LOBGA RANGZEN'S FINAL STATEMENT:

ALL THE ROOT CAUSES OF OUR PROBLEMS STEM FROM THE LOSS OF TIBET'S INDEPENDENCE

Tibet Post International

By: Yeshe Choesang

Dharamshala,
H.P., India 176219

+91 9418143289
www.thetibetpost.com

2026

The Final Statement:

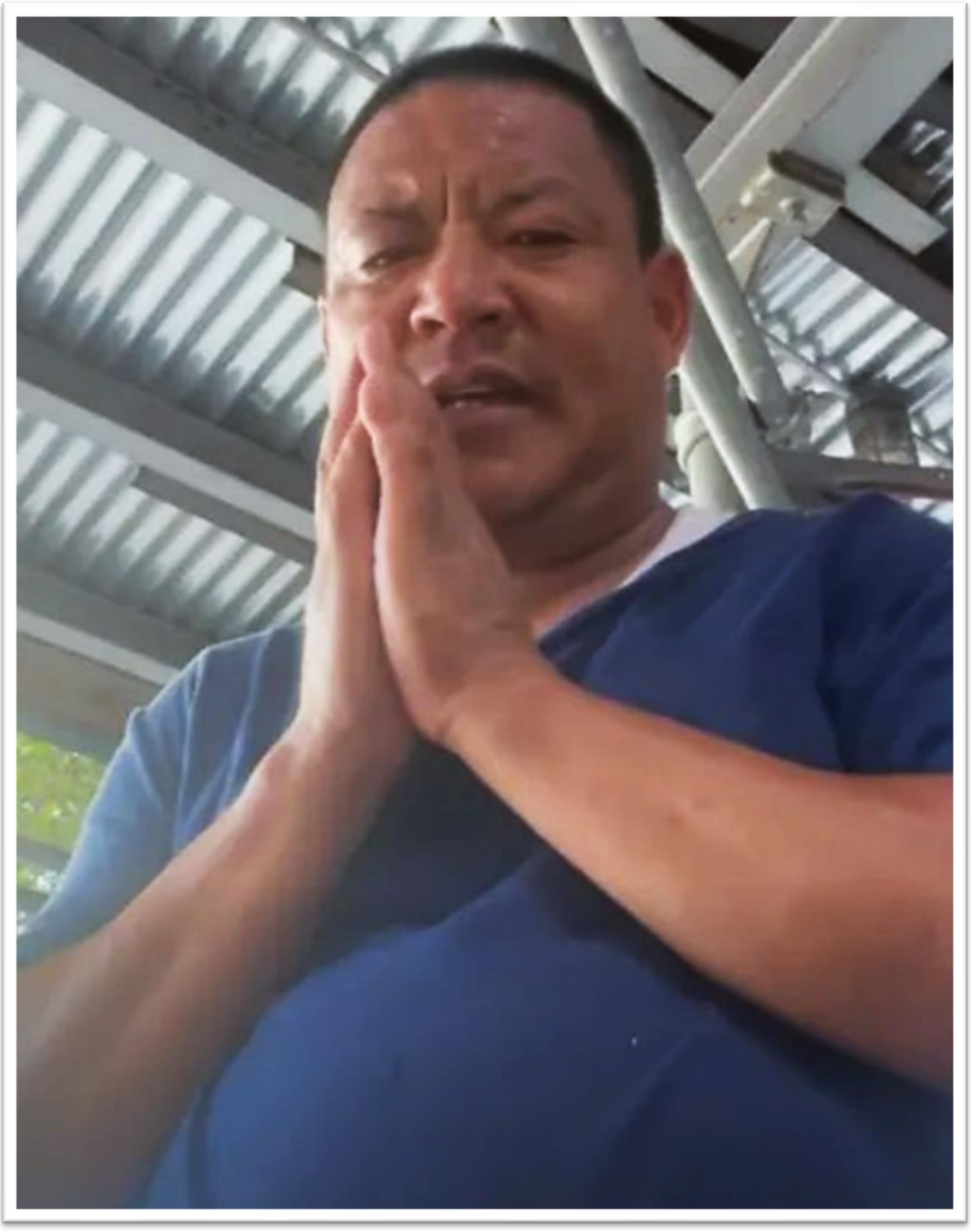

Figure 1 Lobga Rangzen leaving his final statement before his self-immolation outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York City on Thursday, 2 July 2026, in protest against China's rule in Tibet. (Photo: Lobga Rangzen via Facebook)

"Do not mourn for me. What we should truly mourn is the loss of our country. Do not remain in grief. If you must grieve, then I ask each one of you to continue fighting for the just cause of the Tibet independence movement," Lobga Rangzen said in his final recorded video statement, which he posted on Facebook.

