

**From National Archives of India**

*File: Monthly report of the Indian Mission Lhasa; Indian Missions; Lhasa Tibet,  
1951; Progs., Nos. 4(6)-P, 1951*

**SECRET**

From: The Officer in Charge,  
Indian Mission, Lhasa.

To: The Political Officer in Sikkim,  
Gangtok

Memorandum No. 3(10)-L/51.

Dated, Lhasa, Tibet, the 15th January, 1951.

*Monthly report of the Indian Mission, Lhasa  
for the period ending 15th January, 1951*

**I. EXTERNAL RELATIONS:**

**(a) Relations between Tibet and China.**

(i) There is a marked element of surprise in everything that the Chinese do; they attack, capture and unexpectedly abandon a place, and move on with incredible rapidity to new and remote quarters for fresh operations. Their novel strategy is **not** to march straight to a target but to envelope the enemy and appear mysteriously at a number of places almost all at once. They take the enemy unawares, overwhelm small garrisons, penetrate deep into undefended areas and generally create terror and a sense of utter helplessness among the defenders.

(ii) While the Tibetans were closely watching Chinese progress on the Chamdo-Gyamda route, the Chinese were active elsewhere in Dzayul, Pemako and Poyul in South Eastern Tibet, and in areas near Rudok, and even Gartok, in Western Tibet. Garpon Marlampa laconically asked his Government's permission to surrender to the Chinese, and the Radio station at Gartok had to be removed to Chaprang. From the West a possible threat lay on Shigatse, while from the South East - though the difficulties are enormous - a threat to the Chumbi Valley appears to be in the offing.

(iii) The objective of an army that attacks and retreats at will, reappears at the most unlooked for places, and combines subtle propaganda with offer of tempting terms could only be to reduce the enemy's morale to such an extent as would lead them to despair and seek peace at any price.

(iv) To this may be added the equally baffling policy of not keeping prisoners, for the Chinese generally release captured soldiers who receive not only the usual sermon but a dole that never fails to impress. High officials who are taken captive are given high rank and honour and made to serve the communist purpose. Such for instance are the roles of Ngapho Shape and his Assistants, and Garpon Marlampa might easily have followed the same path.

(v) From Kumbum in Sining appeared a party despatched by the Chinghai Governor with terms so attractive that not even the most irrational among the Tibetans were taken in by them. The leader of the party, Taktser Rimpoche, who had been fully tutored to sing the praises of communism and dispel fears of oppression reached Lhasa on the 8th December, and promptly discarded the role he had assumed. He proved a broken reed, much to the disillusionment of his Chinese patrons. The Rimpoche, significantly chosen for this role, was expected along with his two monk colleagues to make a joint appeal to the Dalai; but on his arrival in Lhasa, and while his companions were still travelling, he met Tibetan officials and his brother, the Dalai, in solemn conclave and reviled the communists for their unmitigated villainy.

(vi) Though the Tibetans have suffered serious reverses, they have not been deceived; they can gleefully turn back and say that they have at least succeeded in denying the Chinese their biggest prize - the Dalai and his treasures. Without the Dalai, the conquest of Tibet would only be partial, for among the simple superstitious inhabitants of this veiled kingdom the Dalai will continue to receive homage and divine worship.

(vii) Meanwhile the pretense of negotiation continues, though Ngapho Shape's task has been rendered infinitely more difficult with the departure of the Dalai from Lhasa. The Tibetans have shrewdly appointed Ngapho as Chief Negotiator to be assisted by two junior officials from Lhasa viz. Thupten Lingmyo (the Regent's Nendron) and Sumdup Photrang Se. The last two left for Kham on 2nd January.

Nothing can be easier for the Chinese now than to over-run Tibet but the fire of resistance will not be put out for a generation or two, as long, that is, as those who are now alive continue to live.

**(b) Indo-Tibetan Relations:**

(i) Indo-Tibetan relations continue to be cordial. Tibetan officials met regularly at our Mission for discussions, and duly reported proceedings to the National Assembly.

(ii) The Government of India were at some pains to dissuade the Dalai and His Government from leaving Lhasa prematurely. They thought it inadvisable to send an Indian plane to evacuate the Dalai from His Capital, which, however, did not cause any resentment.

