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## TIBETAN HOMES FOUNDATION, MUSSOORIE

Dear Friends,

This has been an exciting year especially as we turned 50 years and to mark the event His Holiness the Dalai Lama's blessings and presence enlightened the campus. We are happy to present you with this annual report for year 2012 with highlights of activities.

**Admission :** This year a total of 204 new students have been admitted under the care of the Foundation.

**Winter Activities :** The School closed for winter holiday from December 15, 2011 until March 1, 2012. During this holiday period different programs were organized for children to keep them busy, learning and happy.

**Educational Cum Pilgrimage :** A group of 63 children with five staff members participated in the educational cum pilgrimage tour to the holy & historical places of Bodhgaya, Varanasi, Lucknow and Haridwar. The program began on 30th December, 2011 and finished on January 14, 2012. The highlight of this trip was the participation of the group in the Kalachakra prayers conducted by His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Bodh Gaya. Along with the prayers most of the Buddhist holy places in and around Bodhgaya were visited such as the famous Mahabodhi Temple, Nalanda, Rajgiri, Kushinagar and Sarnath. On the return trip children were also able to visit the popular zoo at Lucknow and the holy city of Haridwar. It was a dream trip for the children who had never been exposed so much to the outside world. The children were from grade VI to X from our branch school in Rajpur. The project had been made possible with the assistance from Tibet Foundation, UK and Ex-Mussoorie Association, Nepal.

**Winter fun classes:** From January 19 to February 15, 2012 winter fun classes was organized for the children at School. Over 600 children participated in the different classes of Book binding, Butter sculpture, Drawing and Painting, Tibetan traditional music, Tibetan handwriting, Food craft, First aid and Audio visual classes. The resource persons for the different classes were our own staff members.

**Tibetan New Year:** The Tibetan New Year was on February 22, however the political situation in Tibet had been grim and thus there were no New Year celebrations. The Central Tibetan Administration requested all Tibetans against celebrating the New Year, but to observe traditional and spiritual rituals by going to the monastery, making offerings,

and lighting butter lamps for all those Tibetans inside Tibet who have sacrificed and suffered under the repressive policies of the Chinese government. Thus there were no celebrations and prayers were organized for the Tibetan people in Tibet.

**New General Secretary :** Mr. Penpa Tsering replaced Mr. Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang as new General Secretary of Tibetan homes Foundation on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. Mr. Penpa hails from an army background whose last post was Colonel before retirement. He has dedicated his entire life serving the Tibetan Wing of the Indian army. Mr. Sonam T Khorlatsang had joined Tibetan Homes Foundation in March 2010 serving the Foundation for almost 2 years. He has now been transferred as Secretary, Department of Home, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala.

**21<sup>st</sup> Graduation Day & Board Results :** On 6th April, the 21<sup>st</sup> graduation day of Tibetan Homes School was held. A total of 82 students graduated School in the year 2011-12. The formal function was held at the Tsering Dolma auditorium with a speech from the General Secretary. A tea party was hosted for the graduates with staff members and later a farewell dinner was served. Earlier the graduates were congratulated with traditional scarves by the Foundation, the THF branch School, the neighbouring Central School for Tibetans, Home Parents, the Regional Tibetan Women's Association and Regional Tibetan Youth Congress. Of the total 82 students, Master Yeshe Dawa from the Arts stream topped the School with 86.8% while Ms. Yangchen from Science stream scored 83.4% and Master Tashi Gyatso scored 82.2% from the commerce stream. The overall results had 9 compartment and a pass percentage of 89%.

**THS - New Section for grade V children :** Understanding the over-crowding pressure at the School premises with huge number of children, a project was initiated some years back to reduce the number of children at the main campus. A few of the far away family homes which were in a dilapidated condition were rebuilt in a manner where in the project would include all facility and staff in the same campus. This project has been realized this year and the new section of THF opened on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2012. The School caters to grade V of the main School with 150 children and has all facilities within itself. The project had been made possible by support from Udo Juergen Foundation and facilitated by German Aid to Tibetans, Germany.



