

Dalai Lama

July 6, 2021

In news

On July 6, many leaders in India wished the Dalai Lama on his 86th birthday.

About Dalai Lama(Tenzin Gyatso)

- He was born on 6 July 1935, to a farming family, in a small hamlet located in Taktser, Amdo, northeastern Tibet.
- The Dalai Lama's birthday is celebrated as one of the grandest events of Tibetan community.
- He is the 14th Dalai Lama.
- Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people to the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of Tibetan Buddhism, the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- At the age of two, the child, then named Lhamo Dhondup, was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso.
- The Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and the patron saint of Tibet
- It has been over six decades since he started living in India.
- Tibetans believe the Dalai Lama has control over his re-birth and he can choose the body into which he is reincarnated.
- He calls himself a "son of India" and somebody who has lived the longest in India as a "guest".
- He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1989.

Leadership Responsibilities

- In 1950, after China's invasion of Tibet, His Holiness

was called upon to assume full political power.

- In 1954, he went to Beijing and met with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, including Deng Xiaoping and Chou Enlai.
- Finally, **in 1959, following the brutal suppression of the Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa by Chinese troops, His Holiness was forced to escape into exile.**
- Since then he has been living in Dharamsala, northern India
- He was given asylum and **a Tibetan Government in Exile was formed in Dharamshala. It led to Indo-China war of 1962.**
- In exile, the Central Tibetan Administration led by His Holiness appealed to the United Nations to consider the question of Tibet.
- **The General Assembly adopted three resolutions on Tibet** in 1959, 1961 and 1965.
- In 1963, His Holiness presented a draft democratic constitution for Tibet , followed by a number of reforms to democratize the Tibetan administration.
- The new democratic constitution was named **“The Charter of Tibetans in Exile”**.
- The charter enshrines freedom of speech, belief, assembly and movement.
- It also provides detailed guidelines on the functioning of the Tibetan Administration with respect to Tibetans living in exile.

His Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet

In 1987 in an address to members of the United States Congress in Washington, DC, Dalai Lama proposed a Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet as a first step towards a peaceful solution of the worsening situation in Tibet. The five points of the plan were as follows:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace.

2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy that threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people.
3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms.
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

His approach with China

- He propagated the **middle way approach** for a rapprochement with the Chinese government.
- The middle way approach implies that the Tibetan people do not accept the present status of Tibet under the People's Republic of China.

Significance for China

- Dalai Lama is a highly influential figure of Tibetan culture, and his escape to India sparked major outrage in the region.
- China wants to control the appointment of the next spiritual leader of Tibet in order to firm up its grip on the Tibetan monastic order and in turn, control the region.
- However, the Tibetans believe that China is attempting to manipulate the selection process as a way to strengthen its grip over Tibetan people.