Before carrying out his self-immolation on the doorstep of the United Nations headquarters in New York City, United States on July 2, 2026, around 6:30 PM to 7:00 PM local time, Lobga Rangzen left this final testament in his garage and also published an over 6-minute-long self-recorded video on his Facebook account. "Rangzen" was the name he chose for himself. In Tibetan, it means "independence" or "freedom", literally referring to the national sovereignty of Tibet.

Before his self-immolation, he placed his mobile phone on the roadside while livestreaming himself. He then carried a national flag of Tibet and walked 22 steps towards a pedestrian area opposite the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where he positioned himself beside the flag and ensured that it was flying high before setting himself on fire during the warm New York evening.

In the video message recorded in Tibetan and published on his Facebook platform hours before his self-immolation protest, Lobga Rangzen stated:

"Communist China's policies and activities in Tibet are aimed at completely destroying the Tibetan people. I have nothing further to say to the people of Tibet inside Tibet." (He folds his hands.) "They have been working sincerely to preserve our spoken language, written script, religion and culture, and to revive everything that has declined. Their efforts are truly remarkable. Therefore, I wish to express my gratitude to them. I have nothing further to say to them."

He continued, "I want to share my message with those of us (Tibetans) living in exile. If we do nothing for the struggle of our people, we will achieve nothing. Therefore, those of us in exile must work even harder."

"We are deeply grateful to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Arhat Avalokiteśvara, for granting us democracy without requiring us to struggle for it. Even though some of us said that we did not want it, His Holiness the Dalai Lama nevertheless bestowed upon us a mature and internationally recognised democratic system. His Holiness's gift of democracy was not intended to create internal divisions among us. Rather, it was granted so that we could advance our struggle for the cause of the Tibetan people and Tibet as a nation."

"In particular, His Holiness has previously said that, for those of us living abroad, including those in the United States, it is shameful if our lives become concerned only with owning a house and a car. His Holiness said that you, Tibetans in exile, are all spokespersons for the Tibetan people inside Tibet and, therefore, should work and struggle on behalf of the Tibetan people. His Holiness cannot say more than that because he is a Buddha who works for world peace, unity and harmony among all peoples, irrespective of colour or religion."

"But we are not Buddhas; we are human beings. Today, what I wish to say is that the Chinese Communists have persecuted all of us Tibetans, irrespective of whether we come from Dhotoe, Dhomed or U-tsang Province—the three traditional provinces of Tibet. We are all Tibetans. Therefore, we should work together for the Tibetan nation; we should work for the people of Tibet."

"Today, when we say that we do not have human rights, that we do not have freedom of speech, and that we do not have the freedom to display a portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we must ask why we do not have these freedoms. The reason is that we lost the independence of Tibet. That is why, from today onwards, whether it is the Tibetan Government (in Exile), the Tibetan

Parliament (in Exile), or the Tibetan people, it is essential that we remain united and work together for the cause of the Tibetan nation and the people of Tibet."

"Therefore, from today onwards, without arguing over provincial identities, religious denominations or sectarian differences, we should think of ourselves simply as Tibetans. I am a Tibetan." (He raises his fist.) "Some of us say that we do not have independence. It is not that we never had independence; rather, we had independence, but we lost it. We must regain our independence. Therefore, we Tibetans in exile must unite and continue the struggle for the independence of Tibet. With my hands folded, I respectfully appeal to our exile community to work towards this goal."

He further stated, "Secondly, in the coming days, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 91st birthday will be celebrated. These celebrations, together with Tibetan cultural performances, help safeguard our culture. They also contribute to our wellbeing and greatly benefit our younger generation. Therefore, if I undertake a major action today, it should not cause any disruption to the celebrations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday. Please celebrate His Holiness's birthday in the grandest way possible. Likewise, those who are performing songs and dances should continue to do so. They should not stop, nor should they mourn. Instead, they should reflect upon what more each of us can do for the Tibetan people and the Tibetan nation. It is important that we think in this way. Therefore, I appeal to all of you to work even harder."

He continued, "if I undertake this great action today, I want you to know that it is not for any personal reason. It is not because I have nothing to eat or nothing to wear. Rather, I am doing this for my country—for the Tibetan nation. "Therefore, we should do everything within our power for the national cause. I do not want you to mourn for me. I want you to continue the struggle for the independence of Tibet, because the absence of Tibet's independence is the root cause of all our problems."

"Whenever we say that we do not enjoy certain freedoms, we must ask why. The source of all these problems is that we no longer have our independence because we lost it. If we regain our independence, we will regain everything. Therefore, what we need is independence, and for that, all of us must remain united in our struggle. I ask all of us to continue the Tibetan struggle."

He concluded by proclaiming:

"**Bhod Rangzen Gyalo!"**

(Victory to the Independence of Tibet.)