(iii) The arrival of the Taktser Rimpochhe in Lhasa caused a flutter of excitement and officials daily congregated at the Potala to listen to his experiences under communist rule. His views hardened their hearts, and they firmly resolved to remove His Holiness out of harm's way; and from the relative security of Yatung, free from the ubiquitous threat of being over-powered, to direct the course of negotiations. The National Assembly, summoned to discuss the proposed transfer of Government to

Yatung, approved the proposal as a temporary measure. On the 17th Dec. we made a further attempt to delay the flight but the Tibetan Government were adamant.

(iv) On the 18th December towards evening orders were circulated to all important officials to be ready to leave Lhasa early on the following morning.

(v) That morning a messenger arrived from the Foreign Bureau with a personal letter from the Chief who regretted that he was unable to communicate earlier the decision which had been finalised the previous evening. He tried to make amends for this by keeping me informed of the progress of the party on the road to Gyantse.

(vi) Under recent orders issued by the Government of India all Tibetans have to register themselves as aliens in India.

### **(c) Relations with Nepal:**

The Nepalese Legation in Lhasa have brought up their Wireless equipment and two operators, but they are not making use of their set for fear of irritating the communists.

## **2. DALAI'S FLIGHT:**

(i) For a while the Tibetan Government sought to keep the matter a closed secret but elaborate arrangements were afoot, and on the 17th December one hundred troops of the Trapchi and Kusung regiments left Lhasa to ensure protection for His Holiness on the road. On the 18th December Lhasa was full of rumours about the impending flight. Reports kept on coming of brisk activity in the Potala where the legion of monks were in the throes of packing and towards evening interested spectators had lined the road from the Potala to Norbu Lingka for a last glimpse of the fleeing Dalai.

(ii) In the small hours of the 19th December the leaders and public functionaries of Tibet stole out of Lhasa without the least ceremony.

George Tsarong and George Taring came to the Mission to say their farewells so early in the morning that they alarmed everybody in the Mission; but they were themselves unaware until a few hours ago that they would be asked to accompany the Dalai Lama.

The following officials and members of his family accompanied the Dalai; a few of them preceded him to make arrangements at [word missing] enroute:

1. Taktra Rimpochhe
2. Rampa Kalon Lama
3. Surkhang Shape
4. Taktra Dzasa
5. Dzasa Tsarong
6. Dzasa Liushar
7. Taktser Rimpochhe
8. Khenchen Lobsang Samten
9. Gyayum
10. Dzasa Kunsangtse
11. Phala Dronyer Chempo
12. Rimshi George Tsarong
13. Kandron George Taring
14. Trungyik Chempo Talama
15. Trungyik Chempo Ngawang Trakpa
16. Trungyik Chempo Thupten Tendar
17. Tsipon Namse Lingpa
18. Rimshi Kyipup
19. Rimshi Pangdatsang
20. Khenchen Khenrab Wangchuk
21. Mipon Lungshar
22. Ragashar Sekusho
23. Mr. R. N. Fox
24. Herr Aufschneider
25. Mr. Nedbailoff.

(iii) A few hours before the Dalai's departure, senior monks of the three large monasteries were summoned to His presence. In his last sermon he told them to keep the peace and to hold unruly elements in the monasteries under check. As a parting gift each monk received 20 tankas, and so far they have not failed in keeping their part of the bargain.

(iv) The Dalai reached Gyantse on 26th December, 1950, and left on the following morning for Yatung. He reached Yatung on the 2nd January, 1951.

(v) The Government of India appear to be under the apprehension that the protracted stay of the Dalai in Yatung would involve our detachment there in trouble, and jeopardize the continuance of our Trade Mart.

(vi) It is improbable that the Dalai has taken more than 200 soldiers with him for his personal protection, and these are being deployed in small numbers to guard the approaches to Yatung. Dzasa Tsarong, the man who held back the Chinese in 1909, has again been posted with 40 men at Rinchengang to guard the road from Tsona. In all likelihood the Dalai would make good his escape to India as soon as the communists take Lhasa, or are within a hundred miles of Yatung. There appears to be no intention of defending Yatung.

(vii) However, there is every possibility that the idle officials at Yatung would indulge in large scale smuggling of goods to and from India.

