

After the Dalai Lama, who?

It's been 60 years since Tenzin Gyatso was enthroned as the Dalai Lama. Even as the spiritual and political leader of the Tibetans asks the community to contemplate a future without him, questions are being raised about the direction of the Tibetan freedom movement. **SHOBAN SAXENA reports**

THERE'S a Chinese saying: "May you live in interesting times". It's a curse, actually. Last week, Tenzin Gyatso, the XIVth Dalai Lama, seemed to be thinking about the times ahead as he watched children make brilliant calligraphic formations at the Tibetan Children's Village School in Dharamshala. As the kids ran across the football field displaying a banner which read '60', the Tibetan leader's eyes remained stoic and silent.

Sitting a few feet away from the Dalai Lama was Urgyen Thinley Dorje, watching the formations made by children of his age. The 15-year-old Karmapa Lama's eyes twinkled with warmth as shutterbugs tried to click him

and the Dalai Lama together. As the drums stopped beating, both the leaders left the dais. The Tibetans, standing on both sides of a narrow path, bowed with hope and an implacable worry in their eyes.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Tenzin Gyatso's enthronement to the seat of Dalai Lama. And an uncomfortable question is gripping the Tibetan community in exile: after the Dalai Lama, who? Pose this question to an elderly Tibetan and the response may be either a blank stare or a scowl. But the question is very real.

And it's been initiated by none but the Dalai Lama himself, who asking the community to think about the road ahead after he's gone.



The Dalai Lama with the 17th Karmapa at Dharamshala

that the next stage of the Tibetan movement may be violent, perhaps even more violent than the Mustang uprising of the 1970s when the CIA was funding and backing the Tibetan resistance.

Young Tibetans, in particular, seem to favour a violent struggle against the Chinese. "It's very depressing to think of our movement without His Holiness, but I guess we have to think about it," says an official of the Tibetan government in exile.

This question cropped up all of a sudden when the 17th Karmapa arrived in Dharamshala in January this year. The Tibetans were rejoiced to hear of his escape to freedom, and when the Dalai Lama embraced him in a public function, some even anointed him the Dalai Lama's successor. Since the

Karmapa came to Dharamshala rather than Rumtek in Sikkim, the traditional seat of the Karmapas, it was suggested that he might well be the next leader of the Tibetans in exile.

There are two issues here: Is the Karmapa the third highest spiritual leader after the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama as reported in the Western media? This view is contested by many. There are four major sects of Tibetan Buddhism — the Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu and Gelug, in that order. There are differences over the chronological order as well. While the Dalai Lama — who belongs to Gelug — is both the spiritual and political head of all Tibetans, the heads of all sects enjoy equal status. "If the Karmapa Lama becomes the next head of Tibetans in exile, there will be opposition from other high lamas like Sakya Tenzin," says an official.

The other question is: is Urgyen Trinley the real 17th Karmapa Lama?

While there is no doubt in the minds of the Tibetan government and people on this, the Indian government seems to have taken a serious note of doubts raised by Shamar Rinpoche, a Kagyu sect Lama, that Urgyen Thinley Dorje is not the real Karmapa.

In fact, Shamar Rinpoche has his own candidate for the Karmapa seat. "I don't know what is holding the government of India back from granting asylum to the Karmapa. It's really frustrating," says a Tibetan official.

What's fuelling the frustration is that Beijing is tightening its grip over Tibetan Buddhism. Some years ago, the Chinese kidnapped the Dalai Lama's nominee for the Panchen Lama seat and appointed the son of a local communist of-

ficial as the 10th Panchen Lama. "The Chinese know that Tibetan Buddhism is the basis of Tibetan nationalism, and if they control our religion, they can check our nationalism as well," says the Tibetan official.

Since the Panchen Lama is in Chinese hands, they will use him to select the next Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama too had recently said his reincarnation would logically come from outside Tibet in a free country. "His Holiness has made it clear that he would not be born in oc-

arrival in India as part of the Chinese strategy.

But most Tibetans in India refuse to buy it. "The day the Dalai Lama said Urgyen Thinley is the real Karmapa, everybody believed it. We have no confusion about the Karmapa," says activist Sonam Tsering.

With the Karmapa's arrival in India, the leaders of all four sects of Tibetan Buddhism are in this country. This is both a sign of hope and confusion. The Dalai Lama, because of his position, has managed to keep the community to-

gether. His absence can lead to a situation where other sects might assert their right to rule.

That's probably why the Dalai Lama has been asking the community to adopt a democratic form of governance as soon as possible.

"This is a unique situation. In other countries, people have fought for democracy. In our case, the leader is asking people to adopt it

but they have been shying away," pointed out Thupten Lungrik, vice-chairperson of the Tibetan Parliament in Dharamshala. While democracy may not be an attractive option, violence has its charms for man in the community.

"The chances of the Tibetan movement turning violent after the Dalai Lama are 'very high'," says Lhasang Tsering, scholar and a former guerrilla who fought the Chinese on the Tibet-Nepal border. But at least for now, there are many young men who won't talk about it.

With the Karmapa's arrival in India, the leaders of all four sects of Tibetan Buddhism are in this country. The Dalai Lama has managed to keep the community together. His absence can lead to a situation where other sects might assert their right to rule

Seoul cancels Dalai visit

AP & REUTERS

SEOUL, Oct. 29. — South Korea has decided not to permit a visit by the Dalai Lama, state-run Yonhap News Agency said today.

Buddhists groups, led by a dozen monks in gray robes, held an hour-long rally at temple in downtown Seoul and briefly marched through nearby streets to protest against the decision.

A Buddhist group had invited the exiled Tibetan leader to visit Seoul in November.

However China warned South Korea against hosting the Dalai Lama, labelling the Buddhist leader as a separatist who should be denied a forum to promote his campaign for Tibetan autonomy.

South Korean foreign ministry officials were not immediately available to make any comment.

The government had already refused to issue the Dalai

Lama an entry visit.

The latest announcement came in response to demands by the Dalai Lama visit preparation committee, the group campaigning for the visit, to reiterate its stance.

"How come President (Kim Dae-Jung) who won the Nobel peace prize himself would not allow another Nobel peace laureate to visit South Korea?" the committee asked.



The Dalai Lama.

Local media had earlier reported that the tepid reaction from the Korean government towards inviting

the Dalai Lama was due to Seoul's concern about China's response and reaction to this sensitive issue.

"Not only the members of the private citizens' groups who invited the religious leader, but the general public will doubt the nation's diplomatic ability against the arrogant pressures by Chinese authorities", *The Korea Times* said.

THE STATESMAN

30 OCT 2000

Dalai Lama fears setback to movement after his demise

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
NEW DELHI, OCT 11

TIBET'S exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, fears his death would prove "a great setback" for the Tibetan freedom movement, with China seeking to control the choice of his reincarnation.

In an interview in the latest issue of *Asiaweek*, the 65-year-old Dalai Lama said his death would inevitably have a strong impact on the Tibetan people inside and outside his homeland. "It will certainly be a great setback," he said in the northern Indian hill station of Dharamsala — the seat of the Tibetan government in exile.

"But our struggle is for the six million Tibetans; their rights, their welfare, their future. This is a



AFTER ME, WHO?

struggle of a nation to survive. Whether one particular leader remains or not, the nation will carry on the struggle."

One particular concern voiced by the Dalai Lama was the role of the boy picked by the Chinese leadership as the Panchen Lama — the

second most important figure in Tibetan Buddhism who is charged with selecting the next reincarnation of the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama recognised another boy as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama in 1995, but his choice was spirited away by the Chinese authorities and has been kept in a secret location ever since. "I made it clear that if I passed away, the (Dalai Lama's) reincarnation would logically come from outside Tibet, in a free country," the Dalai Lama said.

"But China will choose a boy as the next Dalai Lama, though in reality he is not." In recent years, Beijing has frozen all contacts with him, but the Dalai Lama said he had not given up hope of a breakthrough in his lifetime.

INDIAN EXPRESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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'Education in Tibet is forcing children to forget'

EXPRESS FOCUS INTERVIEW

Eva Herzer is a California-based Mediator and Attorney at Law. An active member of the International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet she travels around the world mobilising people who believe in the force of law. She was instrumental in preparing a report — *Violence and Discrimination Against Tibetan Women* — that was submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. As a mediator and international lawyer she believes the Tibetan problem can be solved peacefully. She spoke to SHOBHAN SAXENA about the legal aspects of the Tibetan problem. Excerpts:

■ What does the International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet do?

We want a peaceful solution to the Tibetan problem. The organisation was formed in 1989 with the purpose of providing legal help to the Tibetan cause and for the protection of human rights and democracy. There are more than 500 members of the organisation around the world. Some are lawyers and some are not, but they believe in the force of law. We formed the organisa-

tion with the objective of strengthening the legal case of Tibet. Our objective has been to provide a legal framework and perspective to the Tibetan government and leaders. Of course, it's not our objective to suggest to them whether they should seek autonomy or complete independence.

■ Have you made any progress in this direction?

Recently, we sent two fact-finding missions to Tibet to find out about the condition of women and children there. On the basis of our findings we prepared a report — the Fabric of Fear — on their condition.

■ What are the findings of the report?

We found that in Tibet reproductive rights of women are being openly violated. They are being forced to keep the number of children down to one. There have been many cases of forced abortions and this is happening when Tibet doesn't have a population problem. Tibet never had any population problem. This is being done to change the demographic profile of Tibet. In the prisons women prisoners are tor-

tured and the form of torture is very gender-specific — most women prisoners are raped.

In case of children, we found that education in Tibet is forcing them to forget their religion, culture and language. In many cases children are being encouraged to spy on their parents and there are many children in prison who face most horrendous forms of torture. And most Tibetan children continue to suffer from poor health and malnutrition.

■ What do you think was Tibet's legal status when the Chinese forces occupied it in 1959?

Tibet was an independent country in 1959. There was no doubt that at the time of annexation Tibet was an independent and sovereign nation. The reason, I say, it was sovereign is that it had a government which performed all governmental functions — it conducted its home affairs, it took care of foreign affairs and it sent to and received delegations from foreign countries. It was a sovereign state



for all practical purposes.

■ And what is Tibet's status now?

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INDIAN EXPRESS

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rule because it lost its independence through invasion. In international law, independence of a nation can not be taken away by acts of aggression as that violates the sovereignty of the nation.

■ But when the Chinese forces moved into Tibet and the Tibetan government appealed for help, almost all nations, including India refused to help. It seems they had certain doubts about Tibet's legal status?

Yes, there were some doubts. And doubts came to their minds because of history. Let us not forget that for a very long period both Tibet and China were under the rule of the Mongols. And this gave a false impression of the unification of Tibet. And Tibet was seen as a territory of China. But totally wrong and irrelevant right do the Tibetan

people have to determine their future? Is there a legal basis to give them the right to self-determination?

Yes, they have an absolute right to determine their future. This is based on two separate legal pillars. First, every nation has a right to territorial integrity that

■ In his Strasbourg Proposals the Dalai Lama offered a five-point peace plan for Tibet which plans to get an autonomous status for Tibet. What are the merits and demerits of this plan?

It has many merits. First it will ensure the control of Ti-

short of the expectations of those Tibetans who want complete independence from the Chinese rule.

■ Is such an arrangement feasible?

I think it's a viable option. There are around 44 such arrangements in different countries of the world and they are working fine. I don't see any reason why such an arrangement between Tibet and China won't work.

If there is willingness on both sides, autonomy for Tibet can be successfully achieved. In the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping told the Dalai Lama that everything but independence was negotiable. But unfortunately, the Chinese have not taken any initiative since then.

■ How do you define autonomy?

Autonomy does not have a precise meaning in international law. It can be defined as an arrangement by which powers are divided between the government of the people of autonomous region and the government of the larger state. Depending upon how these powers are divided, the autonomous region can have limited self-governance or substantial self-governance.

Women in Tibet are being forced to keep the number of children down to one when it doesn't have a population problem. This is being done to change the demographic profile of Tibet

protects it from any external aggression. Second is the right to self-determination which is guaranteed by the Article I of the UN Charter that guarantees right of a people to determine their own political, economic and cultural status.

Since Tibet was independent at the time of Chinese invasion, they have a right to self-determination. Even if we assume that the Chinese are right in saying that Tibet was never an independent nation, the Tibetans have the option to decide what they want—total freedom, total integration into China or an autonomous arrangement with China.

betan affairs by the Tibetan government. Also they will be able to manage their foreign affairs in the fields of culture, science and environment. Second, it will lead to political stability and peaceful coexistence in China.

From the strategic point of view it will be good as Tibet can be developed as a buffer state between India and China. The autonomous arrangement will also protect Tibetan culture and illegal population transfer of Chinese people from China to Tibet will be stopped.

As far as demerits are concerned I can see only one and that is the arrangement may fall

Situation inside Tibet very critical: Dalai

Washington, June 21

TIBETAN SPIRITUAL leader the Dalai Lama has told US President Bill Clinton that the situation in Tibet was 'very, very critical' and that he is willing to hold talks with the Chinese leadership at 'any place, any time' without any pre-conditions.

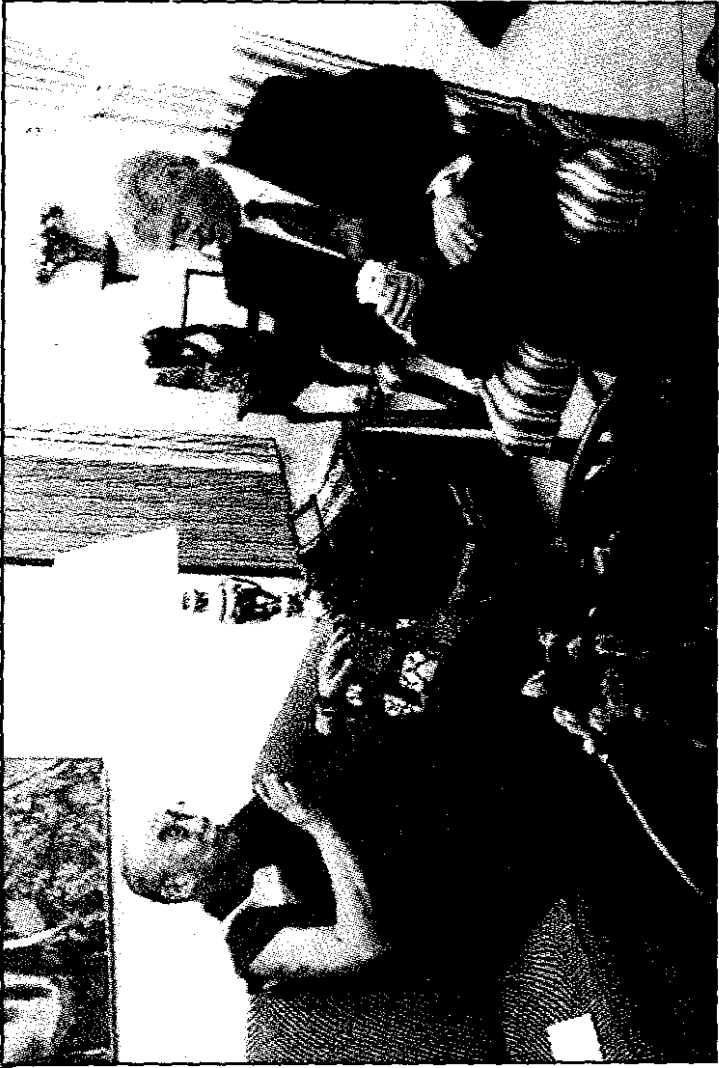
The Dalai, who had a 40-minute meeting with Clinton at the White House yesterday, told reporters: 'I mentioned the present situation inside Tibet is very, very critical. If we look (at the) Tibet problem locally, then time is running out.'

He said he was open to talks with the Chinese leadership without any pre-conditions. 'Any place, any time, I am willing to meet with Chinese leadership without pre-conditions,' he said.

A White House statement said that Clinton 'declared his strong support for the Dalai Lama's steadfast efforts to initiate a dialogue with the Chinese Government'.

Clinton expressed hope that the Chinese Government would respond favourably, and said the US was committed to the preservation of Tibet's 'unique religious, cultural and linguistic heritage,' according to the statement.

The two leaders also agreed on the importance of 'strong and constructive US-China rela-



President Clinton with the Dalai Lama at the White House on Wednesday. Photo: AP

Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, said after meeting President Bill Clinton he thought China was becoming 'a more open society.'

The Dalai Lama yesterday said he told Clinton that 'time is running' out to preserve Tibet's Buddhist culture and mountainous environment, but that changes within China gave him hope.

A White House spokesman said the Dalai Lama told Clinton he hoped for a resumption of autonomy talks with China during the tenure of Chinese President Jiang Zemin.

'China is actually in the process of changing,' the Dalai Lama told reporters after meeting Clinton. 'Today's China, compared (with) 15-20 years ago, (is) much changed.' 'It's definitely a more open society,' he said. 'Freedom of speech eventually will come,' he said. 'There is hope. It is very worthwhile making (an) effort.'

Clinton and the Dalai Lama met for about 35 minutes in the office of US National Security Adviser Sandy Berger. National Security Council spokesman P.J. Crowley told reporters, 'The Dalai Lama said to the President, I haven't given up hope that we'll see a resumption of dialogue in Jiang's tenure,' Crowley said.

He said Clinton agreed to continue work for talks between China and the Dalai Lama, but Crowley

indicated this could go beyond Clinton's term of office, which expires next January. 'The Dalai Lama said to the President I hope you will keep working on this even after you leave office,' and the President said he would.

China has said it would only talk to the Dalai Lama if he recognised Tibet as an inalienable part of China. There were two rounds of unsuccessful exploratory talks between representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government between 1979 and 1984.

Tibet, a landlocked Himalayan land with a devoutly Buddhist population, was annexed by China in 1951 and the Dalai Lama fled after a bloody 1959 uprising against Chinese rule.

The Dalai Lama has long maintained that Tibet should have autonomy rather than independence from China. But issues including settlement of ethnic Chinese in Tibet and restrictions of the Tibetan Buddhist religion continue to concern him. He reiterated his support for expanding global trade with China, including Chinese entry to the WTO.

Economic development stimulated by trade would help Tibet. Greater global interaction with China could help reduce anti-Western suspicions that are used against Tibet's quest for autonomy, he said. (Agencies)

On July 2, the Dalai Lama will hold a Tibetan Buddhist ceremony followed by a public address on The Mall.

According to many Tibetans, the Chinese presence in Tibet is destroying the region's unique Buddhist culture.

ICT said that in the early years of China's occupation of Tibet, the Chinese 'virtually banned the study and practice of Buddhism and that by 1969, not a single practicing nun or monk was left in Tibet - they had all fled, been executed or imprisoned or defrocked'.

China defends Tibet policy

BEIJING, June 22. ^{519 23/6} China lashed out today at the Dalai Lama and other critics of its policies in Tibet, issuing a lengthy report citing achievements in protecting the region's indigenous Tibetan culture and language.

The report follows protests by Beijing against a meeting this week between Mr Bill Clinton and the Dalai Lama, who has accused China of committing 'cultural genocide' in Tibet he fled 41 years ago.

The report was issued to "refute the fallacy that Tibetan culture has become extinct clamored by the Dalai Lama clique," China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

It accused the exiled Tibetan leader of fomenting separatism and of trying to prevent development by seeking to restore the feudal theocratic system that existed in Tibet before China took control. — AP

THE STATESMAN

23 JUN 2000

23 JUN 2000

China warns Denmark over Dalai visit

BELJING, May 9. — China today repeated its warning to Denmark over a scheduled meeting between the Danish Prime Minister and the Dalai Lama, saying it could harm bilateral ties.

"We have expressed the hope that the Danish side will handle this issue prudently... so as to prevent normal development of relations between China and Denmark from being affected," foreign ministry spokeswoman Ms Zhang Qiyue said at a regular news briefing. Ms Zhang's comments were a softened version of Beijing's earlier demand that Copenhagen cancel the meeting slated for 21 May at Copenhagen International Airport. — DPA

THE STATESMAN

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3,000 more troops for Sierra Leone as rebels free hostages

FREETOWN: West African leaders resolved on Monday to send 3,000 more troops to Sierra Leone under U.N. supervision as rebels freed the last of the peace-keepers they had held hostage, ending a crisis pitting guerrillas against the United Nations.

The heads of state decided to send in forces under the command of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Sierra Leone, the executive secretary of the West African grouping Ecowas, Lansana Kouyate, announced.

They also agreed to provide security for captured rebel leader Foday Sankoh, now held in Freetown, Mr Kouyate reported. The summit of the economic community of West African states would ask the international community to fund the troop deployment and command would be left to the Ecowas member state providing the greatest number of troops, he said.

On Sunday rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) freed the last of the U.N. peace-keepers seized earlier this month, raising hopes that the country was pulling back from the brink of civil war.

The U.N. mission spokesman in Sierra Leone said, "We believe that all the peace-keepers held hostage by the Sierra Leone rebels are now free."

The west leaders meanwhile also decided to give "security" to RUF leader Foday Sankoh, in custody in Freetown. A U.N.-mediated peace accord to end an eight-year civil war was torpedoed when the RUF seized nearly 500 U.N. peace-keepers

earlier this month.

Ecowas executive secretary Kouyate told journalists, "We have decided to give security to Foday Sankoh, probably outside Sierra Leone... But that does not mean that we accept massacres and mutilation of the population."

He added, "That does not mean either that he cannot be tried later... This is a decision taken unanimously, with Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Kabbah."

President Kabbah said last week he was considering placing rebel leader Sankoh on trial for his troops' actions, despite an amnesty granted to him under last year's peace accord, which also gave the rebel a government post.

Kabbah appealed at the summit for the return of the West African peace-keeping force (Ecomog) to his country because it "has a job to do there". Nigeria, which has 3,500 troops in Unamsil, was expected to supply two-thirds of the 3,000-strong new contingent.

The Ecowas leaders would send a delegation to Sierra Leone to negotiate a ceasefire, Mr Kouyate said. The final group of 89 detained peace-keepers were freed in Foya on the border with neighbouring Liberia and helicoptered to Monrovia. The U.N. had demanded hostages be released unconditionally. U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan's spokesman said, "The secretary-general is delighted with the news out of Liberia that virtually all of the detained peace-keepers in Sierra Leone have been freed." (AFP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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China accuses Dalai of using Karmapa to separate Tibet

Beijing, May 30

CHINA TODAY accused Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama of colluding with foreign forces to use the 14-year-old Karmapa Lama to split Tibet from China.

