

Study of Spiritual Head and Major Departments Under Kashag of Buddhist Government in Exile in India

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to describe about Buddhism from what has been learned in the different religions in different sessions. It presents an introduction to Buddhist spiritual head, major departments under Kashag and institutional departments of Buddhist Government in Exile in India. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the head of state and the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. On 10 December, 1989, his Holiness was awarded with the Noble Peace Prize. Furthermore it will discuss the spread of Buddhism and the diverse sects that developed in South and East Asia including some of their core beliefs and practices. The discourse will then jump to Buddhism present in the western world, specifically in the United States. The Kashag (Cabinet) is the apex executive organ of the Central Tibetan Administration and its members are ministers of the CTA. The Charter of the Tibetans in Exile stipulates that the Kashag should have a maximum of eight members.

INTRODUCTION

Tibetan population is the main stay of Tibetan Community. It remains to be an important theme of academic research and concern of scholars and scientists belonging to various disciplines. A number of research themes is spatial dimensions of Tibetan population and their religion appear at national and regional level. These are closely associated with the study of religious angle. Many anthropologists, sociologists as well as geographers have contributed generously in this regard. The contribution of different scholars are quite note worthy in the field of various aspects of the Tibetan population as a whole. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the head of state and the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. He was born on 6 July, 1935, to a yeoman family, at the hamlet of Taktser in north-eastern Tibet namely Amdo province. At the age of two, the child named Lhamo Dhondup was recognized as the incarnation of the 13 Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso.

Dalai Lama is a Mongolian Title meaning "Ocean of Wisdom" and the lineage of the Dalai Lama are the manifestations of the Bodhisatva of compassion. On 10th December, 1989, His Holiness was awarded with the Noble peace Prize. The Noble Committee stressed that the Dalai Lama, in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet, consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people. His Holiness is a man of peace. His Holiness has travelled to more than 65 countries and met with their presidents, prime ministers and crowned rulers of major nations. He has held dialogues with the heads of different religion and many well known scientists. From 1959 to till date, His Holiness has received over 150 honorary doctorates, prizes, awards etc.

In recognition of his message of peace nonviolence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibilities and compassion are considered. His Holiness has written more than 50 books. His Holiness describes himself as a "Simple Buddhist Monk". In his lectures and tours around the world, his simplicity and compassionate nature visibly touches everyone who meets him. His messages are of love, compassion and forgiveness. The Kashag (Cabinet) is the apex executive organ of the Central Tibetan Administration and its members are ministers of the CTA. The Charter of the Tibetans in Exile stipulates that the Kashag should have a maximum of eight members. Among the different department of the Kashag, the department of Religion and Culture seeks to preserve and promote Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage which is "on the verge of extinction in its own homeland. The Department of Home is totally responsible for all rehabilitation schemes for Tibetan exiles. The Department of Finance runs 25 business units to generate funds for the smooth running of the CTA. Department of Education established in 1960 under the name "Council for Tibetan Education".

The Department of Security has two units. One unit takes care of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's security while the other looks after new Tibetan refugees and monitors developments in Tibet and China. The Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) educates the Tibetans and

international public opinion to the political, human rights and environmental conditions in Tibet. The Department of Health runs 61 Primary Health Care Centre's and six referral hospitals in almost all the Tibetan communities in India and Nepal.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are following:

1. To study about spiritual and political head of the Tibetan Government in Exile.
2. To study Major Departments under the Kashag.
3. To study Institutional Bodies of Buddhist Government in exile in India.

DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on secondary data as well as primary data. The study area map was prepared with the help of ArcGis software. This study was guided by the different methodology like quantitative as well as qualitative. For compilation tabulation, mapping and analysis of data for cartographic techniques were pressed into service. The term methodology in a broad sense includes the procedure adopted for the study of any area or problem. In social sciences, the term applies to procedures adopted to carry out a given research problem. An appropriate methodology in any scientific investigation is a vital part of the research design. Tools of research, basic assumptions about the problem and procedures to be followed to solve a given problem constitute a methodological framework. The framework for research varies from problems to problem and from investigator to investigator.

