

Friends of Tibet



‘Indian Cartoonists On Tibet’

An exhibition of selected cartoons on the Tibet issue (1950–2005) and the tumultuous Indo–Chinese relations by renowned cartoonists: Shankar, Ranga, OV Vijayan, RK Laxman, Ravi Shankar, Mario Miranda, Rajinder Puri, Yesudasan, Kaak, Madhu Omalloor, Nanda Soobben, Abe Gowda, Priya Raj, Thommy, Ponnappa, Morparia and Prakash Shetty. Introduction and text by Claude Arpi.

www.friendsoftibet.org/cartoons

My Religion is simple;

My Religion is kindness.

Thus spoke His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the XIVth the Dalai Lama.

This exhibition depicts 55 tumultuous years of the history of the Buddhist leader's lost state: Tibet. The Roof of the World sandwiched between the two Asian giants: India and China, had for centuries managed to remain untouched by the changes and revolutions happening in the world. It had the reputation to be the last *Shangrila* on earth.

But this serene state of affairs dramatically changed in October 1950, when the People's Liberation Army of China marched unhindered onto the Tibetan soil. A new ideology, less compassionate than the Dharma which had come from India twelve centuries earlier, pretended to liberate the Land of Snows. So said the new Communist masters!

For India, it translated into the loss of a buffer zone with China and a new neighbour. Her peaceful and un-disputed northern border soon became the object of a bitter dispute which continues fifty years later.

It took many years for the Indian Prime Minister to realise the ominous change resulting from the invasion of Tibet. In 1959, the Dalai Lama had no alternative but to flee his homeland and take refuge in what he calls *Arya Bhumi*, the Land of the Buddha. In October 1962, Mao's troops invaded NEFA and Ladakh.

While Nehru's government generously provided rehabilitation and education for 85,000 Tibetan refugees who remain grateful for this gesture, the Indian Prime Minister made it clear from the start that India would not provide political support to free Tibet from the Chinese yoke. Delhi attached too much importance to a friendship (at times brotherhood) with Beijing. The Dalai Lama began then his quest to find a 'middle path' solution to the sufferings of his people.

This exhibition is the story of the struggle of a man for peace and freedom; a man, who believes that "through the history of mankind,

solutions achieved through the use of force have inevitably been transitory." This man, that Tibetans venerate as a god, says: "A solution can be genuine and lasting only if and when it is to the full satisfaction of the people concerned." Unfortunately the regime in Beijing has not so far been able to share his belief, though the rest of the world has greatly profited from the Tibetan leader's wisdom.

Today we are living in the era of mass media and communication, but cartoons can still convey a strong message which can be grasped by all.

We have here a collection of the greatest names in Indian cartoons which paints their perceptions of the Dalai Lama as well as the often difficult relations between India and China. More than a TV program or a newspaper report, they help us to perceive the Great History behind the smaller one.

After 46 years in exile from his Himalayan home, the basic message of the Dalai Lama remains the same: each and every man on this earth is entitled to happiness and it is the responsibility of each one of us to act, speak or write in such a way to make this possible.

It is worth citing here the Dalai Lama's favourite quote (from the Buddhist sage *Shantideva*):

If it can be remedied

There is no need to be unhappy.

