

Sikyong Lobsang Sangay: China “making mountain out of a molehill” on Dalai Lama’s visit to Tawang

[7 April 2017]

Exactly fifty-eight years ago on 31 March this year, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama entered India via Tawang after two-week trek and horse-ride from Lhasa, Tibet’s capital.

Tens of thousands of Tibetans rose up against the Communist China’s illegal occupation of their country on 10th March 1959 in Lhasa. The peaceful Tibetan National Uprising was brutally crushed down by the Chinese military troops and thousands were killed.

Over 6000 Buddhist learning centres and historical cultural heritage sites in Tibet were destroyed by the occupying Chinese forces. Today, China has a total control over the native Tibetans and their homelands.

The Dalai Lama and his government ministers were forced to flee Tibet and the Indian Government granted him political asylum upon arrival in India. Dharamsala, northern foothills of India, became the base for the Tibetan Government-in-exile since 1960.

The Chinese government officials in recent weeks issued warnings to India for allowing the Dalai Lama to visit Tawang and the neighbouring region, where the Tibetan Spiritual Leader has been giving Buddhist teachings to the local people. Tibetans and the local people in the region share the same Tibetan Buddhist tradition for centuries. The famous 6th Dalai Lama, Tseyang Gyatso, was born in this region.

Responding to the Beijing’s latest objections on the Dalai Lama’s visit to the region, Sikyong Lobsang Sangay, the democratically-elected Tibetan Political Leader of the Tibetan Government government-in-exile (aka Central Tibetan Administration), said, “His Holiness has visited Tawang and Arunachal Pradesh before. At the request of thousands of followers, His Holiness is visiting there to bless them. So in Bomdila, Dirang and Tawang, he is simply making spiritual teachings to his followers. So China is making mountain out of a molehill and saying you are hurting the sentiments of Chinese people. These are the usual drama or the rhetoric that they use and this time it’s against India. Each time His Holiness meets global leaders they do the same.”

The Chinese government claims that the region the Tibetan Spiritual Leader is currently visiting belongs to China. Indian government maintain that the region belongs to the southern neighbour.

The fact remains that the region belonged to Tibet prior to the Simla Accord. British and Tibetan representatives agreed at the Simla Treaty of 1914 that the McMahon Line, the dividing line between India and Tibet, included Tawang and other neighbouring region, claimed by China, as part of India.

Sikyong Lobsang Sangay made remarks on the issue by saying, “These are clear signs where things that happened behind closed doors before is now done in open, in that sense the government is just letting the fact be seen by public.”

World is One News, WION Exclusive: Lobsang Sangay on Chinese sensitivities on Arunachal, Dalai Lama (Published on Apr 5, 2017)

Over the past few years, China’s attitude towards its neighbouring countries has been aggressive. Be it territorial claim in Anuranchal, or establishment of trade between Pakistan occupied Kashmir or claims at the South China Sea. On this exclusive conversation with Lobsang Sangay, Prime Minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, WION’s Surya Gangadharan talks about Chinese sensitivities on Arunachal Pradesh, Dalai Lama and more
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