"The Dalai clique and some foreign forces have always tried to use him to achieve their own goals," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said while briefing reporters on president K R Narayanan's on-going visit to China.

Zhang Qiyue said China was strongly opposed to anybody using the 17th Karmapa Lama, who fled Tibet and arrived in India early this year.

"We are strongly opposed to the efforts made by any people in any way to use the Karmapa to try and split China," she said while confirming that Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Indian President K R Narayanan touched upon the Karmapa Lama issue during their talks here yesterday.

A senior Indian official briefing Indian reporters here said that Narayanan told Jiang that the Karmapa has been merely allowed to stay in India but it was up to him to decide what kind of future he saw for himself. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

31 MAY 2000

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Silence, price of return to China, says Dalai Lama

Rebut

TOKYO, APRIL 20. The Dalai Lama says he could return any time to China but is unwilling to pay the price — a vow of silence. The Lama has lived in exile for more than 40 years but remains the target of China's Communist leaders, who fear him as a rallying point for the devoutly Buddhist inhabitants of his restive Himalayan homeland.

"I have already made the maximum concessions in spite of a lot of criticisms from among our own people," he told Reuters shortly before winding up a week-long visit to Japan today.

"My approach is very realistic," China says it can return only if he recognises that both Tibet and Taiwan are parts of China, and ceases to engage in Separatist activities. "But what concessions are there left to make? I don't know," he said.

The Lama stressed that he had long ago abandoned any pretensions to independence for the poor and landlocked region but did want real autonomy.

He dismissed the Taiwan independence issue as irrelevant, saying Taipei should take a similar realistic approach to China. "I can return if I make one beautiful statement which the Chinese Government wants.

"I can return next week," said the Dalai Lama. However, he stressed that his return alone would be insufficient to end Tibet's problems and urged Beijing to give up its policy of suppres-

sion. The Dalai Lama fled Tibet for India after an abortive and bloody uprising against the Chinese rule in 1959 and has since been locked in complicated on-and-off negotiations with Beijing on how to effect his return.

Informal channels of communication with Beijing were abruptly shut down in late 1998, soon after the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to China, he said.

He held out little hope of a return to Tibet, emphasising that he best serves his people's cause — without compromising his principles — by living outside the region, which has been racked by sporadic and violent anti-Chinese demonstrations since 1987.

The protests have almost all been led by monks, or Lamas, from Tibet's once powerful monasteries, which he described as the focus of Beijing's latest crackdown on dissenting voices.

He cited restrictions on the study of the Tibetan language, arrests, torture — and even deaths — and said tighter suppression in recent years made it more difficult for him to cool the emotions of Tibetans opposed to Chinese rule.

"Actually the Government is stepping up suppression and using force. It is very difficult to tell them." Some of his younger followers in India opposed his non-violent stand towards China, he said.

China insists Tibet enjoys religious freedom but has launched a series of crackdowns, sending work teams into monasteries, limiting the number of Lamas and arresting and jailing hundreds of monks and nuns opposed to Chinese rule.

'Policy may backfire'

The Lama said independence was not in the interests of Tibetans, who live in a landlocked and materially backward mountainous region. They are among China's poorest people.

"If we remain with the people of China we might get greater benefits," he said. "Not a single Tibetan wants to restore our old lifestyle," he said in an apparent reference to the feudal theocracy that had prevailed for centuries until soldiers of China's People's Liberation Army annexed Tibet in 1950. But he warned China that its policies could backfire, resulting in more unrest — and after his death Beijing could find itself with no influential individual with whom to negotiate. The situation on the strategic Himalayan plateau could then get out of control.

"I think the Chinese leadership may eventually realise the current policy is not wise," the Dalai Lama said. "Their top concern is stability and unity, but in Tibet they use more force, more repression," he said. "Result — more resentment."

He evaded questions as to whether he expected to be rein-

carated — thus continuing to provide Beijing with an interlocutor on Tibet. "I have no full control over my own rebirth," he said.

Asked if he was holding back from returning to Tibet to keep one last card in his talks with China, the Dalai Lama said, "Yes".

Sees Indian refuge for Karmapa

The 14-year-old 'living Buddha' who escaped to India as he could not endure to see the suppression of his people, the Dalai Lama said.

The 17th Karmapa Lama had now won unofficial permission to remain in India, the Dalai Lama added.

However, he feared that another boy, whom he had recognised as the reincarnation of the second highest Tibetan figure, may be being taught in China to doubt the Buddhist faith.

Speaking for the first time about why the 14-year-old Karmapa Lama had decided to flee China, he said: "I heard he had left his own monastery and I was very much worried. Then in one or two days another report said he had already reached Dharamsala." The Karmapa Lama's escape dealt a severe blow to the attempts of China's Communist Government to control organised religion through "patriotic" religious figures and institutions, he said.

THE HINDU

21 APR 2000

Karmapa's parents detained

REUTERS

BEIJING, March 1. — Chinese authorities have detained the parents of a high-ranking Tibetan Lama who escaped to India in January, the Tibet Information Network said.



The 17th Karmapa

The London-based group said in a statement late yesterday that China has also detained a Tibetan security officer and a monk involved in security at Tsurphu monastery after the 14-year-old 17th Karmapa Lama's escape to India.

The TIN statement was issued as UN Human Rights chief, Ms Mary Robinson, arrived in Beijing for two days of talks, and shortly after the USA issued a damning report on China's human rights record, notably in Tibet.

TIN said Chinese authorities had taken the Karmapa Lama's elderly parents from their home in Lhasa and moved them to Changdu prefecture in eastern Tibet, where they were being held under close surveillance.

The whereabouts of the two detained security workers from the monastery was unknown, TIN said.

A Changdu government official said the Karmapa Lama's parents had been moved there for their own protection, but declined further comment. Local officials said they knew nothing of the other two reported detentions.

TIN said China had launched a full investigation into the Karmapa Lama's escape, which threatened a diplomatic tangle between China and India after exiled Tibetans urged Delhi to grant the boy political asylum.

The Dalai Lama has asked India to protect and shelter the boy but Indian officials say he has not formally applied for asylum.

The Karmapa Lama, the highest Tibetan Lama whose authority is recognised by Beijing and the Dalai Lama, arrived in India on 5 January after a 1,400 km journey across the Himalayas.

The Tibetan government-in-exile in India says he fled to avoid religious repression and human rights abuses in Tibet.

China says the boy left Tibet to collect symbolic ritual implements which belonged to the previous Karmapa Lama, leaving the door open to his return.

China detains Karmapa's parents, Tibet worried

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
GANGTOK, MARCH 1

THE Tibetan government-in-exile has expressed concern over reports of detention of 17th Karmapa Uijen Trinley Dorjee's parents by the Chinese government.

Speaking over the telephone from Dharamshala on Wednesday Tibetan government-in-exile's Minister of Culture and Religion Kelson Tashi Wangdi said: "We have received reports from various sources that the Chinese authorities in Tibet have allegedly forced the elderly parents of the Karmapa to leave their home in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa and move to Changdu prefecture in eastern Tibet, the parental home of Tibet's third highest spiritual leader, the Karmapa. There they were kept under close "surveillance". The Tibetan minister said: "We are greatly concerned about the well-being of His Holiness's parents. We strongly protest

this act of the Chinese government and request them not to take such reprisals against the family members and close associates of the Karmapa staying back in Tibet." Wangdi said, "There are also reports of detention of a Tibetan security officer and a monk involved in the security at the seat of the Karma Kagyu sects Tsurphu monastery, from where the Karmapa had escaped. The whereabouts of the two was not known."

Karmapa Lama, whose authority is recognised both by Beijing and the Dalai Lama, arrived in India on January 5 after a 1,400 km trek across the Himalayas. The Tibetan government-in-exile had asked India to give refuge to the Karmapa. The Indian authorities, however, said the Karmapa had not applied formally for asylum.

Commenting on the Karmapa's stay and seeking asylum, Wangdi said, "The Karmapa has been staying in India for the past two months. He has been pro-

vided with a heavy security arrangement here. He is carrying out all his religious activities and spiritual studies under Tibetan spiritual teachers at the Gyato monastery on the outskirts of Dharamshala. Many pilgrims come to pay their homage to him daily and so far no one has asked him to leave. He is to stay at Dharamshala for the time being."

When asked about the possible visit of the teenaged monk to the Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre (DCC), the seat-in-exile of the Karma Kagyu sect, Wangdi said: "There is no possibility at present. But he can always come here at a later stage." Meanwhile, the London-based Tibet Information Network in a statement handed over to UN Human Rights chief Mary Robinson said, "The Karmapa's escape has dealt a severe blow to the attempts of China's Communist government to control organised religion through patriotic religious figures and institutions."

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 2 MAR 2000

BALANCING ACT

Karmapa Lama in diplomatic crossfire

HOW serious is Beijing when it tells Delhi that the "boy" Karmapa Lama could split China, and India should desist from offering him refuge? Beijing had harboured hopes that it could groom the boy Lama to succeed the ageing Dalai Lama, and thus secure its control over Tibet in a post-Dalai Lama era when Chinese policies in Tibet are bound to come under increasing international scrutiny. With the Karmapa Lama's flight to India, as well as the Dalai Lama's recent statements about the cultural genocide in Tibet, the fears that Tibet may be slipping out of China's grasp are real, which accounts for their skittish response. Delhi needs to work out a sophisticated balance: its desire to be a major player in Asia necessitates arriving at an understanding with China, yet it cannot afford to genuflect before every verbal blast from it. It is possible to be both firm and accommodating. Delhi should make it clear to Beijing that India's political system makes it impossible to muzzle the Dalai Lama or turn back the Karmapa Lama.

That Delhi is considering a mature response is evident in its engaging China in a security dialogue, even though sharp differences remain. These have historical roots and will take some time to resolve, but it is important to begin the process. Nehru thought that Mao and Zhou en Lai were his ideological soulmates, and was amazed to discover that the latter didn't think so. Since then the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction, with common interests in trade and diplomacy being obscured by the question of control over several square miles of uninhabitable terrain in the Himalayas. India's nuclear weapons programme was begun soon after China's first nuclear explosions in 1964. Its subsequent impetus was provided by a threat perception from the Chinese, as George Fernandes wittingly or unwittingly revealed during the run-up to Pokhran II. China's response has been to tie down India by providing the Pakistanis with nuclear know-how, now the principal bone of contention between the two nations. It is this overall context that Delhi should take into account in a realistic view and try to lessen tensions with the Chinese, instead of being tied to obsolete postures. China today has changed radically from the China of the Mao years, it now wishes to engage in the global game of trade, investment and negotiated settlement of disputes. If it makes belligerent sounds, it is usually to measure how far the other party will bend. In dealing with them, Delhi's mindset requires a corresponding overhaul. It must let go of old ideological animuses, exemplified, for example by George Fernandes's attitudes. At the same time it must be willing to hold the line where its real interests are involved. As far as the Karmapa goes, it should give him shelter but not allow him to become a bargaining ploy with the Chinese.

THE STATESMAN

13 MAR 2000

Chamling plea to end Karmapa row soon

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

GANGTOK, March 18. — The Sikkim chief minister, Mr Pawan Chamling, seems to be in two minds on who should head the Karma Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

"We had earlier requested New Delhi to instal 16-year-old Ugyen Thinley Dorje as 17th Karmapa at Rumtek monastery, but now the situation has changed," Mr Chamling told a group of journalists here.

Though he didn't mention it, the chief minister was obviously referring to the difference of opinions among the Rumtek Rimpoches about the real successor of the 16th Karmapa. Mr Chamling, however, said: "I am not going to decide who will hold the rein of the Kagyu sect. It is the job of the pundits (Buddhist religious leaders)."

Buddhist groups in Sikkim and other parts of the country have been pressuring the Sikkim Democratic Front government to ensure safe entry of Ugyen Thinley Dorje in the Rumtek as soon as possible. The chief minister too admitted that people want the new Karmapa to take his throne at the Dharma Chakra Centre in

Rumtek and perform puja for the welfare of the world. He, however, said the issue should be settled by the Centre.

Washing his hand of the controversy, Mr Chamling said: "The issue has become sensitive, and therefore, my government will not intervene."

1981 and Ugyen Thinley was identified as his reincarnation in 1992. The temporal head of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama, and heads of two other Buddhist sects also recognised Ugyen Thinley as the 17th Karmapa.

But Shamar Rimpoche, one of



Ugyen Thinley Dorje

Rumtek monastery, 28 km from here, is the headquarters of the Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism since the 16th Karmapa fled the Tsurphu monastery in Lasha in 1960 to avoid Communist China's repression and made Rumtek his religious centre.

The 16th Karmapa died in



Mr Pawan Chamling

the three Rimpoches at Rumtek, had been opposing Ugyen and claiming Thinley Thaye Dorje as the real head of the Kagyu sect.

A Buddhist devotee told UNI here that since the 17th Karmapa (Ugyen Thinley) had left Tsurphu monastery, he should have his seat at

Rumtek.

For study the Kagyu's living god may stay at any monastery, but he has to be sheltered at Rumtek since his predecessor, the 16th Karmapa, chose Sikkim as his new religious centre.

Meanwhile, many Buddhist associations have expressed different opinions over who should succeed the 16th Karmapa.

The dispute among the three regents of Rumtek has also affected the study of the budding lamas in the monastery for almost a decade now. While Situ Rimpoche and Gyaltzab Rimpoche are backing Ugyen Thinley, Shamar Rimpoche, is insisting on enthroning Thinlay Thaye Dorje since 1992.

Another Rumtek regent, Kongtrul Rimpoche, died in a mysterious accident in Siliguri in early nineties before the 17th Karmapa was disclosed.

According to some sources, all these incidents are affecting the sect's reputation.

Shamarpa had suggested that while Ugyen Thinley may take over the Tsurphu monastery in Lhasa, Thaye Thinley be allowed to stay in Rumtek.

Fresh twist to Karmapa controversy

Sikkim body asks for Karmapa to be installed at Rumtek

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
GANGTOK, FEB 5

WITH the Centre still "undecided" over granting asylum to the 14-year-old Urgyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa of the Karma Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism, Denzong Nang-Ten Sung-Kyob (DNST), an apolitical organisation, has requested Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee for installation of the "rival" claimant of the 17th reincarnation of the Gyalwa Karmapa at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim.

Rumtek Dharma-Chakra Centre (DCC) is the seat-in-exile of the Karma Kagyu sect, some 24 km east of Gangtok. The DNST in a memorandum to the PM on January 28, copies of which were released to the media here on Saturday, had requested the PM to provide necessary assistance and security to the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, Trinley Thaye Dorje, for his "safe" passage and arrival at his permanent seat at Rumtek DCC.

The DNST, a pro-Sharmar Rimpoché organisation, is opposed to the 14-year-old 17th reincarnation of the Karmapa. The memorandum said, the Rumtek DCC in Sikkim has been the international



Urgyen Trinley Dorje (right), the 17th Karmapa, at the Gyodo monastery in Dharamsala, on Thursday - AFP

headquarters of the Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism ever since 1959 when the 16th Karmapa established the centre after his flight from Tibet in the wake of the Chinese "takeover" of their homeland. The DCC has been without a head (the Karmapa is the spiritual head of the Kagyu sect) ever since the 16th Karmapa passed away in 1981.

Tkunzing Shamar Rimpoché, one of the four Rumtek regents had recognised Trinley Thaye Dorje as the "authentic" reincarnation of the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa,

Tai-Situ Rimpoché were banned from entering Sikkim after the Rumtek DCC witnessed violent clashes between warring factions in 1993.

The Jamgon Kongtrul Labrang (JKL) or the supreme administrative body of the Jamgon Kuntrul Rimpoché's monastery in Lava in Kalimpong, the seat of the fourth Rumtek regent the late third Jamgon Kuntrul Rimpoché, strongly refuted media reports that he along with Shamar Rimpoché had "questioned" the "letter of prediction" of the 17th reincarnation of the Karmapa left behind by the late 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, Ranjung Riggpa Dorje.

JKL general secretary, Tenzing Dorjee said reports about the "questioning" and the claim that the late Rimpoché had "recognised a Sikkimese boy as the 17th reincarnation of the Karmapa, was totally unfounded and baseless.

Dorjee said the regent had offered his personal views about the letter of prediction in an interview, his last before death in April 1992.

The release of the JKL also clarified that unlike the recognition of other tulkus or reincarnate monks, the tradition of recognition of successive reincarnations of the Gyalwa Karmapas have been in accordance with the prophecies left behind by the previous incarnations and confirmed by the Dalai Lama.

Both Shamar Rimpoché and

divided into two factions, one headed by regent Tai-Situ Rimpoché another by regent Galtasab Rimpoché who recognise Urgyen Trinley Dorjee as the 17th Karmapa.

The other faction led by the third Rumtek regent, Shamar Rimpoché is opposed to the claim and has recognised another Tibetan born boy, 17-year-old Trinley Thaye Dorjee, who was brought to India and enthroned as the 17th Karmapa in New Delhi in 1995.

Both Shamar Rimpoché and

Karmapa shouldn't head Rumtek, warns Buddhist leader

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Feb. 9. — Allowing Ugyen Trinley Dorjee, the 17th Karmapa who recently fled from China and surfaced in Dharamshala, to head the Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim can create a "Kashmir-like situation" in the state, a senior Buddhist leader has warned.

Kunzig Shamar Rimpoche (Sharmarpa), the second highest leader of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, said the Rumtek Monastery could become an "extension" of China and that of the Tsupphu Monastery in Tibet which was headed by the Karmapa before he fled.

The Sharmarpa alleged that the Karmapa had come with an "assurance" for the people of Sikkim that China would support their fight for independence if he was allowed to head Rumtek. "If the Indian government doesn't want trouble in Sikkim, they shouldn't allow the Karmapa to head the Rumtek Monastery."

He ridiculed claims by the 14-year-old monk that he had sneaked out from the window of the monastery, trekked 900 km in snow-bound Himalayas for a week before reaching Dharamshala.

"The room from which the Karmapa claims to have sneaked out is on the sixth floor of the monastery. How could he jump from the sixth floor, fool the Chinese security and reach Dharamshala unnoticed?"

The Rumtek Monastery, 25 km from Sikkim, was constructed on 74 acres given by the then Chogyal. Monks at the monastery are divided into two groups.

One is headed by Tai Situ Rimpoche who recognises the 14-year-old monk as the 17th Karmapa and head of the monastery, while the other faction is headed by Shamar Rimpoche (the Sharmarpa) who opposes the former's claim and recognises a 17-year-old — Trinley Thiye Dorjee — as the 17th Karmapa.

Both, Tai Situ Rimpoche and Shamar Rimpoche (Sharmarpa) were banned from entering Sikkim after the Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre, the seat-in-exile of the Karma Kagyu sect, witnessed violent clashes between factions in 1993.

The Sharmarpa claimed that nearly 240 monks were "chased out" from Rumtek in 1993. Those who were chased out included the Sharmarpa.

THE STATESMAN
10 FEB 2000

Karmapa, Dalai Lama share stage

Dharamsala, Feb. 18 (AP) — The Karmapa, who recently fled Chinese-controlled Tibet, joined the Dalai Lama today in the first joint appearance of Tibetan Buddhists' two most important spiritual figures.

At the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's enthronement at age 4, there was little interaction between the two who, close aides say, have formed a strong bond in recent weeks.

The Karmapa, seeking religious instructions that the Chinese authorities denied him, crossed secretly with his entourage into India on January 5.

The Karmapa, 14, was among four senior lamas who appeared on the upper pavilion of the Namgyal Monastery to join the celebration here, seat of the Dalai Lama's government in exile.

The Dalai Lama smiled and

laughed through much of the four-hour ceremony. He briefly tapped the Karmapa's hand as he blessed the monks and lamas.

The crowd could not see the ceremony but listened over loudspeakers to the festivities, which included the sharing of food, dances and singing, and the offering of gifts and prayers for the Dalai Lama's long life.

Born as the 14th heir to Tibet's 600-year-old religious dynasty, the Dalai Lama was driven into exile in 1959 at the age of 24 following a failed uprising against Chinese troops who had taken over the Himalayan nation nine years earlier. He has lived in India for most of the past four decades.

The Dalai Lama has held five meetings with the Karmapa since his arrival here, including a visit yesterday during dress rehearsals for the ceremony and on Tibetan

New Year's Day.

The Karmapa's selection was one of the few points of agreement between Beijing and the Tibetan government in exile and his flight to India has dealt a setback to China.

In one of the public audiences he has given since beginning his studies with senior teachers at Gyuto Monastery outside Dharamsala, the Karmapa said it was impossible to practice the basic teaching of Buddhism — compassion — without freedom.

There has been speculation about the Karmapa's future role. His Karma Kagyu sect was once the most powerful in Tibet, before the ascendancy of the Dalai Lama's sect.

There have been fears that during the period between the Dalai Lama's death and the selection and education of what the Tibetan Buddhists would consider his reincarnation, a leadership

vacuum could develop among Tibetan exiles.

Whether or not the Karmapa could fill that role remains to be seen. The Union government has not yet decided on his status, although the Dalai Lama has requested that he be granted asylum.

Even after the Dalai Lama and the monks left, the crowd remained in the courtyard, performing dances and chanting.

Many groups had travelled from Tibet, Nepal and south India to perform for the Dalai Lama and witness the ceremony.

Tashi Dolma, a member of the Tibetan Women's Association here, said: "It's a lucky day to celebrate the 60th anniversary and we hope we can celebrate the same next year in Tibet."

Tenzin Tsanchoe, 24, another woman from Dharamsala, said: "It's great that the Karmapa is

here. But above all, the Tibetans consider his holiness (the Dalai Lama) the highest."

Rimpoché remarks

The joint action committee of all Sikkim Buddhist organisations today urged Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to "contain" the Shamar Rimpoché, one of the four Runték regents opposed to the Karmapa, from spreading discord among the Buddhist community in India.

The committee, in a letter to Vajpayee, asked him to take serious note of the Rimpoché's press statement terming the JAC as "anti-India and a tool of the Chinese." The letter says: "Shamar

Rimpoché's statements are disturbing, as he is not even an Indian citizen and his status is not clear. That he should be making such misleading statements against Indian citizens is unthinkable."