If it can't be remedied

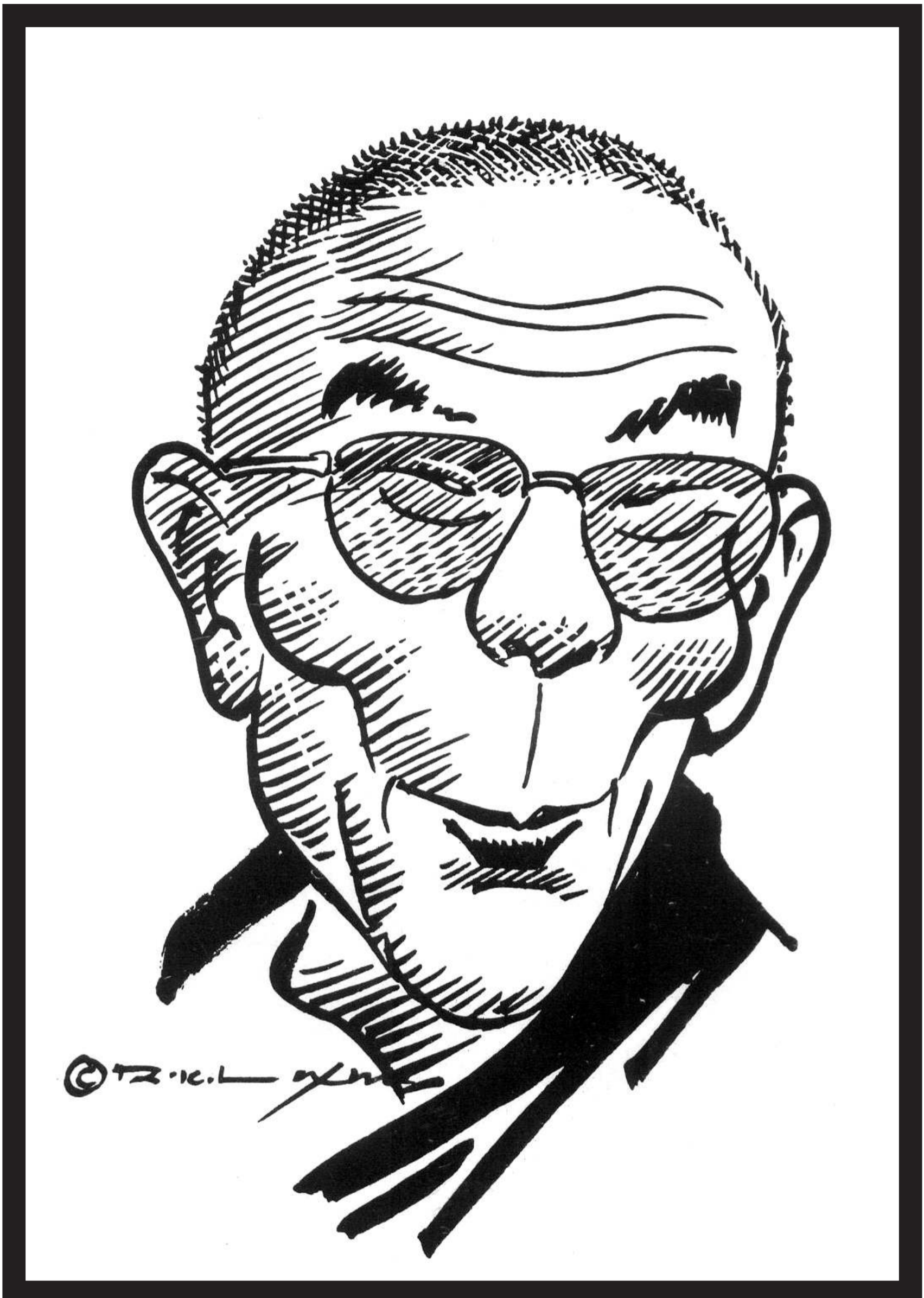
What is the use to be unhappy?

This does not mean that one has to 'give up'. The Dalai Lama's message on the last cartoon of this exhibition gives us the faith that perseverance will help us to one day reach to our highest goals. This exhibition organised by Friends of Tibet is dedicated to the Long Life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

May All Beings Be Happy and Enjoy the Cartoons!

Claude Arpi

(Author of 'The Fate of Tibet' and 'India and Her Neighbourhood: A French observer's Views')



His Holiness the 14th the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso was born on July 6, 1935 in a small village of Amdo province (northeastern Tibet). At the age of two, he was recognised as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama and later enthroned in Lhasa.

He is considered by the Tibetans as the incarnation of Avalokitesvara, the Buddha of Compassion.