"**Bhod Rangzen Gyalo!"**

(Victory to the Independence of Tibet.)

"Bhod Rangzen Gyalo!"

(Victory to the Independence of Tibet.)

"Bhod **Gyalo**!"

(Victory to Tibet.)

"Tashi Delek.".

LOBGA RANGZEN BIOGRAPHY:
TIBETAN ACTIVIST ADVOCATING FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF TIBET

Figure 2 Lobga Rangzen during an event. Photo: Lobga Rangzen's Facebook Account

Lobga Rangzen, also known as Lobsang Palden, was a Tibetan activist who dedicated his life to advocating for the independence of Tibet and the human rights of the Tibetan people. He became known within the Tibetan exile community for his commitment to peaceful activism and his efforts to maintain global attention on the political and human rights situation in Tibet. While living in the United States, he remained actively involved in campaigns supporting the freedom cause of Tibet and calling for greater international awareness.

Recently, Lobga Rangzen, who was 52 years old, made international headlines after setting himself on fire near the United Nations Headquarters in New York City on 2 July 2026 at 5:49 p.m. New York time. He was transported to Bellevue Hospital, where he died at 7:04 p.m. from injuries sustained during the incident. Tibetan organisations described the act as a protest calling for Tibet's independence and Tibetan unity. Before his self-immolation, he placed his mobile phone on the roadside while livestreaming himself. He then carried the national flag of Tibet and walked 22 steps towards a pedestrian area opposite the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where he positioned himself beside the flag and ensured that it was flying high before setting himself on fire during the warm New York evening.

The incident attracted worldwide media attention and renewed discussions about the long-running Tibet–China dispute and the sacrifices made by some Tibetan activists. At the time of his self-immolation, he was dressed in traditional Tibetan robes and carrying a Tibetan flag, which he placed beside him and ensured was flying high as he set himself on fire during the warm New York evening. He also carried sheets of white paper containing the messages "Free Tibet" and "China out of Tibet." He was respected by many members of the Tibetan community for his dedication to their cause. He balanced his daily life in New York with his role as an activist and continued to speak out on issues affecting the people of Tibet. His death left a lasting impact on supporters of the Tibetan independence movement and became one of the most widely discussed events involving the Tibetan exile community in 2026.

Early Life and Background

Lobga Rangzen was born to Soga (father) and Dorjee Lhamo (mother) in Karze, Kham, eastern Tibet. He was born into a Tibetan family and spent his early years surrounded by the rich traditions, language, and culture of Tibet. Growing up in a region with a long history of political tension shaped his understanding of the challenges faced by Tibetans and influenced his worldview from an early age. As a child, he experienced life during a period when many Tibetans sought to preserve their cultural and religious identity. Like many members of the Tibetan exile community, he later left his homeland and travelled to India. His years in exile exposed him to a wider community of Tibetans who shared the goal of protecting their heritage and advocating for greater freedom and international recognition for Tibet. He escaped into exile in India during the 1990s and became a monk at Gaden Jangtse Monastery in South India, where he held several positions before moving to the United States in 2006. After spending time in India, Lobga Rangzen eventually settled in the United States, where he built a new life while remaining closely connected to the Tibetan community. Even after moving abroad, he never lost sight of his roots or his commitment to Tibet. His early experiences of displacement, cultural identity, and exile became the foundation of his lifelong activism and his determination to campaign for the Tibetan cause.

Career and Activism

Lobga Rangzen built his life around both his everyday work and his lifelong commitment to Tibetan activism. After settling in the United States, he worked as an Uber driver in New York to

support himself. Alongside his occupation, he remained deeply involved in the Tibetan exile community and devoted much of his time to raising awareness about Tibet's political future and the rights of the Tibetan people. Over the years, he became an active member of organisations that promoted the Tibetan independence movement. He served as the President of the New York–New Jersey chapter of the Tibetan National Congress, where he helped organise demonstrations, community gatherings, and public awareness campaigns. Through this leadership role, he encouraged Tibetans living abroad to remain united and continue advocating for their homeland through peaceful means.

His activism focused on keeping the issue of Tibet visible on the international stage. He participated in rallies, commemorative events, and public protests highlighting concerns regarding human rights, religious freedom, and the preservation of Tibetan culture. He believed that sustained public engagement was essential in drawing global attention to the challenges facing the people of Tibet. Rangzen was respected by fellow activists for his dedication and willingness to speak openly about Tibetan independence. Friends and members of the Tibetan community described him as someone who remained committed to the cause despite the personal sacrifices involved. His leadership within the Tibetan National Congress strengthened his reputation as a passionate advocate for Tibet.