The Tibet tangle

By C. V. Gopalakrishnan

10-12 1522
RECOLLECTIONS OF a fictional presentation of Tibetan perceptions of other-worldliness and salvation by an American writer during the early Sixties could be of some relevance to what is now going on. The story is about Tibetan monks engaged in writing down, with a small string of words taken from their sacred books, innumerable permutations and combinations which they believed would run to nine billion names of God. Once this task was completed in about a few thousand years by successive generations of writers, the world would come to an end to give the human race its long sought-after liberation. An American visitor made an offer — and it was gladly accepted by the monks — that a high-powered computer in his possession could complete the task within a few weeks though he did not for a moment believe the myth about the nine billion names. His computer completed the job very quickly and he left Tibet. The story ends with the entire world with the sky and the stars fading out along with him. He was witnessing the promised end of the world and its "liberation" into eternity which the monks had been looking forward to.

The story might well have been written to throw some light on Tibet's longing for remaining in a state of serenity, which it would like the rest of the world to respect, and on the arrival of the Karmapa in India. It should also invite attention to matters about which little is known, either in this country or elsewhere. According to a press report from Beijing, "China still says that the Karmapa left Tibet to collect symbolic ritual implements that belonged to the previous Karmapa Lama." If this is true, the Karmapa should be returning to China and there is no question of his causing embarrassment to either India or China. Even the Dalai Lama would not have crept into Indian awareness had he not sought refuge in this country in 1959, much to the discomfiture of New Delhi because of the resentment in Beijing against what was deemed

refusal by the Tibetan spiritual leader to submit to the overlordship of China. It is quite possible that the thought of any subordination to Beijing's political authority was far from the Dalai Lama's mind because of his perception that temporal power and the ecclesiastical way of life need not clash.

This should recall the old prescription, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." A pronouncement like that coming from a spiritual or religious head would sound credible and would be ac-

cepted unquestioningly if the "Kingdom of God" is not riven by contestants claiming divine descent. Media reports about the refusal by some of the Sikkim-based adherents of the Kagyu school to recognise Ugyen Trinley Dorje as the 17th Karmapa should point to the schisms in Tibet's ecclesiastical order.

Media reports from China raise doubts whether it sticks to the marxist disdain for religion. It recently "enthroned" a two-year-old boy Raigen and has expressed the hope that he would love the ruling communist party. The Government's decision was conveyed to the boy by Mr. Legog, Chairman of the Tibet Regional Peoples Government when he visited the "reincarnation" of Raigen, the living Buddha. The Xinhua news agency further said the Raigen would carry on the tradition of patriotism "embodied by the former living Buddhas as well as their desire to preserve the unity of the Chinese nation".

Defending the enthronement of the "Raigen Buddha", Mr. Zhu Bangzao, Foreign Ministry Spokesman, said that the ritual was held in the Potala Palace in Lhasa in accordance with a historical ritual and religious ceremony. The report should sound astonishing to many, par-

ticularly of an earlier generation, brought up in the belief that communism was a total break with all matters relating to religion. It would appear that Beijing has made a break with traditional marxist perceptions of religion; it has shown a readiness to come to terms with religious figures provided they "love the ruling communist party". This should not really be surprising because the red carpet which Beijing has been rolling out to multinational corporations — and to which gesture there has been a tremendous response — is as an indication that it is now

back its lost territory. The theocratic rule of Tibet dates back to Kublai Khan, celebrated Mongol emperor, making Lama Phakpa Lodo Gyaltsen of the Sakya sect vice-regent of the Mongols (1235-74 A.D.). The image of a theocracy dedicated to monasticism thrown up by the Dalai Lama would dissolve when we are told that the Dalai Lama Lobzang Gyatso waged a war against Ladakh in 1679 to end the persecution of the Gelukpa sect by its King, Delek Namgyal.

If Tibetans cherished their aloofness, invaders and explorers from beyond were drawn by it. Jesuits first came to the country from China in the 1660s. One of them, Ippolito Desiderati, who had obviously come to spread the Gospel found his way to a lamastery to study Lamaism with the intention of refuting it but found himself absorbed in the massive 115 volumes of the Tibetan classic, "Kaangbur". His voluminous accounts of Lhasa, Tibetan capital, were accumulated in the archives of the Society of Jesus. Tibet was prised open by the Great Trigonometric Survey initiated, prior to the Indian Mutiny of 1858, by a band of officers and geologists such as Capt. I. G. Montgomerie. The survey led to the discovery of previously "unknown Stone Age tribes still living deep in the Indian jungles and trying to stand waist-deep in the quaking mire of mangrove swamps while trying to hold their sighting poles on firm bottom". (*The Oriental Adventure: Explorers of the East* by Timothy Severin: Angus and Robertson, London).

If Tibetan monasticism clung to its "secrets", resolute Himalayan explorers like Sir Francis Younghusband still managed to crack open many of them. While giving us glimpses of the mind of the Tibetan monastic, he writes, "Time is nothing to him and the same characteristic of dogged obstinacy distinguishes the Mongolian character in general, and the Tibetan in particular (*op.cit*)". The Tibetan ascetic, as it would seem from the story of the nine billion names of God, stays in an eternity beyond time and space.

If Tibetans cherished their aloofness, invaders and explorers were drawn by it.

Dalai Lama sure of his return to Tibet

Washington, February 28

185-14

TIBETAN SPIRITUAL leader the Dalai Lama, living in exile in India, has said he is certain of his return to Tibet and expected that India would allow the young Buddhist monk Karmapa Lama to stay in the country.

"The day of our return (to Tibet) with a certain degree of freedom will definitely come. I will definitely achieve that within my lifetime, I think," he was quoted as saying in an interview to the Newsweek magazine.

Stating that in the long run his approach to peace and non-violence was the best, the Dalai said, "we suffer because of China's violent policies. If we ourselves follow that path, it is illogical. The Chinese Communists have not learnt this. They still think the gun is the ultimate solution."

The Dalai said he was surprised when the 17th Karmapa, 14-year-old Ogyen Trinley Dorje who fled Tibet in the first week of January, appeared before his government-in-exile in Dharamsala.

The Karmapa's first words to him was he that wanted to serve Buddha Dharma as well as the Tibetan people which was difficult in Tibet.

There was no other alternative except escape, in spite of great risks, the Dalai said, adding that the young monk did leave a note saying that he was not against his monastery and his people.

The Dalai Lama said he thinks that the Government of India will allow the Karmapa to remain here. Certainly he wants to stay here and study.

The Karmapa, the Dalai Lama pointed out, is one of the highest Lamas having a large number of followers.

"Once he joins me here (Dharamshala), naturally it will strengthen my hand. He can be a boost to Tibetan aspirations."

The Karmapa is a young Lama who wants to study Buddhism properly. That is why he escaped. "That is the reality."

"(But) on the Chinese side, they think every move is political. Karmapa's escape was, to them, political. Even my retreat is seen by the Chinese as political. There is too much politics, too much suspicion," he told the magazine.

Asking the Chinese government to think seriously about Karmapa's escape, the Dalai said his was not the first (defection).

Another high Lama from the Kumbum monastery (in Tibet), who was supported by China, escaped last year to south America, he said, adding "these are symptoms of something gone wrong" (with China's approach).

On the state of religious freedom in Tibet, the Dalai Lama said that superficially, there is some religious freedom, but there are restrictions on serious practice.

The Chinese want religious people to be patriotic towards the Communist Party. "But how can that happen? The Communists destroyed Tibetan Buddhism. A religious person should be faithful towards the destroyer of religion? That is difficult," he said.

On the reported feeling among people that China had tried to manipulate the tradition of reincarnation, the Dalai Lama said, "it is a totally senseless thing."

"How can someone who does not believe in religion, specifically Buddhism, foist a reincarnation?... The aspirations of the Tibetan people cannot be changed by manipulations." (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 FEB 2000

Tibet issue has China in a spot, says Dalai Lama

The Times of India News Service

SARNATH (Varanasi):



Dalai Lama

(Varanasi): The supreme Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, said on Saturday that on the question of Tibet the Chinese government faced an embarrassing situation whenever the issue was raised as

their leaders had to opt for falsehood to justify their stand.

He said that the Sino-Tibetan relationship had witnessed many ups and downs over the last 50 years, but of late the Chinese attitude towards the Tibetans had become much harder and this had led to a communication problems since 1998. Talking to a group of media persons at the library of the Central Institute of Tibetan Higher Studies here, the Dalai Lama said that in recent years the Tibetan issue was becoming more sensitive and difficult for China and that their inconvenience was increasing day by day with the increase in the peaceful protest by the Tibetan sympathisers.

He said that China's present policy was harmful for both China and the Tibetans as it was not only damaging China's image in the world but also posing problems for the Tibetans. He said that he had been talking about the adoption of 'madhy-marg' (middle path) for the meaningful solution of the Tibetan crisis as it would not only protect the cultural heritage and life-style of Tibetans but also ensure better prospects for the Chinese.

The Dalai Lama, replying to a query, said that the Indian government had been 'over-cautious' in maintaining its relationship with China on the question of Tibet. "There is no need of being 'over-cautious' to such an extent as I think that India is a democratic country and the people have a sympathetic role as they are concerned about the Tibetan people."

He, however, said that the Indian government had provided the maximum level in rehabilitation and education of refugee Tibetans. "We are fully satisfied with the sympathetic role of the government of India", the Dalai Lama said. Talking about the institutional position of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, he said that it was in the hands of the people of Tibet.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 4 JAN 2000

Rumtek 'head' flees Tibet, reaches Dharamsala

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA 51-8

GANGTOK, Jan. 6. — The 17th Gyalwa Karmapa has escaped from Tibet's Tshurpu monastery and trekked to Dharamsala, it was confirmed today.

The news has been welcomed by many at Sikkim's Rumtek monastery, where controversy has raged for eight years over whether the 17th Karmapa is its "reincarnated" head.

Officials of the Tibetan "government-in-exile" at Dharamsala said over telephone today that the Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorjee (15), reached the hill town in Himachal Pradesh yesterday.

He is believed to be at the Chonor guest house in McLeodganj, Dharamsala, where he reportedly met the Dalai Lama today.

Unconfirmed reports said the "reincarnated" Karmapa trekked for more than 11 days and entered India from Nepal. Officials of the Tibetan "gov-



A file photograph of Rumtek monastery in Sikkim.

ernment-in-exile", however, refused to reveal details of the flight.

The Karmapa is the religious head of the Kagyupa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, which has its religious seat at Tshurpu monastery. The sect has its headquarters-in-exile at Sikkim's Rumtek Dharma Chakra Centre. The Rumtek monastery has been wracked by controversy — ever since its

founder, the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa died in 1991 — over who his "real incarnate" is.

The confirmation of the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa's arrival in India has been greeted with fanfare across Sikkim. Delighted monks at Rumtek plan a celebration tomorrow.

Monastery sources said a team would leave for Dharamsala tomorrow to meet the Karmapa. The team will

then meet the chief minister, Mr PK Chamling, and request him to take the matter up with the Centre and bring the Karmapa to Rumtek as soon as possible. The Joint Action Committee of the 37 Buddhist Organisations of Sikkim was more guarded in its reaction. The committee, which has spearheaded the movement to bring the Tibet-born Karmapa over to Rumtek, said: "It is still too early to comment. The details of His Holiness's arrival are still sketchy."

"The committee will, however, meet soon to discuss the latest development and chalk out its course of action," said Kunzang Sherab, JAC president.

The Dharma Chakra Centre at Rumtek, 24 km from here, was established by the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa in 1959 after the Chinese overran Tibet. The centre is affiliated to Nalanda University. The 9th Karmapa had earlier built a monastery at Rumtek in 1730. It was destroyed in a fire.

Boy Lama recovering after epic trek

HD-12
BEIJING, JAN. 7 The boy Lama, who escaped from Chinese Communist rule to India, reached Dharamsala after an epic trek across the Himalayas at the worst time of the year. The 14-year-old is now recovering.

It is not clear how he started his 900-mile journey from his remote monastery home, 30 miles north-west of the capital, Lhasa.

The Lama started the trek last week on foot, crossing mountain passes and heavy snow, before arriving at Dharamsala. "He's extremely exhausted," a Dharamsala source said.

The Karmapa is being shielded from visitors and Chinese authorities, who are enraged at losing a religious leader they had been grooming as a "patriotic" tool in their 50-year campaign to suppress Tibetan independence.

The situation is so fragile that the Tibetan Government-in-exile has not yet confirmed whether the Karmapa is in Dharamsala, though an announcement is expected in the next two days.

The young Karmapa is the head of the powerful Kagyupa sect, often nicknamed the "Black Hat" sect, which was one of the first to attract Western devotees in large numbers. There are major monasteries and centres in places as far as Woodstock, in America, and Eskdalemuir in Scotland.

The president of the North American branch of the sect, Tenzin Chonyi, said today that the news of their leader's escape was "like a miracle."

Chonyi, who was the personal attendant of the 16th Karmapa and fled with him from Tibet in 1959, received "reliable information" on Wednesday from disciples in Dharamsala that the Karmapa had arrived with four companions. "We have received information that he has met the Dalai Lama," added Chonyi.

He described the young priest as a great religious leader and the

reincarnation of the 16th Karmapa. "From the first time I met him, when he was eight years old, you could tell," he said.

The Dalai Lama is labelled as a "terrorist" by the Chinese authorities.

The Dalai has not set foot in his homeland since he fled during a failed uprising in 1959, eight years after his capital Lhasa was "liberated" by Chinese forces. In contrast, the 17th Karmapa has been seen as a valuable ally of Beijing until his escape. The boy was the first high Lama ever to be officially approved in 1991 by the Chinese authorities.

He has been a guest at state ceremonies in Beijing. In 1995, his remote monastery was declared "outstandingly patriotic" and "law-abiding" by the authorities. The young Karmapa appears to have left his family behind in Tibet, unlike the Dalai Lama, whose mother and siblings stay in Dharamsala.

The Dalai Lama's brother, Tenzin Choegyal, who is known as TC, still runs a guest house in the small Indian hill town. The 17th Karmapa was born in 1985 to nomadic parents in the Lhathok region of Tibet. He was nicknamed Apo Gaga, or "happy brother" by his older sister.

His early life was divided between his family and a monastery, where he was given the special education befitting a boy believed to be the reincarnation of a previous Lama. In 1992, a party of monks, using a letter handed down by the 16th Karmapa before his death in 1981, reputedly found him with his parents in a camp he had chosen. The letter had been lost but was mysteriously found inside an amulet 11 years after the death. This led to a bitter dispute over the child's authenticity. However, in a gesture of co-operation that has never been repeated, the Dalai Lama and Beijing both approved the young Lama.

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The Karmapa's authenticity in the eyes of the Tibetans made him an asset in Beijing's fight to destroy the Dalai Lama's authority, by aggressive "atheism campaigns", and by raising their own "patriotic" Lamas under Communist control. When the Dalai Lama, who is 64, dies, there will be a fierce battle over his rightful reincarnation. The row will probably dwarf anything seen before, as Beijing strives to find its own credible candidate.

However, the Dalai Lama has already said that he will not be reborn in territory under Chinese control. Leading Lamas like the Karmapa, and the Panchen Lama, will carry immense sway.

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Karmapa's escape spotlights China repression

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK, Jan. 8. — The dramatic escape of Tibet's last primary Buddhist leader was the second incident in two days to show the Chinese government's persistent problems with organized religion.

The 15-year-old Karmapa, leader of one of Tibetan Buddhism's four sects, reportedly arrived Wednesday at Dharamsala, to meet the Dalai Lama, Tibet's political ruler in exile.

On Thursday, Catholics aligned with China's communist regime ordained five new bishops not recognized by Rome. This was on the very day that Pope John Paul II, was conducting his annual elevation of new bishops from around

the world. The thing was interpreted as a snub, that dooms at least for now. Vatican efforts to normalize the church situation.

China has also detained thousands of Falun Gong followers since outlawing the spiritual movement five months ago.

The harrowing flight of the Karmapa across the Himalayas "reveals the shambles of China's policy of trying to manage religion," says Mr Robert Thurman, Columbia University professor and friend of the Dalai Lama. "Their suppression is not working, and their attempt to pretend to get along with Buddhism doesn't work, either."

Mr John Ackerly, President of the International Campaign for Tibet in Washington, said the Beijing regime

tried to use the Karmapa "to showcase their religious freedom policies. It will make it much more embarrassing that he's been so highly covered by official media."

Mr Thurman said it was essential for the Karmapa to leave in order to receive a thorough Buddhist education and pass on his tradition, which was impossible under Chinese control.

"Some distinguished teachers still remain behind, but among the leaders of the major forms of Tibetan Buddhism, it has become necessary to escape in order to practice their religion," said Mr Donald Lopez, professor of Tibetan studies at the University of Michigan.

The only major Buddhist figure in Tibet, said Mr Lopez, is the Panchen

Lama. But he "has absolutely no status with the Tibetan people" because the Dalai Lama has recognized a different youth whose whereabouts are unknown.

China and the Vatican have had no formal relations since 1951, when the communist party kicked out missionaries and forced Catholics to sever ties with the latter. The Chinese government refuses to accept the Pope's authority to appoint and consecrate bishops worldwide, and has authorized an official Catholic church.

Activist sentenced: A 19-year-old Chinese activist has been sentenced to three years in prison, DPA reported from Beijing, quoting the Hong Kong-based information centre for democracy and human rights.

China downplays defection of 'living Buddha', Karmapa

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
BEIJING, JAN 8

CHINA on Saturday attempted to downplay the embarrassing defection of a top Tibetan spiritual leader which has ruptured mainland plans to control incarnations and undermine support for the Dalai Lama, observers said.

With the exception of the *China Daily*, an English-language publication aimed at foreign readers, the official media was totally silent on the secret departure of Ugyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th living Buddha Karmapa. "Living Buddha simply went abroad," said the *China Daily*, reiterating a brief comment issued on Friday on the official *Xinhua* news agency's English service but omitted on its Chinese-language

service and on television.

The Chinese authorities confirmed that the 14-year-old Karmapa, the third-highest ranking Tibetan spiritual leader, had left Tibet, but without acknowledging he had defected to the Dalai Lama, Beijing's sworn enemy.

Xinhua quoted a government spokesman as saying he had left the Tsurphu monastery in Lhasa recently, leaving a letter saying he was going abroad to collect some religious instruments.

"This did not mean to betray the state, the nation, the monastery or the leadership," he said in a letter, according to *Xinhua*.

"The guarded response from the Chinese authorities to the news of the Karmapa's arrival in India and the fact that they have not denounced him, suggests that they



Karmapa Lama arrives at a guest house in Dharamsala after meeting the Dalai Lama on Saturday — Reuters

the Karmapa might return to Tibet in the near future," said the London-based Tibet Information Network.

"Tibetans have been concerned for some time about Chinese attempts to manipulate the Karmapa and use him for their own political purposes, such as undermining support for the Dalai Lama in Tibet," said the Tibet Information Network.

The Karmapa is the spiritual leader of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, and ranks third in the Tibetan spiritual hierarchy behind the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama.

He was enthroned on September 27, 1992, at Tsurphu monastery and his reincarna-

tion was the first to be recognised by China's atheist government, making him a key figure in the propaganda war over Tibet.

According to a website (www.maiti.net/tsurphu/karmapa) run by the US-based Tsurphu foundation, the Karmapa had spent seven days walking out of Tibet and was now staying with the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala.

The extremely hazardous, high-altitude trek to Dharamsala was also made by the Dalai Lama when he fled Tibet in 1959 after Beijing brutally suppressed an uprising against Chinese rule.

Tin said that since his enthronement in 1992, the boy has made officials visits to China during which he has been received by some of its highest officials, including President Jiang Zemin

Exile spotlights China's religious repression

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK, JAN 8

THE dramatic escape into exile of Tibet's last primary Buddhist leader was the second incident in two days to show the Chinese government's persistent problems with organized religion.

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bishops from around the world. That timing was interpreted as a snub that dooms, at least for now, Vatican efforts to normalize the church situation.

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"Some distinguished teachers still remain behind. But among the leaders of the major forms of Tibetan Buddhism, all have now felt it necessary to escape in order to practice their religion," said Donald Lopez, professor of Tibetan studies at the University of Michigan.

Lama defection a Chinese plot, says Rumtek Rimpoche

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Jan. 8. — The 14th Sharmapa Rimpoche of the Karma Kagyu sect has denounced the arrival in McLeodganj of Ugyen Trinlay Dorji, recognised as the 17th Karmapa by the Chinese government in 1992.

The Rimpoche today said the Karmapa's arrival in the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile and home of the Dalai Lama was a Chinese ploy to take possession of the black crown and other spiritual belongings of the sect, now in safe-keeping at Sikkim's Rumtek monastery.

"Ugyen Trinlay is an innocent boy who should not be used for political purposes." According to him, the lama

■ Another report
on page 12

came here with Chinese support. "I don't believe he escaped or came without their permission. The flight was designed to divert attention from Thaye Dorji (the other Karmapa) who was recognised according to our sacred traditions."

Thaye Dorji had begun his teaching and received worldwide recognition from the followers of the Karma Kagyu.

India reacted cautiously to the defection, saying it was inquiring into the circumstances of his reported arrival and its consequences. China has so far played down the flight, saying that if it was indeed an escape, it would expect India not to harbour the

■ See LAMA: page 10

LAMA:

(Continued from page 1)

lama and add to its embarrassment.

The Karmapa, who is always a reincarnation of his predecessor, is "discovered" on the basis of a prediction made by the latter. Four regents had been appointed for the purpose by the last Karmapa. Differences ensued between them after his death, which ultimately led the Sharmarpa Rimpoche — the second most important dignitary of the sect — to enthrone another boy from Tibet, Trinlay Thaye Dorji, as the 17th Karmapa, in March 1994. The Dalai Lama had earlier approved the consecration of Ugyen Trinlay.

The Sharmarpa said he recognised the Tibetan government-in-exile and didn't think the Dalai Lama's support to the "Chinese" Karmapa to be wholehearted. He expected the Indian government to take cognisance of the seriousness of the situation and take appropriate measures.

He said he had wanted to send the "prediction letter" discovered by the Situ Rimpoche in 1989 for a forensic examination, but refrained from doing so, and added that his talks with the Dalai Lama in June 1992 had been brought forcibly to an end because some said there was a risk of a "blood-bath".

On whether he expected any violence now, he said: "Not from our side. From their side, I don't know." He said the Chinese government was trying to revive the old imperial law in Tibet, whereby Beijing would be able to manipulate high religious functions in Tibet to its own advantage.

