are a minority and China has relocated Han Chinese in Tibet. Tibetans deny all claims that China makes about improving the Tibetan culture and

preserving the language. They believe that if China wants to preserve the language and culture, then it must withdraw all Chinese people living in Tibet areas. Expressing his insecurity about losing the culture and language, the Dalai Lama in a speech said, "Our peaceful culture is in danger, our people is facing genocide. Even the physical existence of Tibet is threatened with extinction."

The Tibetans are insecure about the safety of their culture and language as they tell that even in Tibet offices, they speak Chinese. In the universities, the Tibetan students are forced to learn Chinese. They feel it has become useless to learn Tibetan and also that younger generation finds difficulty in speaking Tibetan. China has built schools in the old areas like Golak and Tibetans are forced to send their children to these schools. It is noted by them that the old and new generations do not speak common language. Many Tibetans believe that it is better to escape to India and receive learning at schools established by the Dalai Lama.

### **Torture**

The United Nations repertoire on torture says that the use of torture is still widespread in China. However, China claims that the government has made efforts to control torture. A former political prisoner explains how Chinese authorities use steel wire to torture forced labourers if the work assigned to them is not completed on time. "They forced me to take off all my clothes. Then they laid me down on the floor and whipped me from head to toe. The steel wire struck me all over the length of my body." (Dispatches - Under cover in Tibet) Many Tibetans suffer psychological damage as a consequence of torture. Such techniques are used to reinforce their claim on Tibet. Chinese use handcuffs in different ways. There are types that bind just the two thumbs together. Others are separated so that they cut into the flesh of the wrists. They handcuff the person and hang her/him from the ceiling and then beat the person with iron bars. But if the person is left hanging from the ceiling for too long, the hands get ripped off because of the body weight. To prevent this they use a metal device to hang people which can auto adjust according to the person's height. This prevents hands from getting ripped off but allows the cuffs to bite the flesh (Dispatches - Under cover in Tibet)

The Chinese also use Dian Bang, an electric baton. They throw the person in a pool of water and use the baton. When the person is under water, the electricity travels from the sole to the crown and when the person is out of water, she /he feels

pain where the electric prod has touched. (Dispatches - Under cover in Tibet)

Imprisonment is also a psychological torture. Many interviewees complain that once they are released from confinement, they do not get any job and are unable to earn a living or pay for medical care.

Chinese authorities force women to undergo sterilisation. Over half a dozen women from one village underwent forced sterilisation. The Chinese policemen visit households to fetch women. If anyone resists, they are threatened. The women are either forced to pay huge fine or they are forced to get sterilised. "Those who can't pay the fine have to have a sterilisation. If you have good connections you can buy a sterilisation certificate but those who don't have the money, have to have the forced sterilisation whether they like it or not. I cried when I was lying on the bed after the sterilisation, I cried thinking that I was forced to have a sterilisation when there was nothing wrong with me. I was feeling sick and giddy and couldn't look up. It was so painful. Apparently they cut the fallopian tubes and stitch them up. When they opened me up they pulled them out by the roots. It was agonising. They didn't use anaesthesia. They just smeared something on my stomach and carried out the sterilisation and I was only given Aspirin for the pain there was no other drug." (Dispatches - Undercover in Tibet) Coercive birth policies, forced abortions, sterilisation and tracking of menstrual cycle are regular techniques of torture.

An interviewee in 'Undercover in Tibet' tells that China ordered them to attend conference about socialism. The main purpose of the conference was to carry out mass sterilisation and to fine those who were with more than two children. Five of them protested, they shouted for independence and demanded China to leave Tibet. They were immediately arrested and taken to the nearest town. They wanted to know if any American or British groups had encouraged the protest. Three of them were convicted for 15 years. They also lost their voting rights for 5 years after the release.

### **Nomadic Life and Chinese Rehabilitation Programmes**

The interviewees, majorly Tibetan Nomads express deep dissatisfaction over the forced rehabilitation programme by the Chinese. The nomads are being forced to settle down in concrete houses against their will. "In the old society, we were fortunate enough to enjoy complete freedom to live-in or visit any place we wanted. (Unveiling the Truth-Situation in Tibet)

Many agreed that they were stripped off their freedom of movement. Nomads are not allowed to graze their cattle in the pastures. The Chinese argue that this has been done under the pretext of setting up civilised cities. The buildings look decent from the outside but the condition inside is horrible. Chinese also argue that relocation is important because living in mountains is difficult. On the contrary, the Tibetan interviewees argue that the Chinese are merely interested in their land and valuable natural resources and therefore China wants to exploit the same. It is also considered illegal to refuse the offer made by the Chinese. (Leaving Fear Behind)