US President Truman and Secretary of State Acheson when the Chinese entered Tibet.

On October 7, 1950, Tibet is invaded.

Delhi's first reaction was to be "extremely perplexed and disappointed at the Chinese Government's action." But for The Daily Telegraph in London: "Regret possible, but why by surprise? From the very beginning of the year, the liberation of Tibet had been proclaimed over radio as a task of the Chinese Communist Government."

Ultimately, India did not take a stand against Beijing's action.



World leaders watch Nehru leaving for his maiden trip to Beijing in October 1954. Seen on the cartoon are US Secretary of State Dulles (with a bomb), Pakistan PM Mohammed Ali (with a knife), Churchill and Malenkov of USSR (with a frown).

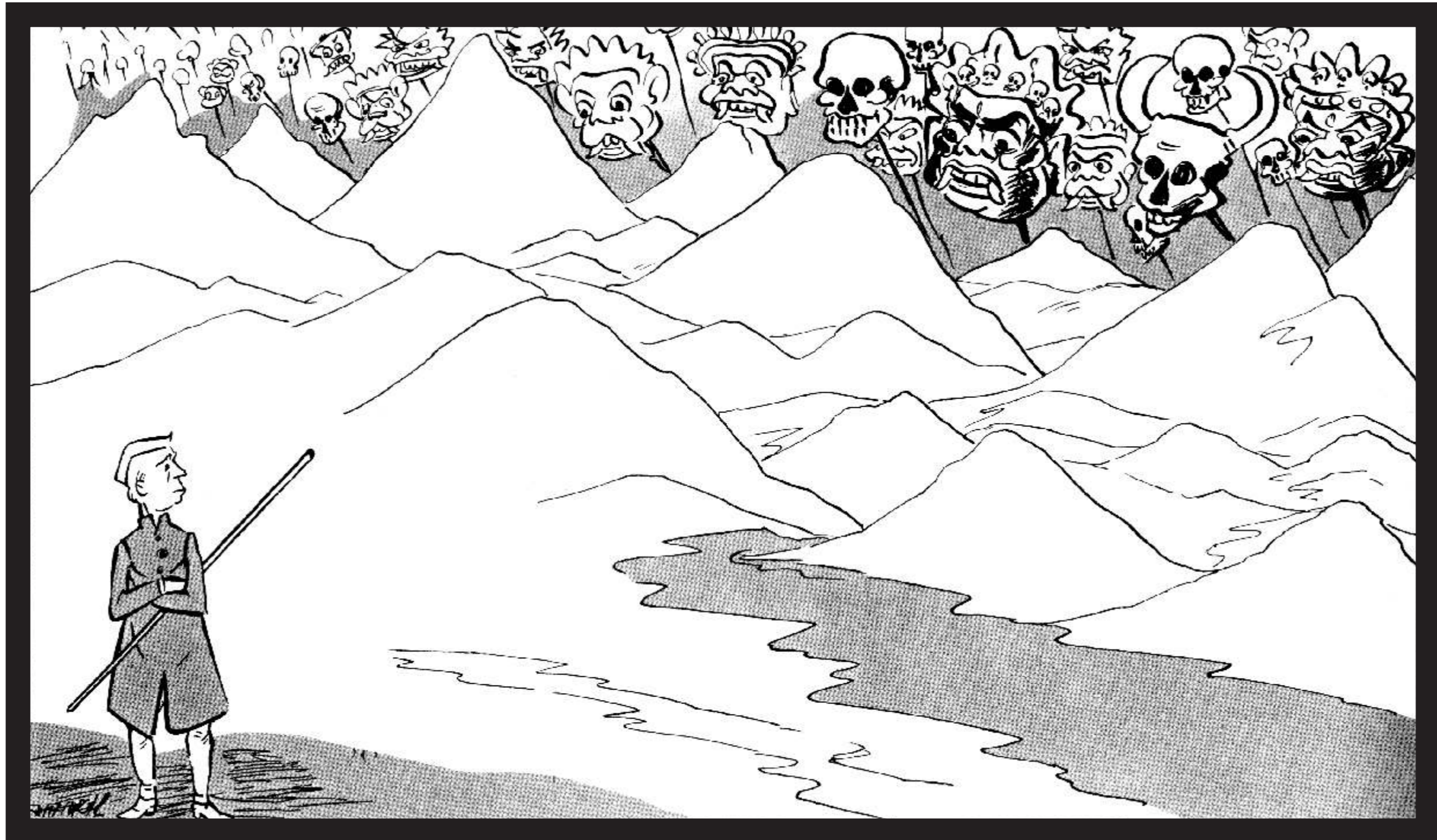
During this visit, Mao stunned Nehru by telling him that he considered the atom bomb to be a 'paper tiger'. "The atom bomb is nothing to be afraid of," Mao told Nehru; "China has many people. They cannot be bombed out of existence. If someone else can drop an atomic bomb, I can too. The death of ten or twenty million people is nothing to be afraid of." He was willing to lose millions of his countrymen in order to emerge victorious in his struggle against the 'imperialists'.