The Tibetan government-in-exile today confirmed that the third highest lama of Tibetans had indeed defected and reached Dharmashala at the end of a clandestine and tortuous journey across the Himalayas, adds UNI.

Karmapa Lama shifted to a secret location

HT Correspondent

Dharamsala, January 9

AFTER REMAINING four days in 'Chogor' lodge of the Norbulingka Institute at McLeod Ganj, the 17th Karmapa, Gyen Trinley Dorjee (14), early this morning was "shifted" to an unknown place. Unconfirmed reports, however, point out that the Karmapa was taken to Sidhbadhi Monastery some 10 kilometres from here.

Meanwhile, another story making the rounds was that perhaps, the Karmapa could be in Sherabing Monastery in Bajmath. For, Sherabing is the Monastery of Tai Situ Rimpoche, who was a disciple of the 16th Karmapa, and he was instrumental in searching this 17th incarnation of the Karmapa.

Police officials of Kangra neither denied nor confirmed that the Karmapa was somewhere near Sidhbadhi. Soon after the news spread about his "unexpected" arrival as Tibetans point out, McLeodganj had become centre-stage of attraction. Massive

pressure from the Press to see him, the Tibetans' unending requests for audience and his security are the reasons being cited by the Tibetan and HP police officials, behind taking Karmapa to an unknown place.

A senior police officer hinted that, Karmapa will be shifted again within two-three days.

A top Tibetan official confirmed that the Tibetan Government is approaching the Union Government to get political asylum for the Karmapa. The officer requesting anonymity said "About four days back His Holiness, the Dalai Lama personally took up this matter with the Government of India. He sought political asylum for the Karmapa."

The Tibetan community has termed the arrival of Karmapa as "a significant development". Top brass of the Tibetan Government

argue that the Karmapa, fleeing from Lhasa is a testimony that things are not right in Tibet. Meanwhile, observers watching this development closely feel that 'this will have a bearing on Sino-Indian relations also.'



The 17th Karmapa leaving a guesthouse in Dharamshala on Sunday. Photo: AP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

10 JAN 2000

HC-13 Out of Tibet

THE ESCAPE of the 14-year old Karmapa Lama from Lhasa will not only revive memories of the Dalai Lama's flight to freedom from the Tibetan capital four decades ago but also underline the point that nothing really has changed in the Himalayan country. For all the efforts of the Chinese to bring up the boy lama as a "patriot", as opposed to the Dalai Lama's categorisation as a "terrorist", the Karmapa Lama chose to flee, no doubt because he saw his patriotism to Tibet as being far more intense than any such sentiments for China. The latest episode only confirms what has always been known — that the Tibetans continue to regard the Chinese as their colonisers. That the lama chose the "worst time of the year for a journey", to quote T. S. Eliot, travelling on foot over snow-bound mountain passes, showed his determination to escape from what he probably considered his prison despite all the facilities. The Dalai Lama's presence in India must have also acted as a beacon. Besides, it could not have been a secret to the 14-year old that the Dalai Lama's status as the spiritual leader of Tibet is acknowledged all over the world whereas the name of Panchen Lama, who stayed back in China, is nearly forgotten.

For the Chinese, the escape is an obvious embarrassment if only because it will further encourage the pro-Tibetan lobbies in the US and elsewhere which have never accepted the Chinese "conquest" of the roof of the world. The Chinese claim that all is now well in Tibet, and that the atrocities during the cultural revolution in the late sixties and early seventies were an aberration, will again be regarded with deep scepticism. Whether there is a Chinese "conspiracy", as has been suggested by some Buddhist groups in India, is still unclear. India, of course, has no role in this matter, and will have to say so in reply to any complaints that Beijing might make. The problem is between Tibet and China and if the Tibetans want to escape from Chinese "suzerainty" and seek refuge in India, we cannot turn them back just as we could not deny any hospitality to the Dalai Lama. Not only will it be against the Indian cultural tradition, the Chinese occupation of Tibet is also not quite the *fait accompli* as Beijing tends to believe. A supposedly "legal" presence in a country with the help of the army is no longer deemed adequate. The consent of the local people is also needed. The latest escape from Lhasa suggests that this may not be the case.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
10 JAN 2000

LONG TREK

The defection of Mr Ugyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th *gyalwa karmapa* of Tibet, to India has unsettled Beijing more than it cares to admit. The karmapa heads the third largest Tibetan Buddhist sect, the Kagyu-pa or "black hats". The karmapa, one Tibetan spiritual leader recognized mutually by the *dalai lama* and the Chinese government, has long been a showpiece for Beijing. His enthronement in 1992 was the first time communist China ever acknowledged a living Buddha. He was often extolled as an example of the benevolence of Beijing's minorities' policy. Five years ago the *dalai lama* and Beijing backed different candidates for the title of *panchen lama*. This led China to push the karmapa as a counter to the *dalai lama*. Along with this has come a sharp increase in Chinese repression of Tibetan Buddhist institutions, a resurrection of the heavy-handed policies that followed the 1987 Tibetan revolt. While it is unclear why the karmapa chose to flee to India, it is likely he and his followers found the new restrictions on state-sanctioned monasteries and nunneries suffocating. The karmapa was personally unhappy at being denied contact with his India based spiritual teacher. Beijing's attempts to use him against the *dalai lama* did not help matters.

That the 14 year old karmapa fled from Tibet to Dharamsala, avoiding Chinese authorities during the height of winter, is almost as great an embarrassment to Beijing as his defection. The karmapa's departure represents the most serious fallout of Chinese communist party's recent crackdown on rival civil institutions. No longer focussed solely on internal party dissidents or pro-democracy activists, Beijing's net now includes minority groups, religious sects, independent trade unions, artists, singers, even software developers. It has been particularly savage with the Falungong spiritual cult. Last month it took up cudgels against the Catholic church, with Beijing threatening to ordain three bishops without papal sanction. Beijing has also been concerned at spreading millenarian movements in rural China. Most scholars believe this civil unrest reflects the party's ideological moorings and the social dislocation caused by economic change. The Indian government has been silent about the karmapa's arrival. New Delhi's position is complicated by the existence of a rival karmapa who lives in India. India's position should be consistent on two points. First, that it unofficially accepts the *dalai lama* as Tibet's leader in exile and will follow his lead in intra-Tibetan squabbles. Second, until the story behind his departure is clearer, India will provide the karmapa sanctuary in the same way it has done to thousands of other Tibetans. India's succour to Tibetan refugees has long helped contrast the country's democratic credentials to China's totalitarianism. India's relations with China are on the mend. But it does not owe Beijing any special favours, especially when it comes to a problem that arises from the brutality of China's internal policies.

THE TELEGRAPH

10 JAN 2000

'Living Buddha' goes underground

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PALAMPUR (HP), JAN 9

KARMAPA Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the 14-year-old Buddhist monk who fled Tibet and reached Mcleodganj in Dharamshala, was on Sunday shifted to an undisclosed place amidst tight security, a spokesman of Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, said.

The Tibetan religious head of Kagyu sect, the third in seniority after the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, was shifted from a guest house at Mcleodganj to an undisclosed destination near Sidibari on the Dharamshala-Yol road in an early morning 'operation' hemmed by tight security cover provided by police, he said.

It is learnt that Indian government is being approached for grant of political asylum to Trinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa, but there was no official confirmation of this from the Dalai Lama's establishment.

On his arrival at Mcleodganj, Dorje had met the Dalai Lama on



Karmapa Trinley Dorje after his arrival in Tibet on Saturday - AFP

'Living Buddha' goes underground

January 5. In an unusual gesture, the Dalai Lama came out of his retreat and met the young monk for the second time on Saturday.

Later, Dorje drove to Chinar guest house where he had been staying along with his 24-year-old sister and five other companions.

The incident has put India in a dilemma and is believed to have indicated that he would not be given political asylum. However, he would neither be deported back to China, nor is likely to be allowed to go to the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, seat of the Karmapa Buddhist sect, according to highly placed sources in the Government.

New Delhi seems to have adopted this middle-of-the-road position because it's unwilling to either antagonise the Chinese, who had officiously blessed the incarnation of the Tibetan spiritual leader in a monastery at Lhasa on September 27, 1992, or interfere in the Tibetan politics within the country.

The official spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs merely said that New Delhi was

"inquiring into the circumstances attendant upon the sudden arrival in India of Dorje as also into the consequences of it."

The diplomatic fallout of the controversy will continue to be watched carefully over the next few days, with the coincidental arrival today of US Assistant Secretary of State Julia Taft, who is also, significantly, Washington's special coordinator on Tibet.

Diplomatic sources emphasised that Taft's arrival had nothing to do with the the young Tibetan spiritual leader's arrival in India, even as analysts pointed out that Tibetan affairs are an area of "mutual convergence" between India and the US.

Government sources in Delhi, meanwhile, defending their decision not to allow the young Lama official status of the Karmapa sect, pointed out that it was a "very sensitive issue, because that would affect Sino-Indian ties, which are looking up". The sources, however, added that it was also not possible for India to ask Dorje to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

return to China. "We can't throw him out either, because a number of Tibetan refugees enter India and he can stay here just like one of them," they said.

Clearly, though, Beijing seems to be terribly embarrassed by the "escape" of the boy, with nearly the entire Chinese media backing out from Tibet or his departure from Tibet or his arrival in Dharamshala.

The China Daily, an English-language publication aimed at foreign readers, on Saturday noted that "(the) Living Buddha simply went abroad", reiterating a brief comment on the official Xinhua news agency's English service but ignored by its Chinese-language service and television.

The Chinese authorities confirmed that the Karmapa had Left Tibet but without acknowledging he had defected to the Dalai Lama, Beijing's sworn enemy.

Xinhua quoted a government spokesman as saying he had left the Tsurphu monastery in Lhasa recently, leaving behind a letter saying he was going abroad to collect some musical instruments and black hats used by previous incarnations of the Karmapa Lama. "This did not mean to betray the State, the nation, the monastery or the leadership," he said in his letter, according to Xinhua.

Pilgrim of Peace

If China were India, the authorities in Beijing would have appointed an inquiry commission to probe the 'intelligence failure' which allowed Ugyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa of Tibetan Buddhism, to leave his monastery in Lhasa undetected and travel over 1,000 kilometres all the way across Tibet and into India. Then again, if China were India, the Karmapa might never have embarked upon such a dangerous journey, a journey reminiscent of the one undertaken by the Dalai Lama 41 years earlier in the wake of the Chinese invasion of Tibet. For all the supposed change in Beijing's traditionally hostile policy towards Tibetan religious and cultural practices, the Karmapa's flight is proof of the fact that the Chinese authorities still feel profoundly threatened by the region's autonomous temper. The excesses of the Cultural Revolution — when monasteries were desecrated and ransacked by Maoist zealots — may have given way to greater tolerance and *faux* mass produced Buddhist relics for sale to international tourists, but Tibet today remains a tightly controlled zone of unfreedom. The political intolerance of State Socialism and the excessive freedoms of the market economy have come together to undermine the spiritual plenitude and tranquillity of the land. By travelling to India in a dramatic manner, the boyish Karmapa has sent an unmistakable message to the Chinese government. If Tibet is really an integral part of China, Beijing should stop feeling so threatened by the region's desire for autonomy.

While New Delhi is embarrassed by the sudden arrival of the Karmapa — the 14-year-old is the third most revered figure in the Tibetan Buddhist clerical hierarchy and the only one officially recognised by the Chinese government — there is, in fact, no reason for discomfiture. India has always given sanctuary to those who have crossed its borders looking for help. The Vajpayee government is reportedly pondering over a request for political asylum made by the Dalai Lama on the Karmapa's behalf. The feeling in South Block is that humanitarian considerations must be balanced by the need to keep bilateral relations with Beijing on an even keel. After the chill which followed Mr George Fernandes' pronouncements on China in 1998 and the Pokhran II nuclear tests which came shortly after, relations between the two countries have been on the mend. Having said that, there is no reason why the Karmapa issue should come in the way of a further improvement. The only glitch is the presence in India of the Clinton administration's special envoy on Tibet; Beijing is bound to suspect the US has played a part in the Karmapa's flight. While granting the Tibetan leader the right to stay in India for as long as he likes, the government should avoid politicising or internationalising the matter. New Delhi should also tell the US in no uncertain terms that while its envoy is free to do whatever she likes on behalf of the Tibetan cause, she need not exert herself while on Indian soil. However, the most important lesson from the entire drama is one Beijing needs to learn. The Karmapa's place is with his people in Tibet but he fled because he was not allowed to travel or enjoy other democratic freedoms. While India is honoured to have him as a guest, it is essential that the Chinese government create the conditions for him to return to his homeland, where he is much needed by his flock.

THE TIMES OF INDIA
11 JAN 2000

Dharamshala rejects 'Chinese plot' charge

SOUMITRO DAS
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

McLEODGANJ, Jan. 10. — The 17th Karmapa of the Karma Kagyu sect, whisked away from the Chinari guest house here before dawn on Sunday, is at the Gyuto Rampoche temple at Sidhbari, 17 km from here.

Urgyen Trinlay Dorji (14) was shifted to ensure the "Karmapa gets good rest", said Tashi Wangdi, Tibetan minister-in-exile for religion and culture.

The minister wouldn't reveal the exact location where the Karmapa has been put up, but journalists were able to drive down to the place and have it confirmed by security staff on duty. The Karmapa's life was said to be under threat.

Wangdi held an informal meeting with

the Press this afternoon and said the Tibetan government-in-exile "has no intention of squeezing political mileage out of this".

What is the next move going to be, he was asked. "We shall be guided by his (the Karmapa's) wishes," Wangdi replied. He described the Karmapa as "mature and decisive and fully aware of the consequences" of his arrival in India.

The minister rejected the Sharmapa Rimpoche's charge that the lama's 'defection' was part of a Chinese plot to grab the black hat and other religious objects kept in the Sikkim monastery.

He, however, couldn't say whether the Karmapa would proceed to Rumtek, whether he would stay on indefinitely in India, or what he had discussed with the Dalai Lama.

The minister fended off most specific questions with evasive answers. What was the immediate cause behind the Karmapa's flight from Tibet? Nothing. Had Indian officials met representatives of the Tibetan government-in-exile? Enigmatic smile. What if the Karmapa is refused asylum? A shrug and a smile.

The minister did say, however, that Urgyen Trinlay Dorji was the true Karmapa, recognised by the Dalai Lama and venerated by the vast majority of Tibetans and other followers all over the world.

He praised India for its generosity towards Tibetans living in the country, and the religious freedom it allows them.

He reiterated the Dalai Lama's avowed desire to find a solution to the Tibet dispute within the framework of the Chinese position.

Uncertainty looms over Karmapa Rimpoche's future

□ Police tighten security for 14-yr-old Lama

□ JAC criticises Shamar Rimpoche faction

By Jagdish Bhatt and Agencies

SHIMLA: It had all the trappings of a great escape. But having reached McLeodganj on January 5 from Tibet along with his entourage of six, Ugyen Trinley Dorje, the 14-year-old Karmapa Rimpoche, now remains in isolation at the Tibetan centre here, close to the headquarters of the Tibetan government-in-exile.

There is a virtual clamour at the offices of the Tibetan government-in-exile from the press and others requesting an audience with one of the highest Lamas of the Kargyu school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Apprehending a "serious threat" to the life of the young spiritual leader, the police on Monday tightened security around Karmapa Rimpoche. Superintendent of police at Dharamsala K.C. Shadyal said.

"We are taking all possible measures to ward off threats to his life."

The Dalai Lama, who is reported to be in retreat, is said to have met the 14-year-old on two occasions. The first was on January 5, when the entourage landed at McLeodganj, and the second on January 8, a day before the Karmapa was shifted to the Tibetan centre.

Although it is not known what transpired between the Dalai Lama and the Karmapa, sources told this newspaper that the temporal and spiritual head of the Tibetans told the 14-year-old of the likely repercussions of his arrival in India.

Sources said efforts were on to seek political asylum for the Karmapa from the government of India, at least until such time as he can take a decision on his future plans. The Tibetan government-in-exile's self-styled minister for religion and culture, Tashi Wangdi, said, "If the Karmapa makes a strong request for asylum, India will definitely consider it on humanitarian grounds as the country has historically given asylum to all refugees." Asked whether granting him asylum would affect Indo-China relations, he said, "I hope it will

not have any adverse effect as this is a humanitarian issue."

On its part, the Indian government said no formal request had been received for "political asylum" from the Karmapa and that his status in India was still to be determined. To a question on whether the Chinese government had contacted India over the defection of the seventeenth Karmapa, an external affairs spokesperson said, "Not that I am aware of."

"There is a lot of uncertainty about the Karmapa's plans. Initial reports said he might like to move to Gangtok in Sikkim, where the

monastery of his predecessor, the sixteenth Karmapa Rimpoche, was established after he fled from China. But recent reports say that they are not willing to have him there, things are still in a flux," a source said.

There were also reports that he might move to the Sherabling monastery near Baijnath, about 70 km from Dharamsala. Sherabling is the monastery of Tai Situ Rimpoche, a close associate and disciple of the 16th Karmapa Rimpoche, who was also instrumental in searching for and establishing that Ugyen Trinley Dorje was the seventeenth reincarnation of Karmapa Rimpoche.

Local government officials said that as far as they were concerned, the matter now lay between the government of India and the Tibetan government-in-exile. "We will abide by the instructions we get from the Centre," an official said.

Meanwhile, in Gangtok, a joint action committee (JAC) of the All Sikkim Buddhist Organisation blamed the Shamar Rimpoche faction of the Rumtek Monastery regents for "acting with ulterior motives" on the seventeenth Karmapa issue. Shamar Rimpoche had earlier said in Delhi that Ugyen's "flight to freedom" was stage-managed in connivance with Chinese leaders in order to claim the 'black crown' and other belongings of the Karma Kagyu school, which were presently with Thaye Thinley Dorjee, based in West Bengal's Kalimpong.



Karmapa Rimpoche poses for a picture on Monday at an undisclosed location near Dharamsala.

Karmapa may seek asylum in U.S.

DHARAMSALA, JAN. 10. The 14-year-old Tibetan spiritual leader, who fled Chinese Communist rule across the Himalayas to India, was in hiding since Sunday amid speculation that he might go to America if India refuses him political asylum.

The Karmapa Lama left a guesthouse run by the Tibetan Government-in-exile shortly before dawn "for his own safety", in an apparent response to threats made against him by Tibetan opponents and any attempt by the Chinese to recapture him.

The teenager was taken to a safe house and is expected to move shortly to a monastery close to the northern India town of Dharamsala.

A final decision on asylum in India is expected to be made in New Delhi this week, but officials at the Indian External Affairs Ministry have indicated to the Tibetan Government-in-exile that his request may be refused.

Tibetan officials expect that the Karmapa - the third most senior figure in the Tibetan spiritual hierarchy after the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama - would be offered political asylum in the United States if New Delhi refuses his application.

Julia Tull, the co-ordinator for Tibetan affairs at the State Department, was said to be travelling from Washington to Dharamsala on Sunday to see him.

Technically, he is regarded as an illegal immigrant in India, which sent a high-ranking official in the External Affairs Ministry to see the Karmapa on Thursday.

Officials in New Delhi are thought to be keen to avoid further antagonising the Chinese, who have been severely embarrassed by the spiritual leader's flight to freedom.

However, the Tibetan government-in-exile was still hopeful on Sunday that despite the constraints in New Delhi, the Karmapa might be granted asylum in India.

The Karmapa is expected to move shortly to the Bharti monastery at Rajpouth, 40 minutes from Dharamsala, where security has been increased. The monastery is run by Tai Situ Rinpoche, his spiritual adviser, who was instrumental in his selection as the 17th Karmapa after discovering a prophetic letter from the 16th Karmapa in 1992.

The letter led him to a nomad's son in eastern Tibet whom he formally identified as the 17th living incarnation of Buddha. The boy was enthroned on September 27, 1992, when he was seven.

Tibetan officials were concerned that at the Chommar House guesthouse, which is a short distance from the Dalai Lama's official residence, the young Karmapa might be vulnerable to an attack by a rival Tibetan group or an attempt by the Chinese to recapture him.

The guesthouse is used by official visitors to Dharamsala, a former British hill station 400 miles north of New Delhi in the Himalayan foothills.

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Although he had made at least two formal visits to President Jiang Zemin in Beijing, aides said the Karmapa did not have complete freedom and was living under virtual house arrest at the 800-year-old Tsaraphu monastery, 30 miles from the Tibetan capital, Lhasa. He had been frustrated by Beijing's repeated refusal to allow him an exit visa to visit India.

The Karmapa, who arrived in Dharamsala on Wednesday after his nine-day trek with six aides, including his 24-year-old sister, had also wanted to move to the head-

quarters of his Kagyu school of Buddhism at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, the mountain state merged with India in 1975 where his predecessor settled after fleeing Tibet in 1959.

China has never recognised the merger and senior Indian officials said the Karmapa's move there would infuriate Beijing, just as New Delhi was attempting to thaw the traditionally frosty relations between the two countries following the recent visit to the Chinese capital by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

Officials in New Delhi are also aware that the five-million strong Kagyu school of Buddhism, of which the Karmapa is the spiritual leader and which has 300 monasteries worldwide, is deeply split over his enthronement and one of his leading opponents, Shamar Rinpoche, who appointed a rival Karmapa in 1994, is the regent in charge of the monastery in Sikkim.

There have been several clashes, at times violent, between supporters of the rival Karmapas and Indian officials said there would be a "potential timebomb" if the young Karmapa were allowed to travel to Sikkim. Shamar Rinpoche denounced on Sunday the Karmapa's flight as a "Chinese plot" to destabilise the Kagyu sect.

He claimed that the Karmapa's escape had been "stage managed" by the Chinese to enable him to claim the "Black Crown" and other belongings of the Kagyu school in the care of Thaye Dorje of Kadimpong, India, whom he claimed was the genuine reincarnation of the 16th Karmapa.

Despite repeated denials by Tibetan leaders in India there was mounting speculation on Sunday that supporters of the Dalai Lama had masterminded the Karmapa's escape. © **Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2000**

PTI reports:
A top source of Tibetan exiles has expressed the hope that India would grant asylum to Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje and said it would not have any adverse effect on the Indo-China ties.

The exiles' self-styled minister for religion and culture, Mr. Tashi Wangdi, told reporters here "if Karmapa makes a strong request for asylum, India would definitely consider it on humanitarian grounds as the country has historically given asylum to all refugees."