Study Area

Himachal Pradesh known in the earlier times as "Dev Bhumi" (which means abode of Gods) lies in the heart of Western Himalayas. Extending between latitudes 30° 22' N to 33°12' N and longitudes 75° 47' E to 79° 4' E longitudes, it covers an area of 55673 Sq. kilometers. It shares its borders with Jammu and Kashmir in the North, China in the East, Uttrakhand in the Southeast, Haryana in the South-West and Punjab in the West. One sixth of its total border constitutes the international boundary with China. The entire territory of Himachal Pradesh is mountainous with altitude varying from 350 to 7000 meters above the mean sea level. Himachal Pradesh is a hilly and mountainous tract. Geographically, it forms a part of Punjab, Himalaya's as well as Western Himalayas and also presents an intricate mosaic of numerous mountain ranges, valleys and hills. The state is interspersed with four majestic ranges namely, Dhauladhar, Pir Panjal, Great Himalayan and Zaskar. There are five mighty perennial rivers namely Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej and Yamuna that drain the state. The five rivers which flow through the state divide it into five river basins. These rivers while gifting the state with fertile river valleys are also the source of vast hydro-power potentials (Fig.1).



Figure 1 : Location of Tibetan Settlements.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tibetan population is the main stay of Tibetan Community. It remains to be an important theme of academic research and concern of scholars and scientists belonging to various disciplines. A number of research themes is spatial dimensions of Tibetan population and their religion appear at national and regional level. These are closely associated with the study of religious angle. Many anthropologists, sociologists as well as geographers have contributed generously in this regard. The contribution of different scholars are quite note worthy in the field of various aspects of the Tibetan population as a whole.

In 1968 Thubten Jigma Norbu and Colin, Turnbull pointed out or emphasized about Tibet, its history, religion and people. He tried to emphasize about the monastic rule as well as discipline of religion. In 1969, His Holiness has pointed out about the culture and religion of Tibetan people. In 1972 R.A Stein highlighted about the teachings of Bon religion of the Tibet which was ancient and carliest religion of Tibet before the existence of Buddhism in Tibet. In 1980 Srisha, Patel pointed out the anthropogenetic study of Tibetan refugees in Orissa.

In 1981 L.C. Holloway made his contribution regarding the dietary system of the people of Tibetan community. In 1982 storm, Alex Kristian made the contribution in his M.Phil dissertation related to the cultural continuity among Tibetan refugees in India. He in his dissertation gave more emphasis upon the cultural aspects of Tibetan refugees.

A famous sociologist Girija, Saklani in 1984 in his famous book "The uprooted Tibetans in India," gave a detailed account of Tibetans pertaining to the different aspects like family and marriage system, about the teachings of Tibetan religion as well as social hierarchy and generational change among the Tibetans youth. He also highlighted and describes the various stages of a refugee situation like refugees on the move, in transitory camps, post rehabilitation, as a distinct ethnic group in a new society and finally, assimilation of the refugees into the host country. In 1985 another famous scholar Rinjin, Dorje in his book "Food in Tibetan Life" highlighted about the food system in Tibetan life. He has given more emphasis upon the various dietary habits which are taken by them in exile also. In 1986 Deone, Dorsh, Marie also gave more emphasis upon the survivalness of the cultural system of the Tibetans refugees in exile.

Carol Diana 1990 in his Doctoral thesis work emphasized that Mahayana is the famous sect of Buddhist Philosophy and gave more stress on the teachings of Mahayana. In the same year 1990 Tanka, B. Subba also highlighted in his book - "Flight and Adaptation"- Tibetan Refugees in the Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalaya about the adaptations of Tibetan Refugees in the Himalayas. He has given focus on many aspects of the Tibetan refugees in terms of Assimilation versus Identity as well as social and economic adaptation in the different settlements of India. In relation to this aspect he has made a comparative study of economic adaptation of the settlements of South India. In 1993 famous Tibetan writer Isepak Rigzin in his book "Festivals of Tibet" gave the more emphasis of the various rituals and festivals which are solemnized by the Tibetan community in Tibet as well as in the exile. Famous Indian writer "Jagmohan Balokhra" 1991 also mentioned the rituals, dialect, and diet, dress of the Khampas people of Lahaul and Spiti and Kinnaur, who are settled from Tibet. S.K. Sharma in his book "Encyclopedia of Tibet" in 1996 also gave the detailed accounts of every aspect of Tibetan people. In 1999 Tsering, Wangma Zara Houshmand in their book "Lhasa Moon" the Tibetan cook book also pointed out about the various dishes or dietary system of Tibet in'a detailed account.