Krishna Menon has returned from China. Has he brought Mao or Zhou?

Krishna Menon, Nehru's Special Envoy visited China after the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung (April 1955). This was the height of the 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai' love affair between Delhi and Beijing.

The Western powers, particularly the US President Eisenhower and the British Prime Minister Anthony Eden (watching from behind the curtain) suspected India's non-alignment to be 'aligned' to Communist China.



Chinese notes repeatedly warn India against aggression committed within their territory.

During 1954 and 1962, the governments of India and China exchanged hundreds of letters on the border issue. Each and every time Delhi complained of a violation of its territory, Beijing counterattacked stating that Indian troops had entered China.

Before 1950, India never faced border problems with Tibet.

The wrathful masks of the Tibetan protector-gods were perhaps kinder. This leaves Nehru pondering.



Nehru and Zhou Enlai sit on hundreds of notes on the border issue with the scarecrow of Panchsheel, the five principles of peaceful coexistence as a witness.

“The Agreement between the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India” known as the Panchsheel Agreement, was described as “Born in Sin” by JB Kripalani. Its title and terms buried Tibet as an independent nation.

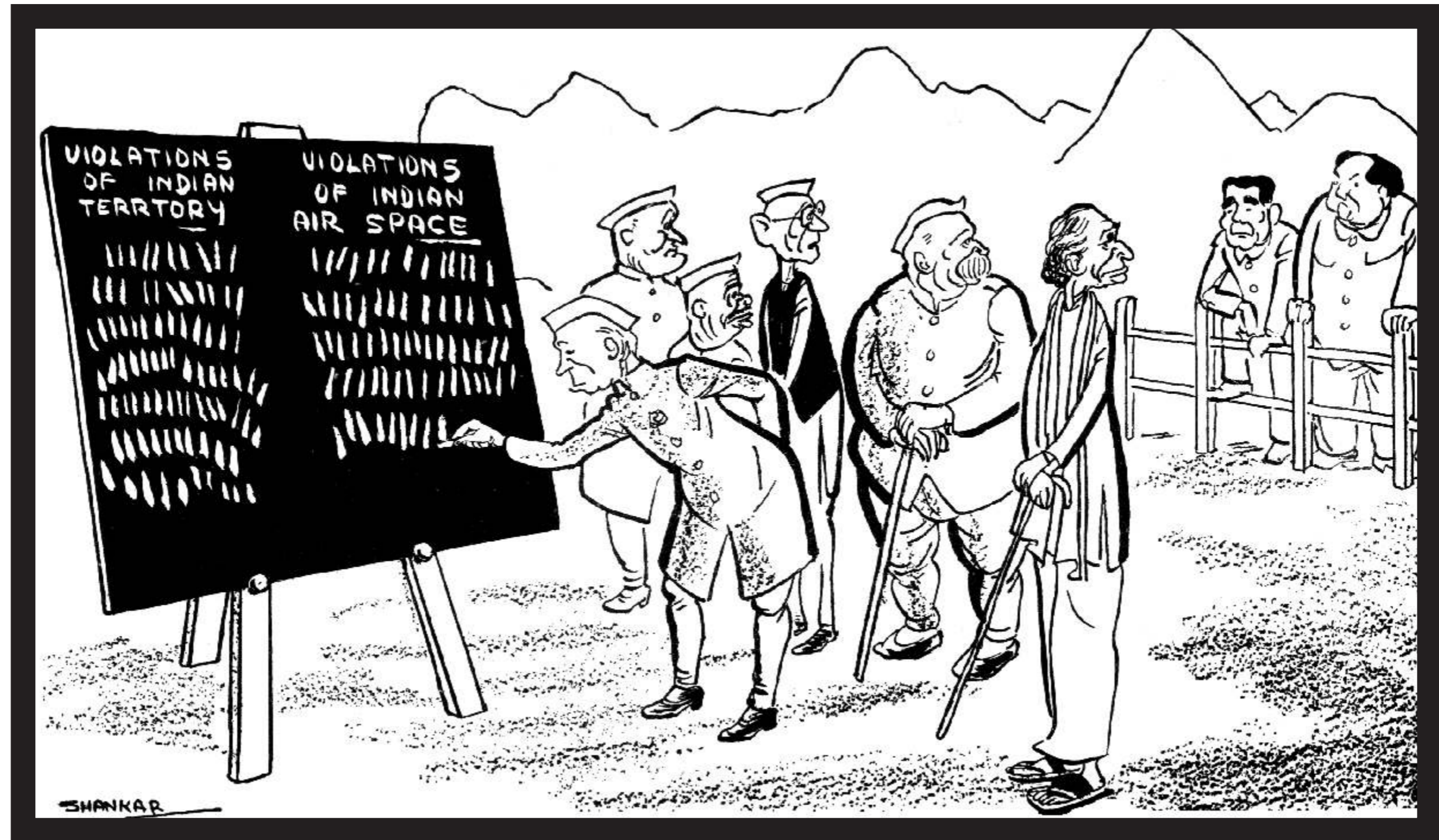
Even while violating the Indian border, China continued to swear by the Five Principles.



“The Prime Minister said India was ready to face the Chinese challenge. He also warned against hasty action.”