The interviewees feel China has increasingly controlled their Nomadic way of life. The government claims that rehabilitation is being done to improve the living standards of the nomads but any such claims are rejected by the interviewees. The living conditions are grim. They say they are made to relocate in isolated locations which are not connected with the city. There are no schools and hospitals. Houses are in a bad shape and one can see the noticeable police control around the settlements. The land is confiscated and the nomads can no longer return to the pasturelands. They also do not believe the claims made by China that such measures are being undertaken to protect the flora and fauna of the place. "Life here is incredibly hard. People here are suffering from hunger and hardship. They have no jobs and no land. The only way they can fill their empty stomachs is by stealing. Nobody wanted to move here. If you ask questions dressed like a Chinese, they won't dare to tell you the truth. We are violently oppressed and don't even have the basic human rights. Not even Freedom of speech. The government makes false claims about its achievements and people can be wrongly convicted for crimes they don't commit. It is just like living through the Cultural Revolution again. Everybody is so depressed, they look awful. Their faces have become pale, their eyes are sunken. Everybody is afraid of speaking the truth." (Dispatches - Undercover in Tibet)

### **Exploitation of Natural Resources**

Tibet is a very rich and powerful country because of the landmass and the natural resources. The interviewee in 'Unveiling the Truth - The Sufferings in Tibet' says "The Yak is dear to you not because you love the animal, but because you yearn for its blood." Tibetans feel Chinese communists have no sympathy for Tibet; they only want to feed on the rich natural resources of Tibet. They reveal, they are forced to stay in

concrete houses and the nomadic community is forcefully being made to settle down in these "socialist villages".

Everything is up for sale in Tibet. Gold, Silver, Largest source of Uranium and even oil has been found. Tibet has become a goldmine and a garbage dump. Tibet accuses China for taking all its wealth. (What remains of us)

### **Support from International community against human rights violations**

Several messages of non – violence were sent to the United Nations by three generations of Tibetans but they have been ignored and they have received no response. They only received acknowledgment of receipts.

In response to the 1989 protests, China imposed the Marshall Law. U.N. and U.S. condemned the move by China as reports showed extreme torture by the Chinese authorities. Since then, China has restricted media and reporting. Free Tibet 2008 campaign by the Americans resulted in higher control over the foreigners. The Tibetans desire support from the international community. They urge the world not to believe the picture China paints before the world.

In 'Undercover in Tibet,' the interviewee is of the opinion that, had the western climbers not witnessed the killings of Tibetans while they were trying to escape to India, the world would not even know.

The film 'What remains of Us' questions the role of United Nations on Nov 24, 1950, March 1988 and 2008. The film also discloses the appeal letters sent by the Dalai Lama to the UN informing the organization about the human rights violated by China. In the letters he has written about several cases of murder. Life and property are no longer safe. The Tibetans emphasise that outside world must look into the matter.

Tibetans reveal that they received information about foreign countries particularly America providing help to Tibet but it did not translate into something very useful. The older generation looks up to the West for support.

### **Self Determination**

The films 'Under cover in Tibet' and 'What Remains of Us' were shot undercover and arrest warrant against the filmmaker of 'Unveiling the truth – The sufferings in Tibet' was issued soon after the Chinese authorities came to know about his intention of making a film on the atrocities and oppression faced by the people of Tibet. However, Golong Rinchen Sangpo managed to

escape to India. Dhondun Wangchen (Leaving Fear Behind) recorded 108 interviews in the eastern areas of Tibet from 2007-08 and captured the opinion of the Tibetans on the 2008 Olympic Games in China. Soon after filming, he along with his assistant was arrested. Despite the threat people expressed themselves hoping that the violation of their human rights will stop. (Leaving Fear Behind)

"No matter how much the Chinese government claims that there is freedom and happiness in Tibet, the fact remains that they do not allow a mother and her son to meet every day. We (Tibetans inside Tibet) dare not rise up against the Chinese but we do certainly know what suffering and oppression means. In short, would anyone describe it as happiness when parents and children are not allowed to meet each other? Is this really freedom?" (Unveiling the truth–The sufferings in Tibet) After the annexation of Tibet in 1959, several rich Tibetans were sentenced to life on false charges. They were left with no food, no clothes and no wealth. "A hat of being an evil person" was given to several. "Chinese government admonishes the Tibetans that they should not speak negative things about the Tibet to the outside world and should say that there is happiness and freedom in Tibet. There is no freedom." (Unveiling the truth – The sufferings in Tibet)

The situation in Tibet is dangerous and grim. Tibetans explain that they could only support the Beijing Olympics had China not misrepresented the situation. They express that the repression is growing stronger and Tibet has not witnessed any freedom promised by China before the International community. There is no freedom of speech. Lhasa is heavily guarded by CCTV cameras and is under close surveillance. Lhasa is a highly militarised city, "talking politics on the streets can put you and your family in jeopardy." (What Remains of Us) "We shall pursue our peaceful struggle for freedom. We struggle for freedom, not against the Chinese people. It is not a battle to win or lose. The issue is the survival of a precious heritage that we happen to possess. Unfortunately many Chinese remain ignorant of this," the message from the Dalai Lama in the film 'What Remains of Us' emotionally moves all the stakeholders in the film. The interviewees express deep desire to meet the Dalai Lama at least once before they die. Majority of the old Tibetans believe that only if the Dalai Lama returns to Tibet, will they be able to attain freedom because Tibet was free when the Dalai Lama was in his homeland. However, many of them are even sceptical about the Dalai Lama's

safety. Many stakeholders in the film 'What Remains of Us' also feel hopeless and powerless. The old generation expresses its helplessness and the young generation expresses the desire to escape to India.