Asked whether granting of asylum would affect the Indo-China relations, he said "I hope it will not have any adverse effect as it is a humanitarian issue."

Mr. Tashi Wangdi said that the Karmapa took the decision to come to India and the Tibetan exiles had no knowledge of his flight from Lhasa.

Asked whether arrival of Karmapa here would result in a sectarian fight, he said "I don't think it will cause any serious problem. Only one Karmapa is recognised by the Dalai Lama and that is Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje," he said.

No 'disowning' the Karmapa
The Rumtek monastery, international headquarters of Kagyu sect of Buddhism, today contested the claim of a section of Buddhists that the Monastery had "disowned" the 17th Karmapa and said that such views were not the official stand of Rumtek.

A press release issued by the officiating general secretary of the main administration (Tsurphu Labrang) of the Dharmachakra centre of the monastery said, "The misguided information stating that Rumtek had disowned the Karmapa is completely baseless in foundation and in fact is the opposite to the official stand."

The arrival of the Karmapa at Dharamsala was greeted with "joyful enthusiasm". The views (of disowning) expressed by the individuals were their "personal opinion and had no basis in objective fact and cannot be held as official stand", it said.

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Contender sets acid test for rivals, says mentor's 'accident' was an act of sabotage

Third claimant to Rumtek throne

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

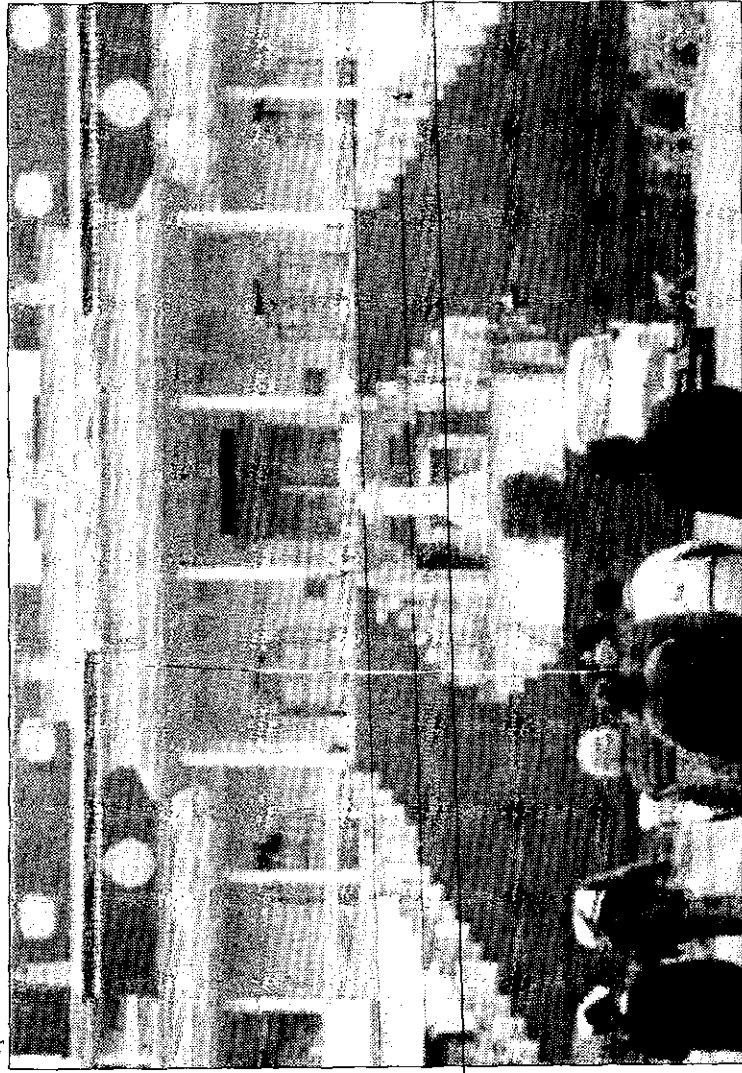
GANGTOK, Jan. 11. — In a new, unforeseen, twist to the Karmapa controversy, a third claimant emerged last night to challenge the other two contenders for the Rumtek monastery post.

Dawa Sangpo Dorji, born in 1977 in north Sikkim's Mangon, has dared his rivals to prove their credentials for the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa's post. How? They must "stay on the throne (of the 16th Karmapa in Rumtek monastery) from seven to 21 days without suffering -- and in front of Lamas and TV cameras."

He claimed the fourth and last regent, Jamyang Kongtrul Rimpoche, had recognised him as the "true" candidate for the post, "but was killed in a car accident when he was going to meet the Dalai Lama to tell him about this." The accident, he said, was the result of sabotage.

The regents of the Rumtek monastery, the headquarters of Kagyu sect of Buddhism headed by Gyalwa Karmapa, had been entrusted with identifying the 16th Karmapa's successor after his death in 1981.

Dawa Sangpo Dorji's rivals are Urgyen Trinlay Dorji — who fled Tibet to reach



Tibetans walk towards the Gyuto Rampoche temple in Sidhbari on Tuesday where the 17th Karmapa is reportedly being housed. — AP/PTI

Dharamshala, the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile, a week ago — and Thaye Trinlay Dorji, a Tibet-born boy.

Urgyen Trinlay Dorji has the support of two Rumtek regents, Tai Situ Rimpoche and Gyaltsab Rimpoche. He has

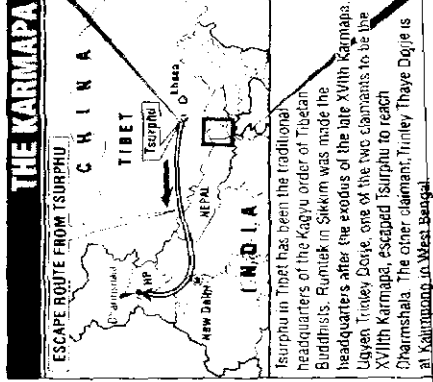
also been recognised by the Dalai Lama.

Thaye Trinlay Dorji has the support of another Rumtek monastery regent, Sharmapa Rimpoche.

Dawa Sangpo Dorji said the (genuine) Karmapa must also

show (supernatural) powers and talk about the past lives of the Karmapas -- which, he said, were known to him.

To buttress his claim, Dawa Sangpo Dorji said he had some "distinguishing mark" on his right thigh, present before only



Tsurphu in Tibet has been the traditional headquarters of the Kagyu order of Tibetan Buddhism. Rumtek in Sikkim was made the headquarters after the exodus of the late XVIIth Karmapa, Ligen Trinley Dorje, one of the two claimants to be the XVIIth Karmapa, escaped Tsurphu to reach Dharamshala. The other claimant, Trinley Thaye Dorje is at Kalimpong, West Bengal.

in the 16th Karmapa's body.

Accusing the Dalai Lama, whom he was not allowed to meet, Tai Situ Rimpoche and Sikkim in general for having failed to recognise him, Dawa Sangpo Dorji said this was because he was "poor" with nobody behind him. "I do not not also have any publicity campaign like others," he said.

Dawa Sangpo Dorji also alleged that the recognition letter of the Jamyang Kongtrul Rimpoche was "forged" and "doctored" by the other regents to deprive him of his legitimate post.

Asked why he had come up to stake his claim after all these years, Dawa Sangpo Dorji said

he had been trying to highlight the facts since 1995, but nobody, it seemed, would listen to him.

He had sought to meet the Dalai Lama a number of times, but was not allowed. Neither did he get any response to his letters to other senior monks on the issue, he said.

On 1 January 1998, Dawa Sangpo Dorji said, he attempted to gate-crash the Rumtek monastery, but he was not allowed in.

"Today, when there are more than one candidate for the post of 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, let all three appear in a congregation to prove each one's claims. He who wins, should get to ascend the throne," he added.

China issues veiled threat

'Political asylum to Karmapa will be violative of Panchsheel deals'

Beijing, January 11

CHINA TODAY issued a veiled warning to India not to give political asylum to the 14-year-old Tibetan spiritual leader who escaped to India last week. Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao indicated that any political asylum granted to the Karmapa Rinpoche would violate the "five principles of peaceful co-existence" which form the basis of bilateral relations between New Delhi and Beijing.

"China and India have stated in explicit terms that they will develop and improve bilateral relations and on relevant issues the India side has made commitments," Zhu said. "We hope that the Indian side will strictly observe their commitments so as to further improve and develop China-India relations."

The Karmapa arrived in Dharmasala last week after an arduous week-long trek over the Himalayas. He had previously

pledged allegiance to Beijing's rule and was recognised by both China and Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama.

"The Indian side has said in explicit terms that it recognises Tibet as an inalienable part of Chinese territory and that the Dalai Lama cannot engage in political activities in India. I think the Indian side is well aware of this," Zhu said.

Zhu reiterated the Chinese Government's official view, stated last week, that the Karmapa had gone abroad to collect a "black hat and Buddhist musical instruments," referring to the black hat sect of Tibetan Buddhism. "It is reported that he (the Karmapa) is now in India, but we haven't yet had any confirmation from the Indian side," he said.

Meanwhile in McLeodganj,

police were waiting for government go-ahead to begin the process of registering the boy lama, the 17th Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje, as a refugee. "I am waiting for government nod to begin the process of registering him as a refugee," Senior Superintendent of Police K C Sadyal said. "The 14-year-old boy monk cannot stay here indefinitely without a registration certificate", he said. Sadyal said "for the time being the Karmapa is safe at Gyatso Meditation Centre (about 17 km from here)."

Asked whether there was any move to transfer the monk to Sherabling monastery at Tashi Jong village near Baijnath, 70 km from here, Sadyal said "may be subsequently he will be moved there, but nothing is definite now."

Meanwhile, sources in the Tibetan Government-in-exile here said the entire registration, which takes a month or two, will begin soon. (Agencies)

India circumspect

THERE WAS no change today in India's highly circumspect position on the young Tibetan Lama's continuing presence in its territory even as China cautioned against granting political asylum to him. The official spokesman for the MEA said that the Indian Government was yet to take a decision on the status of the 17th Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje, adding that there was still no formal request to grant the boy monk political asylum. Asked to specify the time required by the Govt to decide the Karmapa's status, the spokesman said, "I don't know how long it would take." He also sidestepped questions on the Chinese Government's veiled warning against granting political asylum to the Karmapa.

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 JAN 2000

The dragon game

BRAJMA CHELLANEY on Karmapa Lama's "escape"

A MILLENNIUM of defeat, capitulation and shame in Indian history, resonantly ended with the government's New Year Eve hostages-for-terrorists swap at Kandahar. No large society in the world has suffered the extended ignominy or subjugation that India did in the second millennium in the period from Mahmud Ghauri's triumphant entry into Delhi to the departure of the British colonialists. This exceptional history has coloured independent India's thinking and approach, incalculating a subaltern mindset and producing what Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal long ago called a soft state.

The dawn of the third millennium should be a time for hope and reflection, for breaking out of the old straitjacket and meeting the challenges. The new century, however, has begun with a new dragon game in which India unsuspectingly is being drawn in. At the centre is a boy installed by the Chinese Communists as the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa Lama of the Tibetans.

A number of questions arise from the mysterious arrival of China's Karmapa claimant in India, which is home to a rival Karmapa. The India-based Karmapa, receiving religious training at Khampong, was identified as the 16th Karmapa's reincarnation by clerics of the Kagyupa religious order, known as the "Black Hats". The Chinese Communists, in installing a Karmapa of their choice, worked with two of the four regents of the Kagyupa order, particularly the shadowy Tai Situ Rinpoche who was expelled from India in 1994.

The timing of the China-sponsored Karmapa's arrival is remarkable. It coincides with an intense policy debate within the Indian government on the rival Karmapa claims, with the two contending sides seeking New Delhi's active support. It also comes just before an important meeting. More than Beijing, it is India that can influence which claimant gains legitimacy. Although installed in the 800-year-old Tsurphu monastery near Lhasa, China's Karmapa can never become the real

who is 64. China, seeking to complete its hold on Tibetan religious orders while changing Tibet's ethnic composition, is likely to insist on selecting the new Dalai Lama. For that, it will need support from a pliant Panchen Lama and Karmapa Lama. For India, the Dalai Lama is a powerful ally. When China annexed Tibet, India surrendered not only its British-inherited extra-territorial rights over that historical buffer, it also signed a pact in 1954

accepting Chinese sovereignty over Tibet without seeking any quid pro quo, not even the Chinese recognition of the then existing Indo-Tibetan border. That monumental folly stripped India of leverage and encouraged the Chinese to lay claims to Indian territories on the basis of Tibet's putative historical links with these areas. If India still has any card against Beijing, it is the Dalai Lama.

As long as the Dalai Lama remains based in Dharamsala, it is a great plus for India. The Tibetans will not side with the Chinese against India, nor accept the despotic Chinese rule. If the institution of the Dalai Lama, like of the Panchen Lama, gets captured by China, India will lose the equivalent of three army divisions. Indira Gandhi understood that and regularly consulted with the Dalai Lama. Most subsequent prime ministers, however, have treated the Dalai Lama less honourably, scared to even be seen in public with him, lest Beijing protest.

After a half-century trail of mistakes in dealing with China, India has to re-examine the Karmapa's role. One clue has been installed as the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama's appointee held incommunicado with his family for five long years. The Karmapa controversy mirrors the Panchen Lama dispute but with a bizarre twist: China's Karmapa pretender

was endorsed by the Dalai Lama. This may have been intended to avert full Chinese control over the boy or linked to the historical competition between the Dalai Lamas and Karmapa Lamas, who vied with each other for influence. Some 350 years ago, the Dalai Lamas' Gelugpa school gained ascendancy over the Karmapas' Kagyupa order. When the Dalai Lama blessed China's Karmapa aspirant in 1992, he was

involved, with P.V. Narasimha Rao's support, in back-channel diplomacy with Beijing. Now that both the Karmapa contenders are in India, the Dalai Lama can be expected to act with prudence and good judgement.

If the Chinese-supported claimant has indeed defected, it means Beijing has been left without its Karmapa teddy, a "patriot" who it claimed prayed for Mao Zedong's soul and whose investiture at Tsurphu showed Chinese "respect" for Tibetan religion. If, on the other hand, he has been sent to India to stake a well-timed claim to the black hat, the Chinese (who so far have not closed the door to his return or denounced him) may be testing the Dalai Lama's support to him. In either case, India has to proceed with abundant caution.

However, if it is the second case, the troubling question that arises is how Beijing got wind of India's inner policy deliberations. While China has always had a strong lobby here, India needs to plug any leakage. This concern is reinforced by the increasingly visible way the Dalai Lama's external relations are being managed. In 1994, he escaped his incarceration in Beijing and resumed criminal activities. With his strong ties to the Chinese Communists, he was made the official teacher of China's Karmapa. Now he claims a hand in his student's flight from Tibet. Government



records do not indicate at whose behest, or for what reasons, the exterritorial order was annulled. Home Minister L.K. Advani will do well to order an internal probe.

While it is possible that the Karmapa teddy got fed up with his life in a gilded Chinese crib and vamoosed, one cannot at this stage discount the possibility that Beijing gave him the nod to go for compelling reasons. First, as he cannot indefinitely sustain his Karmapa claim without the black hat, it was vital he personally secure that spiritually indispensable item with the Dalai Lama's help. Second, his presence in India could aid Chinese designs to divide the Tibetan exile community by fostering open discord between the rival contending sides and bringing bad name to the holy institutions of the Dalai Lama and Karmapa Lama.

Third, his presence could serve as yet another instrument to mount political pressure on India, routinely accused of not stopping the Dalai Lama's "splittist" activities. Fourth, he could advance Chinese designs in Sikkim, where the famous Rumtek monastery has served as the Kagyupa order's exile headquarters. The 16th Karmapa, like the Dalai Lama, fled Tibet in 1959 but deliberately went to the then independent Sikkim. A quarter century after Sikkim's merger, China stands out as the only country not to recognise the state as part of India. Indeed, it has made even its de facto recognition conditional on India granting it trading rights with Sikkim. It's main interest, however, lies in securing access to Rumtek, even if through pilgrims. If its Karmapa is installed in Rumtek, Sikkim could face potential destabilisation.

When Tibet fell, Sardar Patel wrote that, "for the first time after centuries, India's defence has to concentrate on two fronts simultaneously". Since then, China has lived up to its image as a dragon, a mythological creature part crocodile, part serpent. India is in a position to influence the choice of the Karmapa but not the Panchen Lama. As the last Karmapa died 19 years ago, New Delhi had all the time to settle the succession issue in accord with its weighing options that the China-backed claimant showed up. It is time India understood that if it is not to be at China's mercy, it should at all times have the Dalai Lama and Karmapa on its side.

Same diet, greater odds in Tibetan escape sequel

FROM SUJAY GUPTA

McLeodgunj, Jan. 12: In 1959, the Dalai Lama, then 24, accompanied by Buddhist clerics and protected by Tibetan resistance troops, escaped the marauding Chinese army to trek across rugged mountainous terrain into India.

Forty years later, a teenage spiritual leader, evading Chinese guards, followed the Dalai Lama's footprints across the Himalayas on his more arduous flight to freedom.

"If the Dalai Lama's and the Karmapa's flights were recorded as marathon races, the boy would have won hands down both in terms of time and speed," Lhasang Tsering, a Tibetan leader, said, quoting a scholar who is one of the few persons in touch with the 14-year-old Urgyen Trinley Dorje.

Slipping past the guards at Tsurphu monastery — the seat of the Karmapa's Kagyu sect — on December 28, the teenage leader, dressed in civilian clothes, made his way to Nepal and crossed into Uttar Pradesh, reaching Lucknow.

From there, he went to Delhi and then headed north to Dharamshala via Chandigarh. He changed vehicles thrice — once at the Tibet-Nepal border, next at the Nepal-Uttar Pradesh frontier and finally at Delhi.

During their eight-day trek, the Karmapa, his sister and five followers survived on *tsampa*, a Tibetan speciality made of crushed roasted barley. The Dalai Lama was on a similar diet during his flight.

To avoid suspicion, the

Karmapa and his followers shed their monk's attire for denim jackets and trousers while his sister wore a loose robe. The Dalai Lama, during his escape, had dressed as a soldier.

The young leader, despite requests from his 24-year-old sister, refused to contact the Tibetan reception centre at Kathmandu as he felt that Nepal "would be easily bullied by China" and he would be tracked down.

Tashi Tsering has a fair idea of the route taken by the Karmapa as he had fled Tibet around the same time as the Dalai Lama. Though he is not allowed to speak to the media, **The Telegraph** got in touch with his close friend, Lhasang. According to Lhasang, Tashi was "surprised and shocked" when he heard the Karmapa's tale.

The Karmapa chose to escape in winter for two reasons. First, the Chinese guards are not as alert and the checks are not that

stringent. Second, most of the mountain lakes are frozen and can be crossed on foot.

The group of seven set out in two jeeps from Tsurphu. Before every checkpost, they got off and headed for the mountains.

After the jeeps crossed the checkpoints, the Karmapa and his companions would join the vehicles. They followed this ritual nearly 20 times until reaching west Nepal through Mushtang.

Here they abandoned the vehicles and hired two other jeeps. The fleeing clerics told the Nepalese drivers to first take them to Kapilavastu and then proceed to Sarnath, near Varanasi. The party probably entered Uttar Pradesh through the Barni border in Sidharthnagar.

Once in India, they changed vehicles again, but hired one jeep which took them to Delhi. Here, they shifted to an Ambassador taxi and, posing as Tibetan students, left for Dharamshala.

Tashi, who has recorded the Tibetan struggle, was sought out by the Dalai Lama's administration the day the Karmapa arrived. He, however, is yet to figure out how the Buddhist leader got Indian currency to pay for his journey.

The Karmapa, who is believed to be staying at a Buddhist temple 15 km from Dharamshala, has been reading the latest literature published by the Dalai Lama's administration. "He (the Karmapa) is very restless and wants to know all about politics and the official stand of the government-in-exile on the solution to the Tibet crisis," Lhasang said.

■ Another report on Page 6



Urgyen Trinley Dorje. (AFP)

THE TELEGRAPH
13 JAN 2000

The Karmapa conundrum

How about the West stepping in to help the boy lama?

BEIJING might have been more sophisticated than publicly to raise sovereignty issues in the context of the young Karmapa Lama finding refuge in India. His flight from Tibet, not his presence in India, raises questions about the extent of Chinese authority in Tibet and the challenge to it from Buddhist religious institutions and leaders. Those questions would have arisen wherever the boy lama sought refuge. His "defection" would have been just as embarrassing for the Chinese leadership if he had surfaced in Europe or the US. But the Chinese leadership does not seem to have thought this one through. In any case it has always been excessively sensitive about Tibet and the Dalai Lama in its dealings with India. So it is not surprising to find the Chinese leadership reiterating the principles of panchsheel and India's stated position on Tibet at at this juncture.

Had India-China relations been warmer than they are it would not have been necessary to state the obvious. This suggests some reassurance is required. It may be wise to assert that India is as interested in Beijing in improving the bilateral relationship but must be left to decide the Karmapa issue taking into account many other important factors as well. Perhaps Beijing does not quite appreciate how complex is the problem presented by the boy lama turning up one morning. In finding a solution the Indian government must look for what is in the best interests of everyone concerned. The India-China relationship is only one, albeit very important, factor. Others are the boy lama himself, the Kagyu sect, the Tibetan diaspora in India and India's relation-

ship with the Buddhist world. It will not be easy to balance all these interests. India must certainly be guided by humanitarianism but cannot ignore external and internal politics. Time and patience are required simply to resolve some of the mystery about the flight from Tibet. Was it voluntary? How much did the local Chinese authorities know about it? Is the boy lama, his adult sister or monks from Tsurphu monastery in Tibet answerable for his welfare? Furthermore, the impact must be considered of any decision not only on Indian domestic opinion but also on 1,50,000 Tibetans who rightly enjoy full freedom to express themselves.

India has three options: hand the Karmapa back to Chinese authorities, give him asylum in India or allow him to seek asylum in another country. Beijing's oppressive policies are responsible for the alienation of Tibetans. No matter how vital the Karmapa is to China's programme of pacifying the monasteries, to return the boy lama to China is an option India must not exercise. To do so would be to return him to a state of perpetual imprisonment. He must be given the sanctuary he seeks. To provide him a home in this country would accord with Indian traditions and most Indians would applaud such a decision. But the government needs to study carefully whether India can indeed afford to host a powerful Buddhist sect with deep internal conflicts and powerful links in the West or whether it would be better to help the Karmapa Lama find refuge elsewhere. In any case, it is high time that the West, which has actively espoused the Tibetan cause thus far, step in to help the Karmapa Lama.

