



BURNING DESIRE FOR FREEDOM

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After 60 years of Chinese rule, some Tibetan monks have resorted to self-immolation. Where will their protests lead?

On Aug. 15, the 29-year-old Tibetan monk, Tsewang Norbu, living in the remote Chinese outpost of Tawu, emerged from the monastery and walked down the hill to the centre of town. For a few minutes, he passed out pamphlets advocating Tibetan independence and celebrating the Dalai Lama.

Then he gulped down kerosene, bathed his body in the combustible liquid and struck a match. As he burned in the center of town, Norbu shouted for freedom in Tibet and screamed his love for the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader.

Tibet is burning. Since Norbu's fiery death, **eight more Tibetan clerics or former monks have set themselves on fire** to protest China's repressive rule over Tibetan areas. At least six have died this year, including Norbu, a pair of teenage monks and a young nun whose charred body was seized in late October by Chinese security forces.

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<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2098575,00.html>

TIBETAN LEADER TO EU:

DO NOT BELIEVE MYTH OF CHINESE SUPREMACY



LOBSANG SANGAY

Nov 30/11. euobserver .BRUSSELS - Tibet's new political leader, Lobsang Sangay, has said EU politicians should not bow to China in the belief it is becoming the next world superpower.

Fresh from a high-profile trip to Washington, Sangay spoke to EUobserver in Brussels on his first tour of EU capitals after the Tibetan diaspora in April voted him prime-minister-in-exile, ending a centuries-old tradition of theocracy under the Dalai Lamas.

The 43-year-old Harvard University law scholar, now based in India, said his election heralds a new wave of secular diplomacy on behalf of Tibetan autonomy: "I am a Tibetan and a Buddhist. I know my prayers, but I do not pray for hours each day. I pray from time to time, but I am modern and secular in my orientation."

Sangay on Tuesday (29 November) addressed the European Parliament's foreign affairs committee, which billed him as the "Prime Minister of the Central Tibetan Administration" despite grumbling by the Chinese EU mission.

Asked if he is concerned the EU is going soft on values for the sake of strategic relations, Sangay said EU politicians should not believe the narrative that China is becoming an economic superpower.

He pointed to studies which say the Indian model of organic growth, next to China's model of foreign capital and state-run firms, will see India move ahead of China in the coming years: "As long as a process is democratic and based on rule of law, rather than top-down, there is more chance of its being fair and sustainable. Because of censorship, we do not see the damage [the Chinese government] is doing. We don't understand the ramifications of the economic and political decisions made by the leadership."

Lack of proper oversight on dams built on rivers such as the Brahmaputra and the Mekong could cause environmental chaos in future, he warned.

Political persecution and mass-scale mineral exploitation in Tibet is also causing "a scar on the psyche of the people" that could end in upheaval, he added: "I am not predicting anything, but the Arab Spring also came out of nowhere."

He noted that Chinese statisticians have been caught lying on GDP growth: "The Chinese economy might seem to be booming. But what is really happening on the ground is difficult to assess ... Reports say they are spending \$1.4 trillion on an internal stimulus package. But at the same time, China is also spending more on internal security than on external security."

Asked what is his strongest asset against China's diplomatic machine, he answered: "Really, the truth."

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