

Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness, the Dalai Lama: A Biography in brief

A truly remarkable and inspiring figure for people the world over, the Dalai Lama's unfailing commitment to non-violence in seeking a just solution for the people of Tibet, who, after 59 years, continue to suffer under Chinese rule, is a unique example of compassion and humanity the world should applaud.

Over the years, the Dalai Lama's unwavering adherence to a path of peace has been recognised and acknowledged by many world governments and highly esteemed organisations. In 1989 he received the Nobel Peace prize for leading the Tibetans' non-violent struggle for freedom and, most recently, in October 2007 he was awarded the US Congressional Gold Medal.

The Dalai Lama's story is an extraordinary one. Born into a small farming family in north-eastern Tibet in 1935, Lhamo Dhondup was recognised as the 14th reincarnation of Tibet's spiritual and temporal leader, the Dalai Lama, at the age of two. Taking the formal name of Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama then spent his early years studying Tibetan Buddhist traditions and philosophy in Lhasa. However, at the age 15, the People's Liberation Army of China marched into Tibet and his life changed.

Ten years later, in 1959, following the Chinese army's suppression of the Tibet national uprising in Lhasa, the Dalai Lama was forced to escape into exile in India. In exile he has tirelessly sought to find justice for his people and keeping in mind the interests of the Chinese people, by asking for nothing more than a meaningful autonomy for Tibet, for Tibetan people to live in freedom - freedom to follow their religion, traditions and culture, freedoms we all take for granted.

Tibet Society, the world's first Tibet support group, was founded in 1959. Funded by its members, it has been working for over 50 years to seek justice for Tibet through parliamentary lobbying, campaigns and actions. Help keep Tibet alive by joining Tibet Society today. (Annual membership £24; Family £36; Life £500).

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