

~^~ TAGWA SPRING PICNIC 2013 ~^~ ~Venerable Geshe Jampel Senge Reflects~

Ever since the illegal occupation of Tibet by communist China, which turned Tibet into a hell on earth, by brutal colonial subjugation, Tibetans have spread across the world.

Today, Tibetans are spread across some thirty five countries, most of them in the western democratic countries. Australia has a very small Tibetan community. I have learned from reliable sources that to date we have about one thousand, one hundred Tibetans living in Australia. Among that small number only twenty eight Tibetans are presently living in Western Australia.

When I first arrived here in WA, there were only about ten or so, who called this state our home. So, in the last ten years, it has incrementally increased to the present number.

Whether it was the small number we had or because we were all involved in our quest, of what we were doing and trying to achieve, we did not have many interactions among ourselves in those early years. There were times when we had quite frequent meetings but only with few people while we had only one occasion when we all came together. Other than that we were all keeping to ourselves rather than socializing as one might expect from a people who were probably all home sick at least in the first year of their arrival here.

Things have changed over the years. As more Tibetans arrive in our state, we seem to interact more and enjoy the moments together speaking our language and sharing our experiences. There is so much to talk about and catch up with in our lives and the lives we left back in our original country, the nation of Tibet.

We all long one day to return to a free Tibet, free of the Chinese occupiers.

There is no Tibetan alive whose life has not been affected by the occupation. It has destroyed our lives and the lives of every Tibetan. The Tibetan people will continue to escape from Tibet because the Chinese repression is relentless.

We have seen 123 Tibetan self-immolate themselves owing to this barbaric colonial imperialism. It is now getting to a stage where Tibetans are now nothing more than number for the Chinese. They don't treat Tibetans as human being any more. The Chinese want the Tibetan land but not the Tibetan people. So, they are on a mission to destroy everything that is Tibetan including our language, our culture, religion and dignity. This is the fundamental reason why so many Tibetans have burned themselves in the last three years.

Even though the Chinese have created every hurdle to stop the Tibetans from escaping into exile, Tibetans will continue to escape into the free world and finally find their way to Australia and other free countries.

Even though it is a tragedy of immense proportion, every cloud has a silver lining and our sad story is no different. The growth of our Tibetan community in WA will be good for the Tibetans living here and for the cause of Tibet.

The summer picnic in King's park on Sunday 26th was a great day to come together with the small community and our Australian supporters known as the TAGWA.

We had very nice Tibetan food like momo and a wide choice of other culinary delights.

Tibetans love food and they are very good in making wonderful dishes.

Most Tibetans usually eat meat but surprisingly, the food habit among the exile community seems to be changing slowly. Many of them now prefer vegetarian rather than their traditional meat dish. This is a wonderful development since Buddhism teaches non-violence and prohibits us from harming others including the animals and even insects and all forms of life.

It is heartening that there is a huge amount of good will among the Australians of all ages and social backgrounds. Australians are a people who believe in a fair go for everybody.

Many of them are fully aware of the atrocities committed by communist China in Tibet since it's occupation. I believe there will always be strong support for Tibet in Australia.

It is important the Tibetan community does not fail to tap into this groundswell of support and work towards our cherished goal of a free Tibet.

We hope the Australian leaders take into account, the support of the Australian people for Tibet, and use it's good offices to solve the festering issue of Tibet for the good of the Chinese and for the good of the suffering people of Tibet.

Written by Geshe Jampel Senge