



TIBET SOCIETY

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FOUNDED 1959

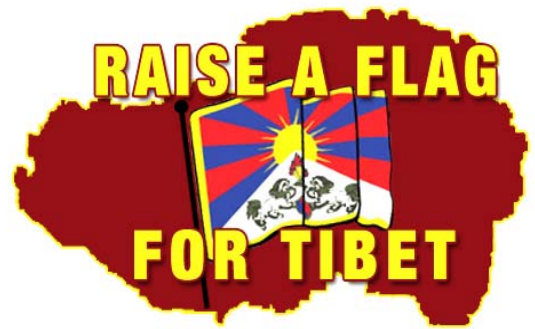
PATRON

TENZIN GYATSO, THE 14TH DALAI LAMA

www.tibetsociety.com

Local Media

Getting your story into the local press is a great way of raising awareness about Tibet, the Tibetan National Uprising and the Raise a Flag for Tibet campaign. Local media are always on the lookout for stories, particularly local stories with an interesting twist. The link between the local area and Tibet could be your council (should they raise the Tibetan flag to mark 50 years since the Tibetan National) or local residents such as yourself who wish to share their concern for the Tibetan people and raise the flag in your home town or village. The more local interest you can present the more likely it is your story will be covered, so any endeavour to bring a local councillor, MP or popular figure on board will really help. It's not essential though, and remember that Tibet Society will be available for comment to express our support and appreciation for your flag raising.



It only takes a little background research before you're ready to present your story to your local press. Firstly gather the following information for your local media:

- **Editorial/news e-mail address** (e-mail is the preferred method of receiving news for most media outlets now).
- **Editorial/news phone & fax number.**
- **Deadline** – You'll need to know when the deadline is for news stories so you can submit your press release in time.
- **Name of the appropriate correspondent.** In the case of local press, it will usually be the news team. It's also worth getting the details of the features editor to see if a longer feature on your story may be possible.

Press Releases

The press release is the standard format you need to use to get your Raise a Flag for Tibet story in the local media, and the best way of getting all the information across.

Content

Before you start writing your press release think about:

- What is the story. Why should the media cover this? What is your local or human angle or hook?
- Your message. What are the key points that you want to get across about your flag raising?
- Who are your audience? What style and tone would be best to make it appeal to them?
- How can you make it as concise and clear as possible?

Format

- To be effective, a press release needs a certain format. It should fit on one side of A4, be in a legible size and font and contain the following elements:
- Preferably on headed paper, make sure it says 'Press Release' at the top;
- Date it and give it a strong title. Ensure the title is clear, like a good newspaper headline;
- If you want photographers or camera crews to attend, mark it 'Photo Opportunity - Crews welcome';
- Make it clear when the story is for, usually: '*For immediate release*'. Generally it's inadvisable to postdate the release as the media won't always hold on a story;
- Use the first paragraph to outline the whole story in brief. This should explain the headline and the *who, what, when, where, how and why*. Expand in the second (and maybe a third) paragraph, with extra layers of information in decreasing order of importance. The body of the press release should be structured like a news story, so that it can be edited from the bottom always leaving the main story intact. Include a quote from yourself or another spokesperson;
- Mark the Release 'ENDS' so they know it's over (sounds obvious, but do it anyway!);
- Give contact details: the name of the person dealing with the media and a contact number;
- Finally, add 'Notes for the editor' if clarification or reference is needed from the body of text;

It is good practice to proof read your release for any errors. Does it get your key messages across concisely?

Sending it out

1. Email or fax your press release, preferably a week in advance of your flag raising.
2. Phone up after sending the press release to follow up. Check they received it and ask whether they need any further information.
3. If the press don't turn-up to your action, take some photos and press release it again afterwards.
4. If the press do pick the story up, you could also end up being invited to give an interview, so bear in mind what you want your message to be. Concise and compelling answers are more likely to be used than longer answers with a lot of detail and information.