In 2000 another scholar Jeremy, Russell also emphasized in his book (Dharamshala-Tibetan Refugee) about the various institute of Tibetans like Tibetan library, Namgyal monastery, institute of Buddhist dialects, Norbunlingka Institute, Dolma ling nunnery and famous one Tibetan Institute of performing arts (TIPA). He has highlighted upon the functions of these institutes which are located in the exile. In 2001 Traley Kyabgon also pointed out about the teachings of various sects of Buddhism philosophy like Hinyana, Mahayana and Bajrayana. In 2003 the famous two scholars namely Dagmar, Bernstorff and Hubertus Von Welck also highlighted in their book. The Tibetan Diaspora" about the problems faced by the Tibetans. In 2004 the Central Tibetan Administration has advocated the project work under the title "Tibetan Community in Exile"

Integrated Development Plan-III. In such plan C.T.A. has focused upon the various aspects related to Tibetan community in exile-like improvement upon school education, rural infrastructure, provision of basic health care. In the same year 2004 S. Sen, P.S. Chopra, and J.K. Chopra collectively in their book namely "Unique quintessence of society of India have mentioned in detail about the Buddhist religion. In such particular book they have made a comparative study of two religious sects of Hinayana and Mahayana of Buddhist philosophy. As per the version of writers Hinayana is atheist. In it the place of God has been given Karma or the essentials of the Dharma. In 2004 Planning Commission, Central Tibetan Administration is also made an analytic study under the text "Tibetan Community in exile". Demographic and Socio Economic issues (1998-2001) in such text, specific focus was given on the demographic profile and scenario of various Tibetan settlements in India.

DATA ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The 14th Dalai Lama- Spiritual and Political Head of the Tibetan Government in Exile

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the head of state and the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. He was born on 6 July, 1935, to a yeoman family, at the hamlet of Taktser in north-eastern Tibet namely Amdo province. At the age of two, the child named Lhamo Dhondup was recognized as the incarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso. Dalai Lama is a Mongolian Title meaning "Ocean of Wisdom" and the lineage of the Dalai Lama are the manifestations of the Bodhisatva of compassion. On 10 December, 1989, His Holiness was awarded with the Noble peace Prize. The Noble Committee stressed that the Dalai Lama, in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet, consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people. His Holiness is a man of peace. His Holiness has travelled to more than 65 countries and met with their presidents, prime ministers and crowned rulers of major nations. He has held dialogues with the heads of different religion and many well known scientists.

His Holiness began his monastic education at the age of six and at the age of 23rd, he sat for his final examination in the Jokhang Temple, LHASA, during the annual "Monlam festival" in 1959. He passed with honours and was awarded the Lharampa the highest level Geshe degree (A Doctorate of Buddhist Philosophy). In 1992, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama issued guidelines for the constitution of future free Tibet. In it he announced that when Tibet becomes free, the immediate task will be" set up an interim government whose first responsibility will be to elect a constitutional assembly to frame and adopt Tibet's democratic constitution. On that day His Holiness will transfer all the historical, political authority to the interim president and live as an ordinary citizen. In 1987, His Holiness proposed the 5 points peace plan for Tibet as the vii first step towards a peaceful solution to the worsening situation in Tibet that are as under:

1. Transformation of whole of the Tibet into a zone of peace.
2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetan people.

3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedom.
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
5. Commencement of proper negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese people.

From 1959 to till date, His Holiness has received over 150 honorary doctorates, prizes, awards etc. In recognition of his message of peace nonviolence, inter-religious understanding, universal responsibilities and compassion are considered. His Holiness has written more than 50 books. His Holiness describes himself as a "Simple Buddhist Monk". In his lectures and tours around the world, his simplicity and compassionate nature visibly touches everyone who meets him. His messages are of love, compassion and forgiveness.