Final Protest Near the United Nations Headquarters

Rangzen's final act of protest brought worldwide attention to the cause he had supported for many years. On 2 July 2026, he set himself on fire near the United Nations Headquarters in New York while carrying a Tibetan flag. Tibetan organisations described the act as a call for Tibetan independence and unity. Following his death, many supporters remembered him as a devoted activist whose life was defined not by public office or financial success, but by his unwavering commitment to the Tibetan freedom cause.

Why Lobga Rangzen Set Himself on Fire Near the United Nations Headquarters in New York

Lobga Rangzen became the focus of international attention after setting himself on fire near the United Nations Headquarters in New York City on 2 July 2026. He was carrying a Tibetan flag during the protest and later died from the severe injuries he suffered. Tibetan organisations described his actions as a protest calling for Tibetan independence and unity. The incident quickly attracted global media coverage and renewed public discussion about the political situation in Tibet. According to members of the Tibetan exile community, Rangzen carried out the protest to draw international attention to the Tibetan independence movement and the challenges faced by Tibetans under Chinese rule. His death was described by supporters as a final act of sacrifice intended to encourage greater global awareness and solidarity with the Tibetan people. The protest also prompted renewed discussions about human rights, cultural preservation, and religious freedom in Tibet. Following the incident, China's Foreign Ministry repeated its long-standing position that Tibet is an inseparable part of China and stated that the case should be handled according to United States law. Meanwhile, Tibetan organisations and activists around the world paid tribute to Rangzen, remembering him as a committed advocate who devoted his life to the cause of Tibet. His final protest became one of the most significant events involving the Tibetan exile community in 2026.

Religion, Nationality, Height and Physical Appearance

Lobga Rangzen was 52 years old at the time of his death on 2 July 2026. During his lifetime, he became known for his dedication to the Tibetan independence movement and remained actively involved in advocacy work within the Tibetan exile community until his final days. He was a

follower of Tibetan Buddhism, the faith followed by the majority of Tibetans. Although he did not frequently speak publicly about his personal religious beliefs, his commitment to preserving Tibetan identity reflected values closely connected with Tibetan Buddhist culture and traditions. He was Tibetan by nationality and identity. He was born in the Tibetan region of Kham, eastern Tibet. After leaving Tibet, he lived in exile and later settled in the United States. Throughout his life, he remained proud of his Tibetan heritage and dedicated himself to promoting the rights and aspirations of the people of Tibet. Lobga Rangzen's exact height has not been publicly confirmed. He was often seen with a slim build and a simple, modest appearance that reflected his lifestyle rather than public recognition. In photographs from community events and protests, he usually appeared with short black hair, dark brown eyes, and traditional Tibetan features. He commonly dressed in casual clothing during daily life and wore attire suitable for public demonstrations and community gatherings.

Legacy of his lifelong dedication

Lobga Rangzen's legacy is closely connected with his lifelong dedication to the Tibetan independence movement. Throughout his years in exile, he remained committed to promoting the rights, culture, and identity of the Tibetan people. His work as a community leader and activist inspired many Tibetans living abroad to remain engaged in preserving their heritage and advocating for their homeland through peaceful means. His final act of protest outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York brought renewed international attention to the Tibetan cause. The incident generated discussions about the political future of Tibet, human rights, and the sacrifices made by some activists to draw global attention to their message. Tibetan organisations and supporters remembered him as someone who placed the interests of his people above his own personal safety.

Although Lobga Rangzen was not a politician or a public official, his determination and commitment left a lasting impression on the Tibetan exile community. His life continues to be remembered as one of courage, conviction, and service to a cause he deeply believed in. As discussions about Tibet continue around the world, his name is likely to remain associated with the ongoing movement for Tibetan identity, cultural preservation, and self-determination. Since 1998, more than 168 Tibetan monks, nuns, and laypeople have self-immolated in protest against China's rule in Tibet. His protest was the first known Tibetan self-immolation outside India, Nepal, and Tibet. Born in Tibet, Lobga was a beloved Queens resident, a former monk, and the President of the Tibetan National Congress NY–NJ chapter, who spent his life advocating peacefully for Tibet's freedom.

Conclusion

Lobga Rangzen lived a life defined by his commitment to the people of Tibet and their pursuit of preserving their identity and advocating for their aspirations. From his early years in Tibet to his years in exile in India and the United States, he remained devoted to raising awareness about issues affecting his homeland. His final protest near the United Nations Headquarters in New York brought worldwide attention to the Tibetan cause and ensured that his name would be remembered in discussions about Tibet, human rights, and political activism. Regardless of differing perspectives on his actions, his dedication to the cause he believed in has made him a significant figure in the history of the Tibetan freedom movement. His life reflects the experiences of many exiled Tibetans who have sought to maintain their cultural identity, preserve their traditions, and advocate for their political aspirations despite living far from their homeland. His story remains part of the broader historical narrative surrounding Tibet, exile, activism, and the continuing international debate over Tibet's future.