INDIAN EXPRESS

13 JAN 2000

The Hindustan Times

Beware of a trap

THE GOVERNMENT needs to be commended for exercising caution on the sudden arrival last week of the 14-year-old Karmapa Lama. Equally commendable is the government's endeavour to probe all possibilities surrounding the China-sponsored Karmapa's mystifying flight from Tibet. For one thing, it is not yet clear how the boy lama and his associates escaped from their heavy Chinese security cover. For another, his coming to India can only exacerbate the row over who the real Karmapa is. The eight-year-old dispute, pitting an India-based Karmapa against China's claimant, has in the past triggered violent clashes between rival Tibetan groups in India, particularly in Sikkim where the Karma Kagyu religious order has its exile headquarters. Given that the discord has to some extent been stoked by foreign interests and money, India has to be concerned about the larger implications of the latest development for its internal and external security. While China pursued its Karmapa strategy by supposedly buying influence in the Kagyu school, based at Sikkim's 270-year-old Rumtek monastery, some rival clerics reportedly received Taiwan's support. While all this was happening, India's approach was characterised by apathy, with local authorities treating the increasingly fierce dispute as a law and order problem and national policy-makers oblivious of its long-term ramifications and their potentially central role in finding a settlement. Just as India was beginning to appreciate the significance of its role, it has been confounded by the China-backed Karmapa's unforeseen arrival.

With both claimants on its territory now, India has to try and use its good offices to resolve the dispute in a way that its interests are best served. If two of the three Tibetan "living Buddhas" are seen to be on India's side and on the side of freedom — the Dalai Lama and the Karmapa Lama — the Chinese Communists will be hard put to credibly use their puppet Panchen Lama as a symbol of their repressive rule over Tibet. India and the Dalai Lama have to be wary of any trap and perhaps coordinate their moves to settle the Karmapa issue. Until the official investigations are complete, it will be premature to conclude that the boy lama defected to India by eluding Chinese security. Beijing knew well that its Karmapa's claim to the title was incomplete without the lama securing the sacred "black hat" in India. Instead of acknowledging that the Karmapa has taken refuge in India, China continues to fudge facts as it seeks to put India on the defensive. While continuing to be circumspect, India should point out that it has never really accepted Tibet as "an inalienable part of China", as Beijing claimed on Tuesday. India's policy has been that Tibet is an autonomous part of China, which however treats Tibet as a vassal state. In referring again to the Panchsheel principles, Beijing will do well to remember that it has repeatedly abused them from the 1950s. India needs to be in no hurry to grant political asylum to the boy lama.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JAN 2000

Resume dialogue with Dalai Lama, US urges China

Washington, January 12

HWB
18/1

THE US has called upon China to resume dialogue with Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama to preserve Tibet's unique cultural heritage following reports that Beijing had launched a crackdown on the Tsurphu monastery in Lhasa which the 17th Karmapa fled.

"We call on China to enter into a dialogue with the Dalai Lama to preserve Tibet's unique religious, cultural and ethnic heritage," state department spokesman, James Rubin told reporters at a Press briefing yesterday.

The US, he said, has been disturbed about the human rights situation in Tibet and restrictions on Tibetan Buddhism.

The US is also concerned about reports that the monastery in the Tibetan capital, which the Lama fled, has been raided and two

monks arrested, he said. "We will be trying to confirm this report. "We have seen reports," said Rubin, "that officials of the Tibetan government-in-exile have requested the Indian Foreign Ministry to grant him asylum. We have no information about the status of any asylum request."

The Indian Government in New Delhi said yesterday that it had received no "formal request" for asylum but that any decision would be viewed in the context of historically close ties with Tibet. An External Affairs Ministry official said he was "not aware" of any communication from Beijing on the issue.

In a veiled warning yesterday, China, which has occupied Tibet since 1951, had said political asylum to the Karmapa would be inconsistent with the principles of Panch Sheel.

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JAN 2000

Tibetans await first move from Delhi

By Sujay Mehdudia

DHARAMSALA, (H.P.), JAN. 12. The Tibetan government-in-exile is now lobbying to mount pressure on the Indian Government to recognise the presence of the 17th Karmapa and grant him political asylum.

The assistance of the U.S. has also, reportedly been sought for the purpose. Though it may be a coincidence, the visit of the U.S. Assistance Secretary of State for Population and Migration Affairs, Ms. Julia Taft, who also happens to be the Special Secretary for Tibet, is also being watched with great interest. Ms. Taft, who is here to overlook the scheme initiated for Tibetan refugees, is reported to have held consultations with senior Tibetan officials last evening over dinner.

The Tibetan government-in-exile is still assessing the situation. It seems the Kashag (Tibetan Cabinet) which met here last evening, is divided on how to formally request the Indian Government for political asylum.

Senior Tibetan officials said the Government-in-exile had been rattled by the sudden arrival of the 17th Karmapa. Some officials have reportedly got in touch with their people in Lhasa to gauge the mood there and ascertain the circumstances which led to the flight of the Karmapa. Struggling to come round to a firm stand on the issue, the Tibetans, it seems, are now waiting for the Indian Government to make the first move before anything is taken up formally at the highest level.

Some senior officials of the Intelligence Bureau have also arrived in McLeodganj and have held consultations with the Tibetan officials. A Joint Secretary rank official of the Ministry of External Affairs also met senior officials of the Tibetan Cabinet and discussed the issue.

State officials here are intrigued why he is not being put up in the spiritual leader Dalai Lama's palace in McLeodganj which enjoys the highest protection as the 14-year-old faces a security threat. When the issue was raised by police officials with the Tibetan Cabinet members, they are learnt to have replied that protocol does not allow this. However, under the given circumstances, should things like protocol get precedence over the security of the "Living Buddha", a senior official asked.

The State authorities are still awaiting word from the Central Government on how to deal with the extraordinary situation. In normal circumstances, any Tibetan migrant coming to Himachal Pradesh without valid documents is treated as "illegal person" and is deported after registration of a police case against him. Officials said on an average, around 15 to 20 Tibetan refugees walk into Dharamsala everyday without valid documents. Many have been deported but somehow manage to get back. But in the case of the Karmapa and his six other associates, the ball is in the court of the Central Government.

Tibetan officials feel that international opinion in the coming days would force the Indian Government to take a decision notwithstanding the threat from China which has asked India not to grant political asylum to the Karmapa.

Declared 'out of bounds'

The Gyuto Kamoche Tantrik monastery in Sidhbari, where the Karmapa has been housed, presents the picture of a fortress as it has been declared "out of bounds" for the Tibetan people and other visitors.

A visit to the monastery by this reporter not only confirmed the presence of the Karmapa

but also gave an insight into the kind of security provided to him in view of the serious threat to his life. After climbing uphill to the footsteps of the monastery, one is greeted by the sign "closed". Along the steps Tibetan security officials stand guard to prevent any unwanted person gaining entry.

The first ring of security consists of Tibetans. Under strict instructions not to allow anyone inside, their duty is to frisk unwanted people. The local Tibetans have been told not to visit the monastery as "it is still under construction". Some senior officials of the Tibetan Cabinet are the only ones apart from officials from the State Government and Intelligence Bureau who are allowed to go inside.

The second ring comprises armed guards from the Himachal Pradesh police. They keep a check on all incoming visitors and are armed with automatic rifles and SLRs. They stand guard at the side gates which have now been made the main entrance.

Assisting them at the side entrance are the Tibetan officials and plain-clothesmen of the CID. Metal detectors, walkie-talkies and other electronic gadgets have been installed to check all visitors. A register is being maintained of the VIP visitors.

This reporter managed to sneak in and have an inside view of the monastery. One could see another ring of Intelligence officials keeping an eye inside the various rooms with electronic gadgets and walkie-talkies in their hands.

The Karmapa is learnt to be reading scriptures most of the time. He is said to be in fine health and doctors of the Tibetan Government-in-exile are understood to have examined him.

THE HINDU

13 JAN 2000

No need to consult Dalai over reincarnations: China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BELJING, Jan. 13. — Chinese authorities, who yesterday announced the discovery of a reincarnated "living Buddha", today further opened up a lively debate with the Dalai Lama by asserting their supremacy in discovering reincarnations.

The Chinese authorities affirmed their right to supervise the intricate reincarnation rituals of principal Tibetan spiritual leaders and said it was unnecessary to consult the Dalai Lama.

"The role of the government is to supervise the work of the searchers in order to verify that the deceased lama has the qualities required for being reincarnated and that he is really dead," an official at the Religious Affairs Bureau in Beijing said.

The official said it was up to the regional government in



Dalai Lama

Tibet to announce Tibetan reincarnations and that it was "not necessary to ask for advice from the Dalai Lama".

"The Dalai Lama left dozens of years ago and he is unaware

of the internal situation in Tibet. Besides there are enough Buddhist dignitaries in Tibet to make the decision."

The Chinese Communist Party's control over spiritual reincarnations has been underlined once again with yesterday's announcement of the discovery of a reincarnated "living buddha".

No details concerning the identity of the spiritual child that has been chosen as the seventh Reting Rimpoche and the reincarnation of the sixth Reting Rimpoche has been revealed.

The sixth Reting Rimpoche died in 1997, while the fifth Reting Rimpoche was the most noted of the lineage for having been chosen regent in 1933 by the Tibetan Parliament to administer Tibet and oversee the selection and enthronement of the present Dalai Lama in 1940.

THE STATESMAN

14 JAN 2000

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'Future destination' of Karmapa under study

By Sujay Mehduia

DHARAMSALA (H.P.), JAN. 13. With reports pouring in of a serious threat to the life of the 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorje, by some people said to be of Chinese agents who have infiltrated the ranks of the Tibetan community here, Tibetan officials and security agencies are exploring the possibility of shifting the Karmapa to an isolated abode till a final decision is taken on his status in India.

The 14-year-old Karmapa is now housed in the Gyuto Tantric monastery at Sidhbari, about 8 km from here.

The local police picked up Namgyal Gampo, a Tibetan holding German passport, for questioning on Wednesday. He was intercepted at the Gyuto Tantrick monastery while trying to meet the Karmapa.

Namgyal, police said, was among a few persons who were scheduled to meet the Karmapa in the evening. Namgyal is claimed to have identified himself as a distant relative of the Karmapa. A letter, reportedly urging the Karmapa to inform China about his stay in India as he had only come to learn musical instruments and take possession of black hats, was recovered from him.

Further, he urged the Karmapa and the Tibetan government-in-exile to inform the Chinese authorities that the Karmapa would be returning back to China soon after completing his education. This, he said, would avoid embarrassment to the Indian Gov-

ernment and also help the cause of Tibet. Namgyal was later left off after they satisfied themselves about his credentials.

Tibetan officials, in close coordination with the State police and the Central security agencies, are exploring the possible "future destinations" to keep the Karmapa under protection.

Various possibilities are being discussed. The most-talked about destination is the Shera Biling monastery near Beed at Baijnath in Kangra district. It is located about 45 km from here and is headed by the 46-year old Tai Situ Rinpoche, who was instrumental in selecting the 17th Karmapa.

Another destination which is being considered is the lonely Bodh temple in the hills of Kullu district. About 4 km from Bhuntur, this temple is of great significance and enjoys a good following among Tibetans. Located amid the imposing "cheer trees", the monastery is also said to be witnessing hectic activity just in case the Karmapa is taken there. Officials also do not rule out the possibility of the Karmapa being taken to a monastery in Manali. Yet another venue which is being talked about is Palwal in Haryana where the government-in-exile is reported to be coming up with a huge Tibetan cultural centre and monastery.

The Karmapa, who is yet to get political asylum, has started meeting people. Delegations of the Indo-Tibet Friendship Society and the Bharat-Tibet Samaj called on him on Wednesday.

Tibetan officials' dilemma: Page 13

THE HINDU

14 JAN 2000

DALAI LAMA 'CONVEYS DECISION' TO GOVERNMENT

Karmapa to seek asylum?

By Sujay Mehdadia

BAJNATH (Himachal Pradesh), JAN. 14. The 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorje, who arrived here on January 5 from his monastery in Dharamsala, is said to have conveyed to the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, his desire to stay on in India and seek political asylum.

Sources close to the Tibetan government-in-exile said the issue, among others, was discussed by the two leaders during their meeting today, the third in the last nine days, which was held at the instance of the Karmapa.

The sources said the Dalai Lama had also told the Indian Government of the Karmapa's concerns. It was said that the Dalai Lama would not do anything which would harm India's interests.

Probably for the first time, mediapersons had a face-to-face with the Karmapa. Around 11 a.m., the Karmapa was brought from Sidhharth Gyuto Tantrik monastery, where he had been staying since Sunday night, to McLeod-

ganj. As the convoy carrying the Karmapa reached the outskirts of McLeodganj, the boy monk's vehicle stalled due to heavy snowfall. The Karmapa alighted and began walking surrounded by a posse of securitymen. Immediately, a few reporters started walking with him.

During the one kilometre trek, the reporters tried to talk to the Karmapa who told them through gestures that he could not understand English. The Karmapa was comfortable on the snow while the securitymen and reporters struggled to keep pace.

Later, he was taken in a vehicle to the Dalai Lama's palace. The two religious heads were cloistered for over half an hour.

The Karmapa also held talks with officials of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Insiders said the Karmapa and the Dalai Lama reportedly discussed how to go about seeking asylum.

An interesting fact has come to light in the entire episode. A distant relation of the Karmapa, Mr. Namgyal Gompo, who had come to meet him but was not allowed to do so by the security agencies, was said to be carrying the draft of a letter. He wanted to deliver the draft to the Karmapa. The draft, it is said, contained material addressed to the Chinese President on behalf of the Karmapa asking Beijing to provide a diplomatic passport to Trinley Dorjee as he wanted to study in India and would return after finishing his education. Mr. Namgyal has since left Dharamsala for New Delhi.

Asia division, Mr. T. C. A. Rangachary, in the evening. During the 25-minute meeting which had been requested by the Chinese envoy, the Indian side informed Mr. Gang that the Karmapa and six others arrived in Dharamsala on January 5. According to the spokesman, the Chinese envoy was told that the Lama was in good health and had been provided "appropriate security cover." He had been lodged in a monastery near Dharamsala.

The Indian side, on its part, asked China to furnish details about the monk's departure in Tibet, the route he had taken and "other relevant details." Asked if the Foreign Office was implying that the Chinese side was aware of the Karmapa's movement in advance, he said no such inference could be drawn.

The spokesman said India and China had noted with satisfaction that a "sound momentum" had been imparted to their relationship and the process of further improving ties was underway under the framework of the Panch-sheel doctrine.

In a related development, the visiting US Republican Senator, Mr. Sam Brownback today hoped that India would show "religious tolerance and openness" while tackling the defection of the 17th Karmapa. The Senator, in response to a question at a press conference, clarified that "it was for India to take a decision on the defecting Tibetan monk." India's position, he said, had become difficult as the Karmapa had not made any statement about his intentions.

Security concerns: Page 13

India, China discuss defection of Lama

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 14. India and China today formally held discussions about the defection of Ugyen Trinley Dorje, the 14-year-old Karmapa into India, with New Delhi seeking details from Beijing about the circumstances leading to his arrival in the country.

According to a Foreign Office spokesman, the Chinese Ambassador, Mr. Zhou Gang, met the Joint Secretary in the Foreign Office's East

Govt informs Beijing of Buddhist leader arrival, questions

Karmapa whisked off for Dalai date

FROM SUJAY GUPTA

McLeodgunj, Jan. 14: In a clear indication that the Tibetan government-in-exile is becoming concerned about the delay in securing the 17th Karmapa's future, the 14-year-old Ugyen Trinley Dorje was whisked away from his hide-out amid heavy snowfall for an unplanned meeting with the Dalai Lama.

The Karmapa, holed up in his heavily-curtained room in the Gyoto monastery for eight days, was very busy this morning. He travelled in a car through heavy snow from the monastery to McLeodgunj, about 30 kilometres away, trekked across the mountain slopes when his vehicle got stuck in the snow and made his way back as the snowfall intensified.

Local Tibetans and monks were in for a rare treat when the Karmapa's car — a dark green Esteem — got stuck in the heavy snow a kilometre from the Dalai Lama's palace. His guards asked him to get off and walk to the palace. A few journalists who managed to track down the convoy gave chase.

But the Karmapa and eight others walked swiftly through the snow and then climbed to the Dalai Lama's palace via a shortcut. By the time the media arrived at the Dalai Lama's palace, the Karmapa was already inside the walled compound.

It is learnt that home ministry officials accompanied the Karmapa from the Gyoto Rinpoche monastery to the Dalai Lama's palace in McLeodgunj, where he is in retreat. The Dalai Lama met the Karmapa for over two hours, a rare occurrence during his retreat.

'purpose' of visit

Sources in the Tibetan government here said that a decision was reached late last night to arrange a meeting between the Dalai Lama, the Karmapa and home ministry officials. At about 11.30 am, the Karmapa left in a four-car convoy, including a Gypsy carrying four home ministry officials.

Shortly after 12 pm, the Karmapa entered the Dalai Lama's palace. The cars, stuck in the snow, reached much later.

Though Tibetan government officials and senior police officers refused to disclose details of the meeting, sources said "one matter of concern for the home ministry officials was that there might be moves to shift him to the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim". Rumtek is the headquarters of the Karma Kagyu sect of the Karmapa. However, it seems that such moves have been dropped for the moment.

But the reception given to the Karmapa has undermined the claims of the rival faction of the Kagyu sect headed by Sharmapa Rinpoche.

The Karmapa left the palace a little after 2 pm in a yellow Range Rover, accompanied by a senior monk. A little later, he changed cars and shifted to a blue Cielo, which took him back to the Gyoto monastery.

Tibetans lined the snow-covered road to catch a glimpse of the teenager believed to be the successor to the Dalai Lama and a central figure in future relations between India and China.

The Karmapa sat upright in the back seat of his car, looking straight ahead. Monks and locals stood next to the road, heads bowed and hands folded. The Karmapa, however, did not make eye contact with them.

But for those who caught a glimpse of the Karmapa, it was a moving experience. One of the lucky few, Lobsing Tsering, said his "life was made". "I have waited so long to see the man who is going to guide our lives. I have been blessed," he gushed. For Tenzing Orgyen "it was like seeing the Buddha himself. There is a strange and great feeling of peace and calm. Just one glimpse was enough".

The uncertainty about the Karmapa's future continued with no word from the Tibetan government here as to when he will formally seek asylum.

Delhi replies to China with query

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Jan. 14: Breaking its week-long silence, India today informed China about Ugyen Trinley Dorje's arrival to the country, but sought clarifications on whether the 14-year-old Karmapa had defected from Lhasa or was here to acquire "musical instruments and black hats".

China, though keen that the Karmapa is not given asylum in India, has maintained that he left Tibet to get musical instruments and black hats and that his departure should not be seen as a defection or "betrayal" to the state and the monastery.

Beijing had yesterday demanded that Delhi inform it about the Karmapa's arrival in India. But India refused since China had so far not formally approached it on the issue.

The Chinese ambassador, Zhou Gang, today held a meeting with T.C.A Rangachari, joint secretary in charge of China in the foreign ministry. But the foreign office made it clear that the meeting took place "in response to a request made by the Chinese side".

Foreign ministry spokesman R.S. Jassal said after the meeting: "We have informed them today that Lama Ugyen Trinley Dorje accompanied by six others arrived in Dharamshala on January 5. He and his entourage are currently at a monastery near Dharamshala. They are in good health. The lama is provided with appropriate security cover."

That India has avoided using the term Karmapa, while describing Dorje, indicates that Delhi wants to maintain a distance from

an issue it considers purely religious and that it would like to treat the monk like any other Tibetan refugee. Jassal added the "Chinese side has been asked to share with us details regarding his departure from Tibet, route taken and other relevant details". Though he did not specify it, this was a signal to China to clarify how the Karmapa managed to escape from the Tsurphu monastery in Lhasa.

"Both India and China have noted with satisfaction the sound movement in bilateral relations and the process of improvement and development of these relations on the basis of Panchsheel principles by the concerted efforts of the two countries," Jassal said.

China has frequently fallen back on the Panchsheel either to lodge its protest against some Indian action or to justify a decision taken by Beijing. The principle of "peaceful co-existence" has not, however, prevented China from building close military ties with Pakistan.

India appears to be using the same logic. "The question of clarifying his status at this juncture to the Chinese does not arise since they are yet to make it clear whether he (the Karmapa) is here on a visit or has defected from Lhasa," a senior foreign ministry official said.

For the Chinese government, it is embarrassing to publicly admit that the Karmapa has defected to India. When Ugyen was identified as the reincarnation of the 16th Karmapa in Tibet in 1992, the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership had supported the claim. Subsequently, he was groomed and tutored by the Chinese.

THE TELEGRAPH

15 JAN 2000

MYSTERY OF THE RUNAWAY MONK

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DID THE DALAI LAMA AND CHINA COLLUDE IN THE KARMAPA LAMA'S ESCAPE? STRANGE AS IT SOUNDS, THAT'S PROBABLY WHAT HAPPENED, SAYS RAJESH RAMACHANDRAN

THE BUDDHA must be frowning. For, the mysterious appearance in Dharamshala on January 5 of the boy who the faithful believe is his reincarnation has sent shockwaves from Lhasa to Washington, Beijing to New Delhi.

The 14-year-old Karmapa Lama's mysterious, 900-mile winter trek across the Himalayas has impacted the power struggle between the two factions of the Karma Kagyu order which he heads; the Dalai Lama's 50-year movement to regain Tibet; India's already sensitive relations with China; and US interests in Tibet.

No wonder. Ugyen Trinley Dorje, to give the boy his real name, is the only Tibetan high priest who is recognised by both the Dalai Lama and China. The Dalai Lama accepted him as the 17th Karmapa in June 1992, and after some thought, the Chinese followed suit. That was seen as an attempt to build bridges.

There was talk then of his coming to India, and his arrival now could become a climactic episode in the relationship between the Dalai Lama and China, who, some observers believe, might even collude in the boy's escape.

Publicly, the Tibetan government-in-exile claims the Karmapa Lama fled Chinese oppression, and that he wants Delhi to grant him asylum. Beijing says he is visiting India to bring back symbols of his authority such as the "black hat" from Sikkim's Rumtek monastery. India is "cautiously studying the issue." And Washington wants China to talk directly to the Dalai Lama to preserve "Tibet's unique religious, cultural and ethnic heritage."