The Kashag

The Kashag (Cabinet) is the apex executive organ of the Central Tibetan Administration and its members are ministers of the CTA. The Charter of the Tibetans in Exile stipulates that the Kashag should have a maximum of eight members. The chair of the Kashag is the executive head of the CTA. During April, 2001, the Tibetan parliament, on the advice of the Dalai Lama, amended the Charter to provide for the direct election of the Kashag chair by the exile Tibetan populace. The amendments provided for two elections to this effect: the first one to throw up six highest winners as the candidates and the second to confirm one among them as the chair. The Kashag chair will submit a list of his colleagues to the parliament for its approval. The Kashag is serviced by a Secretariat.

Major Departments under the Kashag

1. Department of Religion and Culture: Among the different department of the Kashag, the department of Religion and Culture seeks to preserve and promote Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage which is "on the verge of extinction in its own homeland. Over the past four decades the Tibetan community in exile has established over 200 monasteries and nunneries with enrollments of over 200,000 monks and nuns respectively. The Department of Religion and Culture gives back-up services to these cultural institutes. It maintains close touch with the Buddhist centre's throughout the world. Apart from the monasteries and nunneries, there is other cultural centre for the study of both spiritual and secular traditions of Tibet. While some of these centres are autonomous bodies, financed by the Government of India, others are financed and administered directly by the Department of Religion. The important one of these cultural centre in India are the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in Dharamshala, Tibet House in New Delhi, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamshala, the Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies at Sarnath in Varanasi, and the Norbulingkha Institute for Tibetan Culture at Sidhpur near Dharamshala.

2. Department of Home: The Department of Home is totally responsible for all rehabilitation schemes for Tibetan exiles. It looks after 21 agricultural settlements, 11 cluster units, eight agro-industries and four carpet weaving cooperatives throughout India. Besides this, there are 20 Tibetan settlements and Handicraft societies in Nepal and Bhutan which are under the jurisdiction of The Department of Home. The Department works in deep association with the Government of India and international organizations involved in helping Tibetans to improve their lot. Employment creation of units and promoting self-reliance among the Tibetan populace has been the chief work of the Department since it came into existence.

3. Department of Finance: The Department of Finance runs 25 business units to generate funds for the smooth running of the CTA. An important source of its income is the annual self contribution from all the exile Tibetans. The Department also formulates the annual budget of the Central Tibetan Administration (Dharamshala).

4. Department of Education: Department of Education established in 1960 under the name "Council for Tibetan Education". The Department of Education looks after the management of 80 schools situated in India, Nepal and Bhutan, serving 30,000 children, which form 70 percent of the children's, are in exile. Rest of 15 or 20 percent goes to private schools for education. Out of the 80 schools, 28 are directly run and funded by the Central Tibetan School Administration (CTSA) or the Government of India. The Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamshala and Tibetan Homes Foundation in Mussoorie are autonomous bodies under the Department of Education. While the Tibetan Children's Village administers number of schools with over 10,000 students, the Tibetan Homes Foundation runs two schools with 1,500 students. Education Department also has a major child sponsorship scheme, which receives fund from individuals and organizations. Under this scheme, the Department provides scholarship for higher studies to deserving school graduates.

5. Department of Security: The Department of Security has two units. One unit takes care of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's security while the other looks after new Tibetan refugees and monitors developments in Tibet and China. The Department has a Branch Security Office which arranges public audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and helps Tibetan refugees in seeking renewal of their refugee residential certificates by the Government of India. The Department of Security runs Reception Centre's in Dharamshala, Kathmandu and Delhi for the new Tibetan refugees. The refugees usually arrive first in Nepal, and after that they make their way to Dharamshala and other Tibetan communities via Delhi. The Reception Centre's at each of these places provide food, lodging and traveling expenses and guides to new refugees. The Reception Centre does also help the new refugees to join schools and monasteries in exile. The Research and Analysis Centre of the Department is responsible for monitoring developments in Tibet and China.

6. Department of Information and International Relations: The Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) educates the Tibetans and international public opinion to the political, human rights and environmental conditions in Tibet. Towards this end, it publishes both print and video materials on Tibet. The periodicals are printed in four languages: Tibetan, Hindi, English and Chinese. The DIIR serves as a protocol office of the CTA and liaises with the international media and Tibet Support Groups all over the world. Under the DIIR are CTA's foreign missions in 13 countries. They function as the embassies of the CTA and are based in New Delhi, Geneva, New York, Tokyo, London, Kathmandu, Budapest, Moscow, Paris, Canberra, Pretoria, Taipei and Brussels.