Tsangyu Wangdhev (Unveiling the Truth – The sufferings in Tibet) says "Although I am physically under the Chinese rule today, in my hearts and hearts, I crave for freedom." In the film 'What Remains of Us', on being asked by the interviewer to express their opinion, many Tibetans say they cannot say anything because China is crushing them. They say that they do not have the right to raise heads as there is constant pressure on them and China is too strong.

The interviewee believes that Tibet was always self-sufficient and China has destroyed its religion. They strongly feel that there was sufficient to feed themselves in their homeland and China has done nothing but exploit them.

Tibetans also feel it is important to follow the Dalai Lama's Middle way policy. They show deep gratitude towards their religious head the Dalai Lama. They believe that the spirituality, their compassion which is deeply connected with Buddhism is also a source of inspiration for international community as it propagates peace. The interviewees strongly believe that Tibet was never a part of China and deserves freedom. Majority of the people inside Tibet believe in the middle path policy which aims at complete autonomy. The majority believe that Tibet has the right to self-determination as its unique culture, religion and language must be protected. They also strongly believe that China has violated several human rights violations and dignity of life has suffered for long.

## **CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

This paper has attempted to study the issues of human rights violations in Tibet as highlighted by the filmmakers in the films.

It is obvious from the analysis of the films that China has continued to violate human rights in Tibet for more than five decades now. Tibetans are under constant monitoring by the Chinese authorities. They live under surveillance of heavily armed police personnel. Their freedom of speech and expression is curtailed. They are not permitted to even carry photographs of their religious leaders. Any such material, if found, is confiscated and the person is arrested on false charges and then tortured in detention.

They are not permitted to establish any contact with the outside world and compatriots in exile. If they are caught escaping to India or Nepal, they

are captured, interrogated and tortured or killed. Foreign media is restricted and China only communicates information it wants the world to believe. China has tried to wrongly project Tibet and Tibetans many times. It tried to present a 'Happy Tibet' before the world during the Beijing Olympics but all its efforts failed when 33 monks accidentally got an opportunity to interact with a team of international media delegates. They shouted free Tibet slogans and also shared heart wrenching stories. 2008 uprising was a result of the frustration amongst Tibetans against the atrocities of the government.

The living conditions are grim. The Tibetan nomads have been forced to relocate to distant locations which are completely cut off from the city. Their lands have been forcibly acquired by the Chinese under the pretext of development and infrastructure building. Tibetans nomads who are skilled farmers lose their land and cattle and do not get an alternate job. This has left many unemployed and economically deprived. They receive negligible economic assistance from the authorities.

Tibetans do not get adequate health care and are deprived of traditional Tibetan education. Women are subject to undergo forced sterilisation. Political prisoners are physically and psychologically tortured and are also deprived of their voting rights. Tibetans have no religious freedom. The Chinese authorities have forced them to denounce the Dalai Lama but the only hope with which they are motivated to live is the return of the Dalai Lama. They believe that the only solution to their problems is the Dalai Lama.

Tibetan culture and language is under serious threat as Han Chinese population has grown in many Tibetan areas. China has even renamed Tibet and it is now called Xixang.

Tibetans also urge the international community to build pressure on China to improve human rights conditions. Tibet also raises concern over the little effort made by the United Nations and the United States of America. Several cases of detention of Tibetan protestors abroad have been seen in the recent past.

A state must protect the population it governs. It must promote the economic, cultural, social and spiritual welfare of the people. Above all, it must encourage human rights and fundamental freedoms and must promote self-determination and equal rights. Therefore, when a State represses people, curbs their fundamental freedoms, destroys their culture and economically exploits them, it no longer has the right to claim

the territorial integrity. (Democracy, 2016). Unfortunately China has failed to perform any state duty and therefore, has no rights to govern the people of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama's middle path policy has been accepted by most of the Tibetans who want complete autonomy and not independence from China. However, China has failed to improve human rights conditions in Tibet and therefore, any solution to the Tibet discourse is farfetched. Tibet is a large landmass with unique people and culture. Its biggest strength is its religion and faith in the Dalai Lama. The country has the right to self-determination but no efforts are seen from China's side to give complete autonomy to Tibet.

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