Rinpoche, one of the four high priests of the Karma Kagyu order. All reports suggest he was the key person behind the boy's escape. Tai Situ was persona non grata in India till August 1998, when the 1994 expulsion order against him was mysteriously rescinded. India had then branded him anti-national, implying he was pro-Chinese.

Interestingly, Tai Situ was the 17th Karmapa, driving a wedge in the Karma Kagyu sect in doing so. Travelling several times to Tibet and China, he was instrumental in persuading the Chinese to recognise the boy, and forging a link between China and the Dalai Lama.

Tai Situ has several court cases pending against him, including one by the CBI for producing a fake residency certificate to buy 500 acres of land in Gurgaon. His legal advisor has been an influential member of the Union Cabinet since 1998, and is said to have lobbied with the home ministry to lift the ban on him (he is still barred from nine Indian states, including Sikkim). The Dalai Lama

also has informal access to a senior Union Cabinet minister with whom he met recently.

Dalai Lama's fear

THE OTHER question Tibetan factions in Delhi ask is, if the boy's escape was genuine, why did he go to Dharamshala instead of Rumtek, which has been the Karmapa's seat since the 16th reincarnate fled Tibet? Also, why did the Dalai Lama receive the boy? The Karmapa and the Dalai Lama have distinct beliefs and lineages, and do not have to pay obeisance to each other. Officials at the Dalai Lama's Delhi

office say "any Tibetan refugee can meet the Dalai Lama, particularly someone seeking spiritual teaching." But the Dalai Lama was in retreat, and surely would not have received any other refugee during this period. Khenpo Rimpoché, the priest who was ousted from Rumtek by Tai Situ, cites what he believes is the "vital" evidence linking the Tibetan government-in-exile with the boy's escape: "The pro-China Tai Situ's associate, Karzang Chime, was appointed by

the Tibetan government-in-exile to its Kathmandu office in October. It was for this specific purpose."

What is the Dalai Lama's motive? Since the negotiations which began after China recognised the Karmapa failed, the 64-year-old Dalai, insiders say, has been worried about the future of Tibet and its exiles. He wants the problem to be resolved during his lifetime, and is fearful of going down in history as the Dalai Lama who lost his kingdom and died in exile — a fear exacerbated by a recent road accident.

The Karmapa's seeking refuge at Dharamshala thus reinforces the Dalai Lama's vision of a unified Tibetan community under his leadership. The previous Karmapa, keen to retain the distinct identity of his order, had not been willing to pay such obeisance.

Moreover, the Karma Kagyu order has been more popular in the West (the Dalai Lama emerged as a spiritual icon in the US only in the late Seventies), and commands vast wealth (its assets are valued at \$1.2 billion), influence and following. These could come under the Dalai Lama's control if the young Karmapa Lama accepts his supremacy.

Then, the Gelug and Kagyu orders together comprise the bulk of Tibetan Buddhists. This enables the Dalai Lama to become the spokesman for most Tibetans.

As for Washington, within days of the Karmapa's "escape" becoming known, US special coordinator for Tibet Julia Tift was in Dharamshala. Two days after her visit, the state department spokesperson mentioned the need for a dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama.

US intervention could help the two open a new chapter of negotiations. If all goes well, the Dalai Lama can quell his fears and China can remove an irritant. And that leaves only a very nervous India to do some tightrope walking.

THE LAMAS: WHO'S WHAT

The four main Tibetan Buddhist orders or lineages:

● **Gelugpa:** Founded in the 14th century. Headed by the Dalai Lama. The Panchen Lama is its next most important leader. Exile headquarters at Dharamshala.

● **Kagyupa:** Founded in the 11th century. Headed by Gyalwe Karmapa, who is head of the sub-order Karma Kagyu. Exile headquarters at Rumtek, Sikkim.

● **Sakyapa:** Founded in the same period as Kagyupa. Headed by the current hereditary successor, Sakya Trinzin. Exile headquarters in Dehradun. The only school whose leader marries and produces an heir.

● **Nyingmapa:** The oldest school, which was universally accepted in Tibet till the 11th century. It has no designated head.

There is no hierarchy of importance among the heads of the various sects. The Dalai Lama, by virtue of being the political leader, however, does have more influence over the others.

The first Lama ruler of Tibet was from the Sakya school, who in 1244 captured power with the help of the Mongol Khans. This line retained power till 1369. Since then, Beijing has always played a role in Tibetan politics.

During 1369-1642, it was the Kagyu period when the Karmapas' representatives ruled. They were violently overthrown by the Gelugpa, who enthroned the fifth Dalai Lama. The present Dalai Lama is the 14th.

The Karma Kagyu conflict

After the 16th Karmapa, Ranjung Rigpe Dorje (1924-1981) died, the order's four high priests — Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche, Tai

Situ Rinpoche, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche and Gyaltshab Rinpoche — began looking for his reincarnation.

Shamar Rinpoche was accused of engineering a reincarnation in the royal family of Bhutan, which the Bhutanese government denied. Tai Situ then "found" the reincarnation in Tibet. Just before this claim, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche died in a car crash in April 1992.

Shamar accused Tai Situ of colluding with the Chinese and of forging the 16th Karmapa's letter (the basis of identifying the reincarnation.) But both the Dalai Lama and China recognised Tai Situ's candidate. Soon, violence erupted at Rumtek.

Shamar left Rumtek and is now in Delhi. In 1994, he enthroned a rival Karmapa. This had also led to a clash.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
16 JAN 2000

Beijing ordains Tibetan 'Living Buddha'

REUTERS

BEIJING, Jan. 16. — China today ordained the reincarnation of a Tibetan "Living Buddha" in a move that could exacerbate already bitter relations between Beijing and the Tibetan government-in-exile.

Backed by the Religious Affairs Bureau in Beijing, the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region approved the selection of a two-year-old boy as the reincarnation of the sixth Reting Lama, who died in February 1997, said Xinhua, the official news agency.

His head was shaved and he was given a Buddhist name in an ordination ceremony before a statue of the Buddha at Jokhang temple, Lhasa.

But many Tibetan Buddhists are likely to reject the boy as a fake unless the Dalai Lama, in exile in Dharamsala, accepts him as the Reting Lama's legitimate reincarnation.

ACCEPTANCE DEPENDS ON DALAI LAMA NOD

"The legitimacy of any person being a reincarnate of a lama has to have His Holiness's approval to be accepted by Buddhists living both in Tibet and outside," Tashi Wangdi, exiled Tibetan Minister for Religion and Culture, said last week when news surfaced that China had approved the boy for ordination.

The Reting Lama is significant as one of the few Tibetan lamas who can act as regent in the Dalai Lama's absence, who held political power in Tibet before the Communist take-over in Beijing in 1949.

The installation of high lamas selected by Beijing appears to be a key Chinese strategy in quelling separatist sentiments in Tibet and winning the allegiance of the Himalayan region's predominantly Buddhist population.

China says he left Tibet to collect sym-

bolic ritual implements that belonged to the previous Karmapa Lama, leaving the door open for his return. But the Tibetan government-in-exile said the Karmapa Lama fled Tibet to avoid religious repression and human rights abuses.

The boy ordained as the seventh Reting today had been selected from more than 700 boys through divination, including letting candidates choose positions of the previous Reting, a Lhasa government official said last week.

Lhasa vice-mayor, Fajie, was a senior member of the search group which set out to find the reincarnation to "meet the needs and wishes of adherents," the *Tibet Daily* had reported. The boy's father is a driver and his mother a housewife, the government official said. He declined to provide further details of the boy.

Excitement & concern over Karmapa move

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE 5-8

DHARAMSALA, Jan. 16. — While the Tibetan community here is excited about the prospect of the 17th Karmapa deciding to stay on at Dharamsala, there is also growing concern that the divide between the refugees and the locals could widen further.

Relations between the two sections have been troubled over the years for various reasons

which include a clash of interests ever since the Dalai Lama fled from China and made Dharamsala his home in 1959.

In the mid-90s, Dharamsala witnessed clashes between the Tibetan and the Gaddi shepherd communities. Tibetans dominate the entire township of Mcleod Gunj.

As a result of these clashes which left a local youth dead, there was talk amidst tension by the Tibetan government, including the Dalai Lama, to shift the headquarters to some other part of the country.

But the state government has since been pacifying the Dalai Lama with reassurances. But the talk of shifting some of their offices to the outskirts of Delhi have continued while shifting the headquarters have been ruled out recently by the

Dalai Lama.

When the Statesman spoke to people here there appears a mixed reaction could be gauged, in the event of the Karmapada deciding to stay on here along with the Dalai Lama.

While most feel there would be a rise in the influx of Tibetan refugees in Dharamsala and other nearby centres in Himachal, some feel his stay may further distance the locals and the refugees.

INFLUX POSSIBLE

DHARAMSALA, Jan. 16. — The journey of the 17th Karmapa who marched across high mountains and the sensitive Indo-China border could embolden hordes of other Tibetans to follow the footprints of the 'Living Buddha' into India.

Enquiries here reveal that around 500 Tibetans are currently crossing over from Tibet into India after passing through Nepal.

— SNS

The reasons attributed for the tension between the two sections are quite obvious.

With huge amounts of international aid pouring in for the Tibetan government in exile, locals feel deprived.

Another complaint is that Tibetans look down upon

Indian tourists who visit Dharamsala. "Often the Indians are treated shabbily by shopkeepers and hoteliers at Tibetan-controlled Mcleod Gunj, while in sharp contrast the foreign tourists are favoured," said a long-time Dharamsala inhabitant.

Another group says authorities pamper refugees.

Added to this is the alleged rampant deforestation and encroachment on forest land, with authorities looking the other way.

THE STATESMAN

17 JAN 2000

'Lama's stay won't violate Panchsheel'

New Delhi, January 16

DEFENCE MINISTER George Fernandes today said the 17th Karmapa Urygen Trinley Dorje could be allowed to stay in India.

"If people walk in and want to stay on for a while they can be allowed to stay. What is there," Fernandes told reporters when asked whether allowing the 14-year-old Tibetan monk to stay in India would be violation of Panchsheel.

He was speaking on the sidelines of a seminar on "Governance and Social Justice" here.

Asserting that Karmapa's defection to India and allowing him to stay here would not "impinge on relations" with China, Mr Fernandes said "if one has come to our country and wants to stay there

is no violation of anything. And I don't think we should be upset over anything related to that."

On whether granting asylum had

However, the Defence Minister clarified "as far as I know, nobody has asked for political asylum."

Mr Fernandes said he was not

Mr Fernandes said the circumstances in which the Karmapa had come were still not known.

The Karmapa arrived at McLeodganj near Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh on January 5 with six of his followers after fleeing from Tsurphu monastery in Tibet.

A member of the Tibetan Parliament-in exile on January 13 requested India to consider granting political asylum to the Karmapa.

Besides him, monks of three Buddhist monasteries in south India have requested the government for granting asylum to the Karmapa saying the presence of the monk would benefit the Buddhists and herald peace and happiness throughout the world. (PTI)

Rabi Ray seeks asylum for Karmapa

FORMER LOK Sabha Speaker Rabi Ray on Sunday appealed to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to grant asylum to the Tibetan Buddhist leader Urygen Trinley Dorje. "It will be in keeping with the country's age-old tradition of religious tolerance," he said in a release here. Mr Ray, president of the Indo-Tibet Friendship Society, said the Chinese government had installed him as the 17th Karmapa and held him as a living Buddha while he was in Tibet.

PTI, Bhubaneswar

any potential to upset Sino-India relations, he said "I don't think there is any need to look at this issue, which can impinge on our relations."

aware that Beijing had issued "any veiled threat" to New Delhi on granting asylum to the Karmapa. "This is not a matter on which threats can be made," he added.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
17 JAN 2000

Karmapa should himself seek asylum, says Tibet

RAJIV K PHULL
DHARAMSALA, JAN 16

THE 17th Karmapa Lama, Orgyen Trinley Dorji, reportedly expects the Dalai Lama to plead his case for political asylum with the Indian Government, but the Tibetan government-in-exile, it is learnt, wants him to set the ball rolling himself.

The Tibetan government also made it clear on Saturday that the Karmapa will have no meeting with mediapersons until his "status in India was clear".

However, the Karmapa obliged photographers, who had been following him ever since he arrived here on January 5, by coming out on the balcony of his room located on the top floor of Gyuto Tantrik Temple, Sidhbari, 7 km from here.

According to sources, the Karmapa, during his meeting with the Dalai Lama yesterday, had reportedly urged him to take up the matter of political asylum with the Government of India.

The Tibetan government, however, had described the hour-long meeting as a 'routine one', saying



that the Dalai Lama wanted to enquire about the progress of the religious studies of the Karmapa. The Dalai Lama, who is in retreat these days, had to come out twice to meet the Karmapa.

According to Tashi Wangdi, minister for religion and culture in the Tibetan government-in-exile: "The Karmapa will have to write to the Indian Government for political asylum, and the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government will plead his case."

The minister denied that the Tibetan government had sent feelers to any other country for deporting the Karmapa there, in case he was denied political asylum in India.

When asked why the Karmapa was being kept so closely guarded till now, the minister said: "Given the circumstances under which he had come to India, we have to give him time. Moreover, I cannot go and tell him that enough is enough."

Wangdi hoped that the Union Government would take a decision in this regard on merit. He added that the Tibetans were not unduly worried as India could not be pushed into a corner and forced to take a wrong decision, as was evident from history. He, however, evaded questions regarding the time and the route taken by the Karmapa for his escape from Tibet. "I cannot comment on anything based on partial information," he said.

He also questioned the authenticity of Namgyal Gompu, reported to be the maternal uncle of the 17th Karmapa, saying that he was a "Tibetan residing in Germany, who has no position in Tibetan society." A few days ago, Gompu had reportedly urged the Karmapa to return to Tibet and had described his escape "a mistake".

INDIAN EXPRESS
17 JAN 2000

China ordains two-year-old ^{child} 'living Buddha'

Beijing, January 17 ^{11-9A}

CHINA TODAY announced that it had ordained a two-year-old boy as a new "living Buddha" in a face-saving measure after one of the highest leaders in Tibetan Buddhism escaped to India.

The announcement came in a brief dispatch on the official Xinhua news agency saying the little boy was enthroned yesterday as the 7th reincarnation of the Reting Rinpoche.

The sixth Reting, Dandzim Jigme, who played a role in the administration of Tibet in the 1930s and in the search for the present Dalai Lama, died in February 1997. Xinhua said the

new living Buddha, Soinam Puncog, was born in Lhari, north of Lhasa, on October 13, 1997.

But his legitimacy is contested by the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, who has lived in exile in northern India since he fled Tibet in 1959 after China brutally suppressed an uprising against Chinese rule.

The ordination ceremony was held yesterday in the Jokhang temple in Lhasa, and attended by the leading authorities from the city and the Tibetan autonomous region.

Xinhua described the Reting Rinpoche as "one of the highest-ranking positions in Tibetan Buddhism" and said the region's vice president had presented an official certificate approving him as the 7th Reting.

"The tradition of patriotism and the spirit to preserve the unity of the Chinese nation have long been

advocated by Raiqen living Buddhas," it said.

Despite his pro-communist stand the 6th Reting Rinpoche was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76).

But the boy's most renowned predecessor was the 5th Reting Rinpoche, who was designated the regent to run Tibet after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama in 1933—a post he held until the ordination of the current Dalai Lama in 1940.

The 5th Reting Rinpoche was also head of the search party for the present Dalai Lama and his senior tutor before being arrested in 1947 by the Tibetan Government for col-

luding with China.

He died a month later in prison, four years before Chinese troops marched into Tibet.

The enthronement of the 7th Reting Rinpoche comes just weeks after the 17th Karmapa, the only Tibetan Buddhist leader to be recognised by both the Dalai Lama and Beijing, fled to India. (AFP)



Soinam Puncog

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 JAN 2000

Palpung monastery all set to receive Karmapa

By Sujay Mehdudia

BAIJNATH (KANGRA), JAN. 17. The outer walls are being decorated by artisans of Tibet, the interiors are being decked up, the entrance has been embellished colourfully and the gold-plated throne is in place. The monks peep out of their rooms on the arrival of any vehicle, eagerly awaiting the 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorjee, at the Shera Biling Palpung monastery, about 8 km from here.

Hectic preparations are on to welcome the 14-year-old Karmapa. This monastery is run by the "controversial" Tai Situ Rinponche, said to be close to the Karmapa and who played a major role in his installation. The Palpung monastery at Beed village houses around 250 monks and is considered a major learning university of the country. People of the adjoining monasteries and the Tibetan community have been asked to make preparations for his welcoming the Karmapa. Rehearsals are already on to present Tibet's cultural programmes, including the famous lion dance.

The Palpung monastery, still under construction, is being cleaned up. Artists from Tibet are giving last-minute touches to the main entrance. All work, including cooking, cleaning and washing, is being done by the monks.

On the other hand, Tai Situ Rinponche has confined himself to his room and meets people there. He is conducting all behind-the-scenes operations and is keen on bringing the Karmapa to Shera Biling. He recently came under fire for his out-of-turn statements and has been asked to maintain a low-profile by the government-

in-exile. The Palpung monastery is named after Tai Situ Rinponche's original monastery, which was once the major Kagya monastery in Eastern Tibet. Palpung is not easy to translate but the "Palace of Good Fortune Where Talented People are Cultivated" roughly summarises it.

The monastery is being built on a 2.5-acre land, 100 feet in front of the Institute of Buddhist Studies. The building has been designed by Tai Situ but bears the stamp of traditional Tibetan architecture. The concept of design follows the ancient science of geomancy and the utilitarian spaces have been accommodated in relation to their functions, the ground floor having all areas of public or semi-public activities. There are an auditorium for teaching and making video presentations and a hall where the resident monks train for the ritual Lama dance.

A multi-media room, still under construction, will produce teaching videos, audio cassettes and educational CD Roms.

The top floor of the monastery houses the room of the Karmapa. It has a full-fledged library, a bedroom, a study, a terrace garden and a meditation hall. Nobody except a single attendant will be allowed into his room when he occupies it.

According to the praying monks, the Karmapa's throne has already been kept ready. A look at the throne, which stands under the shadow of the 42-foot high gold plated statue of the "Future Buddha", suggests that the Karmapa is coming only to Shera Biling.

A huge portrait of the Karmapa has been placed on the golden

throne. Sitting on it, he will meet the people and bless them, say the monks. The wooden floor hall, the exquisitely painted wall murals and elaborate wooden furniture add a touch of class to the entire surroundings. The monastery itself is located amid pine trees and thick forests. The approach road to the monastery, full of slush and mud, is still under construction.

Officials inside the monastery said the project of the monastery began in 1977 when the need was felt to provide an opportunity to the people to study and practise Buddhism in the traditional monastic environment. The project encompasses four independent aspects —the spiritual, educational, health and culture. The project lost its momentum in early '90s when Tai Situ was banned from entering India for alleged anti-Indian activities. The ban was only lifted last year and since then the project has been taken up.

According to Tai Situ Rinponche, the idea of the project is to preserve the Tibetan people's culture in a complete self-sufficient environment where every one can study and practise.

The Tibetan people in the adjoining villages have already started visiting the monastery with offerings and are praying for the early arrival of the Karmapa. He is likely to be put up in Shera Biling monastery as the Indian Government is not inclined to send him to the Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim. The Karmapa is expected to be shifted anytime after a decision on his status in India is taken by the Government.

The Karmapa controversy

W W J. N. DIXIT on the Lama's escape

THE HEAD of the Karmapa or Kagyu sect of Mahayana Buddhism has been in the centre of controversy over the last three weeks. His escape from Tibet has generated complexities in the Tibetan community in India, in the power politics of the Rumtek monastery, the headquarters of his sect in Sikkim, and created tension between India and China. Resolving problems caused by his escape also involves Indian policy stances on human rights, on the relations between State and religion and attitude towards the Tibetan community in India.

Mentioning some factual background about the Karmapa sect, and events attending the selection of the 17th Karmapa, would be relevant to understand the issues involved. The Kagyu sect is one of the most influential sects not only in Tibet, but it commands widespread following in Sikkim, Bhutan and the north eastern states, especially Arunachal Pradesh, and to a limited extent in Ladakh. The reigning Karmapa has always been the third most important religious and temporal figure in Buddhist politics in Tibet and its adjacent regions, ranking after the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama.

The selection and the determination of reincarnation of every new Karmapa are done by the same procedure which is followed on the selection of the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama. In some respects after the decline of the influence of the Dalai Lama in Tibet, the temporal influence and physical resources of the Karmapa sect, has been most significant. The sect and its monasteries are rich (the assets are estimated at 1.2 billion dollars) and influential. Consequently, there has been continuing struggle between different factions of monks belonging to the sect, particularly those manning the Rumtek and other main monasteries. This situation has been compounded by the Chinese government's desire to control the religious power structure in Tibet.

The origin of the current controversy about the escape of the 17th Karmapa is rooted in these factors. The background of the appointment of the 17th Karmapa is even more relevant to the points at issue. Rival candidates for the position of the Karmapa were sponsored between 1989 and 1991,

one by a section of the monks of the Rumtek monastery and the other by the Chinese government. The Rumtek faction tried to pressurise the Government of India through the Sikkim government to ensure the installation of its candidate and prevent the arrival of the Chinese nominee. The Dalai Lama has a crucial role

in the nomination of the head of this sect because confirmation of his position depends on the Dalai Lama's approval. I recall the initial manoeuvrings regarding the appointment of the Karmapa from my days as Foreign Secretary. The Government of India took the principled position that it is not for any particular group of monks from Rumtek or the Chinese government to decide who should be Karmapa. The confirmation of the reincarnation of the 16th Karmapa was to be based on clearly defined traditional tests plus the rituals. The authenticity and legitimacy have to be finally confirmed by the Dalai Lama. The Government of India will not get involved. This policy stance was also predicted on the logical assumption that the Dalai Lama's decision would be accepted by the followers of the sect as well as by the Tibetan community in general.

Difficulties about the nomination of the Karmapa were ultimately resolved in the mid-'90s by the Dalai Lama accepting the nomination and selection made by the Chinese government. The Chinese authorities, however, did not allow the Karmapa (Ugyen Trinley Dorji) to come to Rumtek and occupy the throne at the headquarters of his sect. The logic of this measure was obvious. The Chinese authorities desired the centre of power of this sect to be located within Tibet under

their political and territorial jurisdiction. This has been part of their policy not only to exercise control over the temporal and political affairs of Tibet, but also over religious affairs with a view to gradually change the autonomous identity of Tibet.