7. Department of Health: The Department of Health runs 61 Primary Health Care Centre and six referral hospitals in almost all the Tibetan communities in India and Nepal. The Department provides the cost of emergency health care needs and treatment of poor Tibetans. The Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute in Dharamshala is an autonomous body under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health. The Tibetan Medical Institute has 36 branch clinics in different parts of India and Nepal to provide traditional Tibetan medical care to Tibetans and the local populations.

Institutional Bodies

Some important institutional Commission of Tibetan Government in exile is below:

1. Election Commission: The power and functions of the Election Commission are to conduct and oversee elections of the Tibetan Assembly, Local People's Assemblies, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Assembly, and the members and Chair of the Kashag. If the CTA decides to call a referendum to get people's verdict on a matter of extreme importance, it will fall upon the Election Commission to conduct the referendum. Although the settlement and welfare officers of most Tibetan communities are appointed by the CTA, people have the right to elect them if they so wish. In such a case, the Election Commission will conduct the election of settlement/welfare officers as well. In order to ensure the independence of the Election Commission, the Charter provides for the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Two additional Commissioners are appointed by His Holiness during the general election of the Kashag Chair and the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. The Chief Election Commissioner holds the office for a term of five years unless the Assembly impeaches him or her by two-thirds majority.

2. Public Service Commission: The Public Service Commission is responsible for recruitment, training, appointment and promotion of the civil servants of the CTA. The Chair of the Commission is appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for a term of five years.

3. Audit Commission: The Audit Commission is responsible for scrutinizing the financial transactions of all the CTA departments and its subsidiaries. The

Commission evaluates the efficiency, propriety and management performance of all CTA units. In short, the Audit Commission functions as a watch dog on the CTA. As a result, it is on the basis of this Commissioner's reports that the Assembly of Tibetan People's deputies takes different units of the CTA to task. The Audit Commission is headed by an Auditor General who is appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for a term of ten years.

4. The Planning Council: As well as facilitating the optimum utilization of the CTA's resources, the Planning Council helps to mobilize further resources for the CTA. The Council provides technical consultancy in designing and evaluating the CTA's community development programs.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Writing this paper, I have learned a lot about this fascinating Religion, its history, the different ways it is practiced, and ultimately, its philosophy. Unfortunately, I was unable to extensively cover the different shades of Buddhism as believed and practiced by its adherents throughout the globe, nonetheless, whatever little material I read and been able to cover here has indeed enlightened me in ways I never imagined. Buddhism had always been a mystery to me, and I am glad that my curiosity leads me to read and write about it. He has advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people. His Holiness is a man of peace. In 1992, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama issued guidelines for the constitution of future free Tibet. In it he announced that when Tibet becomes free, the immediate task will be "set up an interim government whose first responsibility will be to elect a constitutional assembly to frame and adopt Tibet's democratic constitution.

On that day His Holiness will transfer all the historical, political authority to the interim president and live as an ordinary citizen. In 1987, His Holiness proposed the 5 points peace plan for Tibet as the vii first step towards a peaceful solution to the worsening situation in Tibet. The Kashag (Cabinet) is the apex executive organ of the Central Tibetan Administration and its members are ministers of the CTA. The Charter of the Tibetans in Exile stipulates that the Kashag should have a maximum of eight members. The chair of the Kashag is the executive head of the CTA. During April, 2001, the Tibetan parliament, on the advice of the Dalai Lama, amended the Charter to provide for the direct election of the Kashag chair by the exile Tibetan populace. The department of Religion and Culture seeks to preserve and promote Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage which is "on the verge of extinction in its own homeland.

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based in New Delhi, Geneva, New York, Tokyo, London, Kathmandu, Budapest, Moscow, Paris, Canberra, Pretoria, Taipei and Brussels for international relation. The Department of Health runs 61 Primary Health Care Centre and six referral hospitals in almost all the Tibetan communities in India and Nepal. The power and functions of the Election Commission are to conduct and oversee elections of the Tibetan Assembly, Local People's Assemblies, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Assembly, and the members and Chair of the Kashag.

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