



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Tibet rated world's second-least free country

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Tibet is one in a hundred in all the wrong ways.

The homeland of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people earned just one point out of a possible 100 in the US watchdog group Freedom House's newest Global Freedom Scores, released today.

That's good enough (or, more accurately, bad enough) to rank Tibet as the second-least-free country in the world—a position it has held for the past several years.

According to the scores, even North Korea is freer than Tibet.

The only place to do worse? Syria, which is in the throes of a deadly civil war and earned a score of zero.

Chinese rule in Tibet

To assign its scores, Freedom House looked at 195 countries and 15 territories around the world and gave each of them scores based on their civil liberties and political rights in 2019.

It's no surprise that Tibet—a historically independent country that China annexed in 1959 —failed miserably on both counts (it earned a three on civil liberties and a negative two on political rights).

Living under Chinese rule, Tibetans are denied their most basic freedoms. They cannot freely practice their religion, take part in their cultural traditions or peacefully protest against their Chinese oppressors.

In the past few years, Chinese authorities have arrested and tortured Tibetans simply for promoting the use of the Tibetan language, contacting people outside Tibet and praying for Tibetan Buddhist leaders.

Just recently, Chinese police reportedly arrested a Tibetan man because he asked people to recite prayers to ward off coronavirus.

Trapped in this repressive environment, more than 150 Tibetans have self-immolated since 2009, lighting their own bodies on fire in a desperate attempt to bring the world's attention to their plight.

Help from global community

Despite these tragedies, the Chinese government continues its human rights abuses in Tibet.

However, the global community—led by the United States—is increasingly taking action to help Tibetans.

In late 2018, the US Congress passed the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, which calls on China to end its isolation of Tibet from the outside world and requires the State Department to sanction Chinese officials directly responsible for keeping Americans out of Tibet.

Elected leaders in the United Kingdom and Canada have introduced their own versions of the reciprocal access legislation, and earlier today, the International Campaign for Tibet called on the State Department to implement the law.

Tibetan Policy and Support Act

In January, the US House of Representatives also passed the Tibetan Policy and Support Act by an overwhelming margin.

This far-reaching bill will dramatically upgrade US support for the Tibetan people and make it official US policy that only Tibetan Buddhists can select the next Dalai Lama.

If any Chinese officials attempt to name their own Dalai Lama in the future, they will face sanctions under the bill.

The Senate is expected to take action on the legislation soon.



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