### **3. INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS IN LHASA**

(i) The Dalai completed arrangements for setting up an Interim Government in Lhasa prior to His departure. Two acting Prime Ministers viz. Tsipon Lukhangwa and Lobzang Tashi have been appointed, and they are to be assisted by acting Shapethupten Rabyang and Sasur Theiji - appointed early in November. The Chikyap Khempo, the Regent's darling, has been left behind in Lhasa ostensibly to carry on the religious

ceremonies in the Potala, though it appears that the Dalai took this opportunity to wriggle out of his irksome control.

(ii) I met Lukhangwa, the new prime Minister, on 19th Dec. and discussed with him the plans for maintaining law and order in Lhasa. He promised to increase the skeleton police force of the capital, but advised me to bring up few men from Gyantse for our protection.

#### **4. MILITARY SITUATION:**

(i) There has not been any spectacular development in the military sphere during the period under review. Assam reports, if true, support earlier Tibetan news that the Chinese have moved southward to Dzayul, Pemako and Poyul. Reports of their advance into kombo seem premature.

(ii) In Western Tibet the situation continues to be obscure. We have been told that a Tibetan patrol shot a 'communist' camel near Tingung, but there were no repercussions.

(iii) Despite communist efforts to improve communications in Kham, and build up stocks of essential supplies, they seem to be running short of stores. In consequence, they are said to be buying, requisitioning and taxing the local people. They bought large quantities of barley from Peshu. However, they seem to be pulling out men from forward areas in Kham. The weather in the last few weeks has been atrocious, and it is not inconceivable that roads on the Sikang side have become impassable. Anyhow, communists are still busy building a road between Kanze and Chamdo. Loads of silver dollars are being dropped from the air at Chamdo to meet local requirements, and the rate has been fixed at 18 sangs for a dollar.

#### **5. INTERNAL SITUATION:**

(i) People in Lhasa spent a few anxious nights after the Dalai's departure. There were some minor disturbances and a few cases of armed

dacoity. Lhasa authorities have recruited an additional police force, and an order has been circulated exhorting all concerned not to disturb the peace by firing in the evenings without provocation.

(ii) We caught two thieves - a man and a woman - inside our compound and handed them over to the local authorities. They were stripped bare and given 20 lashes each.

(iii) Following new appointments from Lhasa have been made recently:

Rimshi Thro-gawo - Tsipon.

Lachag Mento-pa - Officiating Tsipon.

Lachag Thupten Sangye - - do - Trungyik Chhempo.

Khenchung Thupten Gawa - - do - - do -

(iv) Under orders issued by the Tibetan Government all foreigners arriving in Lhasa are now being registered at the Foreign Bureau. Foreign Bureau officials say that there has been a large influx of foreigners from Sining in the past few days. They fear that quite a number of these are communist agents.

5 monks who were out one evening with riffles were disarmed by the police.

(v) Ragashar Shape left Dam for Shigatse on 10th January. It is not known why he decamped, but this move will leave the north-eastern route to Lhasa open. There are rumours that Lhalu Shape is also returning to Lhasa in a day or two.

(vi) It is understood that the annual new year ceremonies in Lhasa will be held as usual.

## **6. ECONOMIC:**

The rupee is fast depreciating in terms of Tibetan currency. It now fetches less than 4 Sangs, while local prices continue to rise. Trade in Lhasa is dull, and most traders are merely watching the situation. No fresh goods are coming in



from the outside, while high wool prices in India are helping to keep the value of the rupee down.

## **7. MISCELANEOUS:**

Yolbus Khan, ex-Governor of Hami, General in the Sinkiang army, and a member of KMT Control Yuan, has arrived in Lhasa with his two sons, his Secretary and a few servants. He escaped from Sinkiang 6 months after the communists had taken over the province. He decided to leave Sinkiang because he found conditions under communist rule unbearable, particularly in the manner in which it affected his religion. Yolbus Khan has asked for entry visas for India for himself and party. He will wait for the visas at Yatung. He is a mine of information on Sinkiang and regards Burhan's ill wife more dangerous than Burhan himself.

2.4 white Russians have also reached Lhasa from Sinkiang. A separate report on them will be furnished as soon as full particulars are available.

3. An escort party of 1 Jemadar, 2 sepoy and 1 medical orderly arrived in Lhasa from Gyantes on the 3rd January, 1951.

(S. Sinha)

Officer in Charge.