The 17th Karmapa's arrival in India on January 5 has revived rival candidates for the position. Two more have emerged at Rumtek and the Chinese have discovered another incarnation of the 16th Karmapa while the first incarnation, the 14-year old Dorji, is still alive. The contradictions within the Tibetan community and the religious establishment need not be a major concern of the Government of India as long as, in terms of ripple effects, it does not generate

additional tension between India and China. This latter reservation remains relevant because one of the understandings which the Dalai Lama gave to India, when he came and settled down in India in 1959 was that he and his followers will refrain from political activities, particularly of the category which may impinge on Sino-Indian relations. This understanding has not been fully adhered to in recent years.

What is more relevant at the government level is the manner in which we should deal with the Chinese reaction to the 17th Karmapa's escape. Chinese spokesmen have cautioned India against giving political refuge to the Karmapa. They have implied that India giving asylum to him would be a contradiction of the principles of peaceful co-existence and that it can affect Sino-Indian relations negatively. Our response to the Chinese message has been somewhat defensive. This is not necessary. Two of the principles of peaceful co-existence

are mutual respect and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Non-interference in each other's internal affairs is the third.

It would be pertinent to tell Beijing that their cautionary note referring to the five principles applies to the government of China also. It should be pointed out that the 17th Karmapa who was their nominee, voluntarily left Tibet due to reasons with which India had nothing to do. Nor did India play any role in his escape from China into India.

India has refrained from interfering in the internal affairs of China, especially related to developments in Tibet. We have remained constant in our policy of recognising Tibet as an autonomous region of China. The Karmapa's coming to India is a matter between him and the Chinese authorities. However, the granting or not granting political asylum, when he is in Indian territory, is a matter of sovereign discretion of the Government of India, which does not constitute any challenge to China's jurisdiction over Tibet, nor is it a case of India interfering in Chinese affairs.

China giving any other interpretation or making demands on the basis of such interpretation is not logical, politically or in terms of international law. It should also be emphasised to the Chinese that India attaches importance to its relations with China and desires normal and expanding contacts, and that Sino-Indian relations have a much larger and diverse dimensions than the case of an individual Buddhist leader coming away from China because of the problems he might have had with the Chinese authorities.

Sustaining normal relations and improving them would depend on India and China focussing on the larger issues of resolving the boundary question, expanding economic, cultural and technological cooperation and structuring an environment of security and stability through mutual consultations. It should be clearly indicated that India will not be subjected to pressure on issues which fall within its sovereign jurisdiction. Whether we, in our own judgement, will give political asylum or not to the Karmapa is a different matter. And the conditions under which such asylum may be given will be consistent with our policies on Tibet.



China upset over Dalai's proposed visit to Thailand

BANGKOK: Chinese authorities have expressed their concerns over reports that Tibetan spiritual leader-in-exile, the Dalai Lama, has been invited to Thailand to attend a religious conference later this year, a news report said on Wednesday.



Dalai Lama

Diplomats from China's embassy to Bangkok recently met Thai foreign ministry officials to seek an explanation about the upcoming visit, said the *Nation* newspaper.

"China's expression of concern over the possible visit of the Dalai Lama is not unexpected. We understand their feelings," a foreign ministry official told the local newspaper.

Thailand's decision to grant the Dalai Lama a visa to enter the kingdom in February 1993 as part of a group of touring Nobel Peace Prize laureates, drew strong protests from Beijing and ruffled Sino-Thai relations.

Sulak Sivaraksa, a renowned Thai scholar and social critic, has invited the Dalai Lama to attend a seminar on religion. He has not specified the exact date of the seminar for fear of drawing Beijing's protests to the visit. Mr Sulak said the Thai government had given him a "green light" to invite the Dalai Lama to participate in a religious function on the precondition that his visit remained apolitical. (DPA)

THE TIMES OF INDIA
20 JAN 2000

The truth behind the Karmapa controversy

MEDIA PUNDITS in India have interpreted the Chinese Karmapa, Ugyen Trinlay's impact on Sino-Indian relations at length, but erroneous assertions have crept into these accounts because of lack of historical perspective. One can properly understand this story only in the context of Tibetan history, which presents a tangled web of religion and politics. Undoubtedly, numerous newspaper and TV accounts have failed to separate these two threads. But doing so is critical to separate fact from fiction.

One mistaken assumption widely repeated is: the Dalai Lama must approve the recognition of the Karmapa. Eminent former foreign secretary JN Dixit innocently repeated this claim in an article in this paper on January 19. The truth, however, is simple. By tradition and history, the Dalai Lama has never had the power to recognise the Karmapa. This incorrect assertion most likely derives from confusing the Dalai Lama's political authority with his spiritual authority. While the Dalai Lama has historically led the Tibetan government, his spiritual authority has never extended beyond his own Gelugpa school. Let's now look at the historical facts. The first Gyalwa Karmapa, Dusum

Khyenpo, lived in the 12th century, over 300 years before the Gelugpa school was even founded and before the first Dalai Lama was recognised. (In fact, scholars all agree that the Karmapa line holds the distinction of being the first appearance of reincarnated lamas in Tibetan Buddhism.) Five Karmapas reincarnated before the first Dalai Lama appeared. Therefore, it is historically impossible to claim that the Dalai Lamas have always anointed the Karmapas' reincarnation. It is true that the Dalai Lama and his Gelugpa school dominated the Tibetan government from 1638 to 1959, but during this period, each school functioned free from the Gelugpa government's interference in spiritual matters. (Incidentally, the Nyingma, Kadampa, Sakya and Kagyu schools each ruled the government at one period or the other before the Dalai Lama's ascendancy.)

Two historical incidents illustrate this point. Chinese Emperor Yung Lo, who was a disciple of the 5th Karmapa, planned to invade Tibet and merge all four schools, including the Gelugpas, under Kagyu authority. However, the 5th Karmapa Dezhin Shagpa blocked the scheme, saying each school had a spiritual right to exist. When the 5th Dalai Lama ruled Tibet, his disciple, a Mongolian lord, suggested a similar

scheme, but the Dalai Lama refused. Starting in 1962, however, tradition and history were reversed. In that year, the current Dalai Lama attempted to merge all four schools under his authority. While the late 16th Karmapa recognised the Dalai Lama's political authority, he led the three other schools in fighting the spiritual consolidation.

Two weeks ago, the Tibetan government-in-exile issued a proclamation asserting its power to recognise the reincarnations of all four schools. This declaration went unchallenged in the media, thereby reinforcing the misperception about the extent of the Gelugpa school's spiritual authority.

Coming to the current situation with the Chinese Karmapa, one must again examine the intersection of religion and politics. The Chinese Karmapa wears the stamp of legitimacy, according to the press, because the Dalai Lama has approved of the 14-year-old boy. Unfortunately, the Chinese Karmapa's appointment has more to do with politics than religion.

In collaboration with the Chinese government, Tai Situ Rinpoche appointed Ugyen Trinlay as an illegitimate nominee. Furthermore, Situ installed the boy at Tsurphu monastery, which was the Karmapa's seat in Tibet, and fixed his enthronement

GUEST COLUMN



KUNZIG SHAMAR RINPOCHE

While the Dalai Lama has historically led

the Tibetan government, his spiritual authority has never extended beyond his own Gelugpa school

ment date. In addition to receiving the Chinese government's backing, Situ then won the Dalai Lama's validation for his candidate. Thus, he undermined my spiritual authority and our lineage's traditions.

Tai Situ's actions have betrayed our school to two governments — the Chinese and the Tibetan government-in-exile. Regrettably, Situ Rinpoche has irrevocably damaged our lineage, and he has helped stage manage the Chinese Karmapa's every move.

In 1993, Chinese President Jiang Lee invited Ugyen Trinlay to Beijing, and said that Trinlay should receive six years of training in communist ideology. Six years later, Trinlay finished his training, and the Joint Action of Sikkim secretly met with Chinese officials in Lhasa, Tibet. Three months after the committee's secret meetings

Ugyen Trinlay left Lhasa for this country, leaving a note saying he was going to collect the crown.

It's highly improbable for a 14-year-old boy to travel 900 km on foot in winter. As the Indian government is considering asylum for him, the stories about his escape keep changing. He first said that he had trekked all the way, then later claimed he had taken a jeep, etc.

As the second-highest ranking leader of the Karma Kagyu school, the Shat-

Don't use Karmapa against us, Beijing envoy warns Delhi

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

THIRUVANTHAPURAM, Jan. 24. — The Chinese ambassador to India, Mr Zhou Gang, today strongly advised India not to use the presence of the 17th Karmapa in the country for "anti-political and anti-social activities against China".

"We hope India would not use the presence of Karmapa for anti-political activities against our soil," Mr Zhou said.

Instead of trying to damage the bilateral relationship between the two countries on the issue, it should further foster the growing relationship, he said, and affirmed that his country firmly believed in *Panchsheel* for better relations.

Earlier, he recalled the strong association between both countries and felt the relationship had improved tremendously from the beginning of last year.

"India and China have a common task, especially in the post-globalisation era of building the economy and eliminating poverty," Mr Zhou said, and called for mutual co-opera-

tion so that both benefit.

(There was no immediate reaction from the Ministry of External Affairs on the hope expressed by the Chinese Ambassador, Mr Zhou Gang, that India would not use the presence here of the 17th Karmapa for "anti-political and anti-social activities against China", adds SNS from Delhi.

(Nor was any comment offered by the MEA on reports that the Dalai Lama had pleaded for India to grant asylum to the boy lama, Orgyen Trinlay Dorji. There was no change in the Indian government's position that it had sought from China details of the lama's movements out of Tibet, and that it was awaiting a response from China, the official spokesman of the MEA said here this evening.)

Tibetans' appeal: Leaders of Tibetan organisations today urged the Centre to grant permission for a "permanent stay" to the Karmapa and hoped "good sense" would prevail over Beijing who would give religious freedom to Tibetans.

THE STATESMAN
25 JAN 2000

Future of Shangri-La

ANAND K. SAHAY on the Tibetan question

NO MATTER how the Karmapa Lama tangle is eventually resolved, India is unlikely to make its China policy hostage to the question of Tibet. Although important in its own right, the Tibet issue is not a direct bilateral concern between the two countries, though an independent Tibet will undoubtedly bolster the security of India's northern frontiers by establishing a buffer. But plainly Beijing is not about to let go a prize it has held in its grasp — loosely or with brute force — for more than two and a half centuries. Big powers armed with nuclear weapons are not apt to act with such meekness. After all, Britain fought Argentina in the Falklands/Malvinas half a world away just to protect its sheep pastures. And Tibet is no grazing yard, given its strategic geographical location in High Asia which is astrid with intense international economic and political rivalry on account of its impressive gas finds.

Among the reasons for which China has traditionally coveted Tibet — and from time to time occupied it, as now — is the consideration to deny the use of this huge territory to a potential adversary. If this implied Russian or British imperial interests in the past, today Beijing will be wary of the US. India, of course, is in no way placed to excite Chinese concerns within these parameters. Nevertheless, China is unlikely to drop its guard vis-a-vis Indian actions in respect of Tibet because this country, on account of its historical and religious associations with Tibet, actively proffered refuge to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual and temporal head and symbol of its cultural, religious and political unity and existence, when he escaped from Chinese persecution 40 years ago. In the intervening years India has also come to host a fair-sized and active Tibetan community who have constituted for themselves a government-in-exile.

The presence on Indian soil of Tibetan institutional entities has always worried Beijing even though in 1980 it did replace its earlier policy of repression in Tibet with a "policy of leniency" aimed co-optation. For all that, communist China's 50-year occupation of Shangri-La lacks legitimacy in the eyes of the world, and concerns about human

rights — civilisational, not just political — are often raised. If a mutually satisfactory accommodation between China and legitimate representatives of Tibetan interests ever becomes possible, or alternatively if Tibetan independence beckons, no matter how remote it may seem now, an Indian interest in such denouncements is clearly foreseeable.

It is this which gives India a modicum of leverage in its intercourse with China, though the balance easily lies with Beijing as it occupies Indian territory to the north, does not recognise Sikkim's accession to India, and raises territorial questions in Arunachal Pradesh. The recent Karmapa Lama episode causes concern here, for it has mischief potential in Sikkim in case the fleeing boy Lama is actually a part of a Chinese game plan. As is well-known, the



Indian diplomatic skills will lie in determining how this matter is broached in the intriguing backdrop of the Karmapa's flight from Lhasa. The two countries can quickly put the whole episode behind them if China can summon the necessary political will. That will certainly make for a higher path relationship.

Beijing can fruitfully recall that the India-brokered 17-point Tibet-China accord of 1951 became a nullity on the ground when China activated its vigorous pacification and assimilation programme shortly after its armies invaded Tibet. In its spirit the accord dealt with religious and cultural freedoms, and Tibetan functional autonomy in the temporal sphere. Not long after, prevailing conditions made the Dalai Lama's continued stay in Lhasa impossible.

But before his 1959 flight, India did reach a border trade agreement in 1954 with China in which the Dalai Lama's domains were referred to as the "Tibet region of

China". India did not at any point deviate from this restricted position to regard Tibet as an "integral part of China", though Beijing would certainly have liked that. Indeed, the 1954 agreement lapsed in 1962 before the India-China hostilities broke out, and was not renewed.

While in practice India continues to be alive to Beijing's sensitivities in respect of Tibet, there exists a vacuum as far as the paper work is concerned. To fill it needs a new perspective on both sides; otherwise all options will necessarily remain

open theoretically, including that of Tibetan "independence", even though of late the Dalai Lama has shown signs of resigning himself to the thought that his country has now practically become a part of China. If he is shown satisfactory accommodation by Beijing, other issues can also plausibly head in the direction of resolution. These will necessarily include the India-Tibet border question — hanging fire for over a century — which is at the heart of the Sino-Indian boundary talks in the eastern sector.

The twentieth century has offered Tibet little reprieve. While imperial China, which faded out in 1911, had for two centuries asserted only suzerainty rights over Lhasa, during its brief republican interlude, the Chinese dragon claimed the right of sovereignty, though it was too weak to effect it. Indeed, precisely in the three and a half decades between the advent of Sun-yat Sen and the emergence of communism, it was Lhasa that began to exercise de facto independence. Cartographers ceased to show Tibet as part of China.

In 1911 Chinese government representatives were even expelled from Lhasa. They could only return in 1933 under the guise of a condolence mission following the demise of the thirteenth Dalai Lama, the present leader's predecessor. They stayed on, but were expelled again in 1949. But the show was over for Tibetan independence once the red star rose over China.

Whatever Tibet's proper status, even in Beijing's eyes it is not the same as that of Hong Kong, Macao or Taiwan which Beijing regards as its very own. That is why it refuses to offer Lhasa the same terms of reconciliation as it does to these. Doesn't this show that Tibet is not really China, but only a conquered part of the old empire which could one day want to break free?

In his introduction to *Tibet in Pictures*, Lama Govinda has said, "Tibet's was a great and ancient civilisation which flourished with unbroken vitality for more than a millennium, right up to our time, when it met with total destruction by the conquering hordes... this happened exactly at the moment when humanity was on the verge of becoming conscious of its essential oneness and its future common fate." Has that moment passed?

Tibetans' appeal

NEW DELHI, JAN. 24. Leaders of various Tibetan organisations today urged the Centre to grant permission for permanent stay of the 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorje, in India.

"We thank the Government of India for giving adequate security to Karmapa Dorje and urge that he be given permission for permanent stay in India so that he could continue his spiritual education and spread the message of peace," the Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association president, Lama Chospel Zotpa, said at a special ceremony held here to celebrate the arrival of the Karmapa.

Lama Zotpa regretted speculations in media about "differences" among Tibetan groups and the law and order threat due to the arrival of the Karmapa.

The BJP's Rajya Sabha member, Mr. T. N. Chaturvedi, said, "he (the Karmapa) is an honoured guest and people and the government should accord him all respect." — PTI

THE HINDU

25 JAN 2000

Karmapa must be allowed to stay: Dalai Lama

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BHUBANESWAR, JAN. 28. The Tibetan spiritual head, Dalai Lama, has said that it would be "a terrible mistake on the part of the Government of India, both in respect of country's image as well as in substance," if Karmapa Ugyen Trinley Dorje, who escaped from Tibet, was not allowed to stay in the country. In a letter written to the former Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. Rabi Ray, the Dalai Lama, however, said he understood to some extent the cautious stand of the Government of India on this issue.

The reincarnate 17th Karmapa, 14-year-old Ugyen Trinley Dorje escaped from Tibet with his sister, Ms. Ngodup Palzam, a nun and five others and reached India on January 5.

The Dalai Lama, in his letter dated January 18, also thanked Mr. Ray for his stand on the issue of granting asylum to the Karmapa. The copy of the letter was released by Mr. Ray to the press today.

Stating that he was convinced that the Karmapa

had escaped from Tibet because he did not find it possible to pursue his religious studies and practices satisfactorily there, the Dalai Lama said he had evidence that contrary to appearances, there was much restriction and suppression of religious freedom in Tibet. Meanwhile, the escape of the monk from Tibet to India had triggered off controversy among the three living regents of Sikkim's influential Rumtek Monastery with the majority supporting him.

The Tibetan leader said in his letter to the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, he had mentioned that the conduct of the Karmapa in the past clearly indicated a strong character and correct stand on issues relating to his religious practice and the welfare of the Tibetan people.

Unfortunately, there was factionalism within the Karma Kagyu sect itself which had complicated the matter, the Dalai Lama said referring to the Shamar group and the Situ group. — P11

THE HINDU

29 JAN 2000

Brief history of the lama wars

EXPRESS FOCUS KARMAPA

Trinley Dorje is not the only possible Karmapa, discovers SUKHMANI SINGH after meeting the man who has backed his main rival since 1993

IN the coming weeks, the lama wars are bound to intensify and, perhaps, climax. Desperate attempts will be made by rival claimants to forestall the installation of the 17th Karmapa, Orgyen Trinley Dorje, in the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim. Prime among these is Delhi-based Tibetan regent of the Karma Kagyu sect, Shamar Rinpoche, who is leading the slugfest against the acceptance of Orgyen Trinley Dorje. His real identity and motives remain mysterious. Significantly, he had initially conceded his approval of the Dalai Lama and China's consensual choice of the Karmapa in a letter dated June 17, 1992. It reads, "I offer my willing acceptance." Today, he confesses that he did so "because I did not want to create trouble."

In a complete volte face a year later, he orchestrated a seven-year series of litigations against rival Tibetan regent Tai Situ Rinpoche, spiritual guru of the 17th Karmapa. In 1994, he also discovered another boy — Trinley That Dorje — now aged 11, whom he proclaimed to be the real Karmapa. He had been identified on tenuous grounds. As Shamar himself admits, it was the child's own words — he had declared, "I am the Karmapa."

Last year, one of Shamar's general secretaries even applied to the Indian gov-

ernment for a passport for Trinley That Dorje. The fact that Dorje is Tibetan by birth and was subsequently smuggled into India was no deterrent. Shamars detractors claim this was done "to create unrest in the Tibetan community."

But the legal battle began way back in 1993. That year, the first writ petition was filed in the Gangtok High Court by Shamar's disciples Dugo Bhutia and Karma Gompu, challenging the 17th Karmapa's recognition by the Dalai Lama and others. On August 19, 1994, it was dismissed and withdrawn. In 1996, another of his followers, Ngedon Tenzing, filed a case against the state of Sikkim in the Supreme Court, again challenging the recognition accorded to the 17th Karmapa. Within a month, it was withdrawn *in limine* on February 8, 1996.

In 1997, a petition was filed in the Patna High Court by one Narayan Singh of Munger, Bihar, under the name of the Dr Ambedkar Bodhi Kunj Foundation. Singh is allegedly a former monk. The petition charged that Tai Situ Rinpoche, Gyaltsab Rinpoche of Sikkim and His Holiness the Dalai Lama were indulging in anti-India activities and were Chinese agents. The court dismissed the case on March 31, 1997, stating that this was a matter to be decided by the administrative authorities.

Soon afterwards, Shri Narayan Singh filed a civil suit in the munisif court in Munger against all three with the same charges. Although the defendants have filed replies, the case is currently pending.

In 1998, Singh again filed a criminal complaint in the office of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in Delhi, making the same charges of sedition. The CMM requested a CBI enquiry into the matter. After the CBI submitted a report, the case was dismissed on January 13 last year. As a consequence of the sedition charges, the Indian government banned Tai Situ Rinpoche from entering India in 1994. The government partially revoked the ban in July 1998, allowing him to visit areas other than the Northeast and Sikkim.

Immediately Dugo Bhutia again filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court challenging the government's order. It was dismissed *in limine* by the High Court on August 26, 1998. Bhutia then filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court, which was also dismissed on November 16, 1998. The speedy dismissal of cases may have something to do with Tai Situ Rinpoche's alleged relationship with Law Minister Ram Jethmalani — his aides claim that the latter is an "adviser".

In 1998, Shamar Rinpoche filed a case in the court of the district judge, Sikkim, pleading that he be declared the sole trustee of the Karmapa Charitable Trust. The Trust was established in 1961 for administering all movable and immovable properties of the 16th Karmapa. These include a priceless collection of antiques



The Karmapa in ceremonial gear and Shamar Rinpoche, his bete noir

Karmapa by the President of India in 1979. He owns a house in Rajpur, Dehradun and the palatial Gyalangka House in Kalimpong, apart from land in Nepal, where most of his followers reside. Interestingly, he holds Bhutanese citizenship, earlier had Nepalese citizenship and enjoys refugee status in India, though he says that the last has expired. He enjoys very cordial relations with Kathog Shingchong Tulku, an office-bearer of the Chinese Communist Party who was allegedly deported from Dehradun 20 years ago for indulging in anti-India activities. Tulku now resides in Chengde, located in the Szechwan province of China, and is a key anti-Dalai Lama player. Says Shamar, "He heads a monastery there and is very good to me."



The 16th Karmapa's

trust, established in 1961, includes a priceless collection of antiques brought from Tibet. Says Shamar, "I can get everything if I claim it legally."

brought from Tibet. Says Shamar, "I can get everything if I claim it legally." Shamar currently resides in a monastery in Mehrauli given to the 16th