### **Birthdays of His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso The Dalai Lama :**

On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012, the 77<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Holiness The Dalai Lama was celebrated with much fun and happiness. The whole Tibetan community of Mussoorie gathered at the Dalai Hill early morning for Sangsol and offered prayers for the long life of His Holiness The Dalai Lama. The Dalai Hill presented a mystic picture that morning beautifully draped with Tibetans in traditional dresses, chanting prayers, burning incense and raising prayer flags. The smiling expression and the brightness in the eyes of every Tibetan on that day showed how much of importance the day holds for every Tibetan. The prayers were followed with the formal program during which the scarves were offered to the portrait of His Holiness The Dalai Lama. This was followed with speeches from respected guests and finally the children of the two schools and members from the Tibetan local community presented cultural songs and dances. Following the formal program there was a lot of things happening through the day –and then of-course the highlight of the day - the inter house cultural competition of our school.

**India's Independence day :** The 66<sup>th</sup> Indian Independence day was celebrated with much happiness. The formal program started with the singing of the Indian and Tibetan national anthem. This was followed with the School's history teacher speaking for the occasion and bringing back strong memories of India's struggle for freedom. This occasion was also taken to offer scarves to all Indian staff members of Tibetan Homes Foundation as a gesture of appreciation for their hard work. The program ended with singing of Indian patriotic songs and cultural performances by children.

**Golden Jubilee Celebrations :** On September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of Tibetan Homes Foundation was held. The highlight of the occasion was the Presence and Blessings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. A large number of sponsors, dignitaries, guests and alumni members participated in the three day program. A book commemorating the anniversary titled "A Journey of 50 Years" was released and a photo exhibition on the same title was showcased, children presented Tibetan dances and also performed the "Khen Lob Chos Sum" chapter from Tibetan Opera. An inter alumni football tournament was held and finally the Golden Jubilee Fest was organized for the children. The celebrations offered a good platform to take pride of the work of the Foundation, thank the sponsors and donors and re-connect with several hundred alumni members. It was also an occasion to once again re-dedicate ourselves to work harder to meet the goals of the Foundation.

**Inter House Athletic Meet – 2012 :** The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual inter house athletic meet was held on Friday, October 12. Honorable Mr. O P Uniyal, Chairman, Nagar Palika Parishad, Mussoorie

graced the event as Chief Guest. The programme as usual began with the chief guest taking the guard of honor from the contingent of the five houses participating in the March Past, which was led by the school band group. The highlight of the band group this year was the large number of bagpipers. Thereafter, the Olympic flag was hoisted and the meet declared open by the Chief guest. Other delights of the opening ceremony were the display with wooden dumbbells by over 600 children. On the field, competition of races, throws and jumps could be seen through the day. Each participant seemed to be striving harder than the other and it was a delight to see the competitive struggle shown by the students. The overall championship was won by Songtsen(white) house while the March Past trophy was taken by Trisong House (Yellow). Hon. Mr. R P Singh, Principal, CST, Mussoorie presented the winners with their trophies and declared the meet closed.

**International Day of the Older Person:** On October 1, the School Captain's and Prefects participated in the formal program of the International day of the Older Persons expressing their love and appreciation to the older generation by hosting a tea party at GAT senior citizen's home, Mussoorie. It was a proud moment for the Captains as the funds for the special tea party had been collected through voluntary donation from senior children of the school, who sacrificed their pocket money. With the close bonding in the Tibetan family setup, the older persons are special and that is how they celebrated the day. The General Secretary spoke on the occasion reminding the grans that their wisdom and experience is still needed in the community and should be shared with children. The formal program ended with an emotional "Thank You" from the Grans. After tea there was a cheerful interaction of students with the smiling elders. A similar program was held at the new Senior citizens home in Rajpur.

**School's Academic Session :** The School's academic session for year 2012 concludes on December 15, 2012 and the new session for 2013 will resume in March.

**Conclusion –** I take this opportunity to thank you very much for your continued support which enables us to bring a difference in the lives of our children and grans.

Wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year – 2013.

Penpa Tsering  
General Secretary