Dichotomy was the hallmark of Nehru's policy on Tibet and China. After China announced its 'liberation' of Tibet, Nehru declared that it was not clear "from whom China was liberating Tibet". However, he decided to accept the 'liberation' as a fait accompli.

While he always maintained that the McMahon Line was the border, he did little to defend it.



Nehru and thoughtful colleagues, SK Patil, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Morarji Desai, Govind Ballabh Pant and Krishna Menon.
Mao and Zhou Enlai watch over the border-fence the embarrassed Indian leaders who do not know how to react.

The Chinese incursions continued in 1960.

While Nehru counts the number of Chinese incursions, the Chinese leaders are getting ready for a larger conflict. Roads and communications lines are laid to the Indian border.

Were the five rounds of border talks held in 1960 just to gain time?

Today, the issue continues to haunt the Sino-Indian relations.



China attacked India on October 20, 1962. Defence Minister Krishna Menon wondered whether he should resign from the Cabinet. Colleagues Lal Bahadur Shastri, Gulzar Lal Nanda, SK Patil, Jagjivan Ram and Morarji Desai as well as Rajagopalachari and Kripalani (at the door) await outcome while Nehru ponders.

On October 31, Nehru took over the Defense portfolio; VK Krishna Menon was made a mere Minister for Defense Production. The following days, the pressure continued to mount on Nehru asking for Menon's resignation. Finally on November 7, Nehru sacrificed his faithful lieutenant. Nehru however remained Prime Minister.



The heavy buildup of Chinese troops observed all along the Indian border has been denied by China.

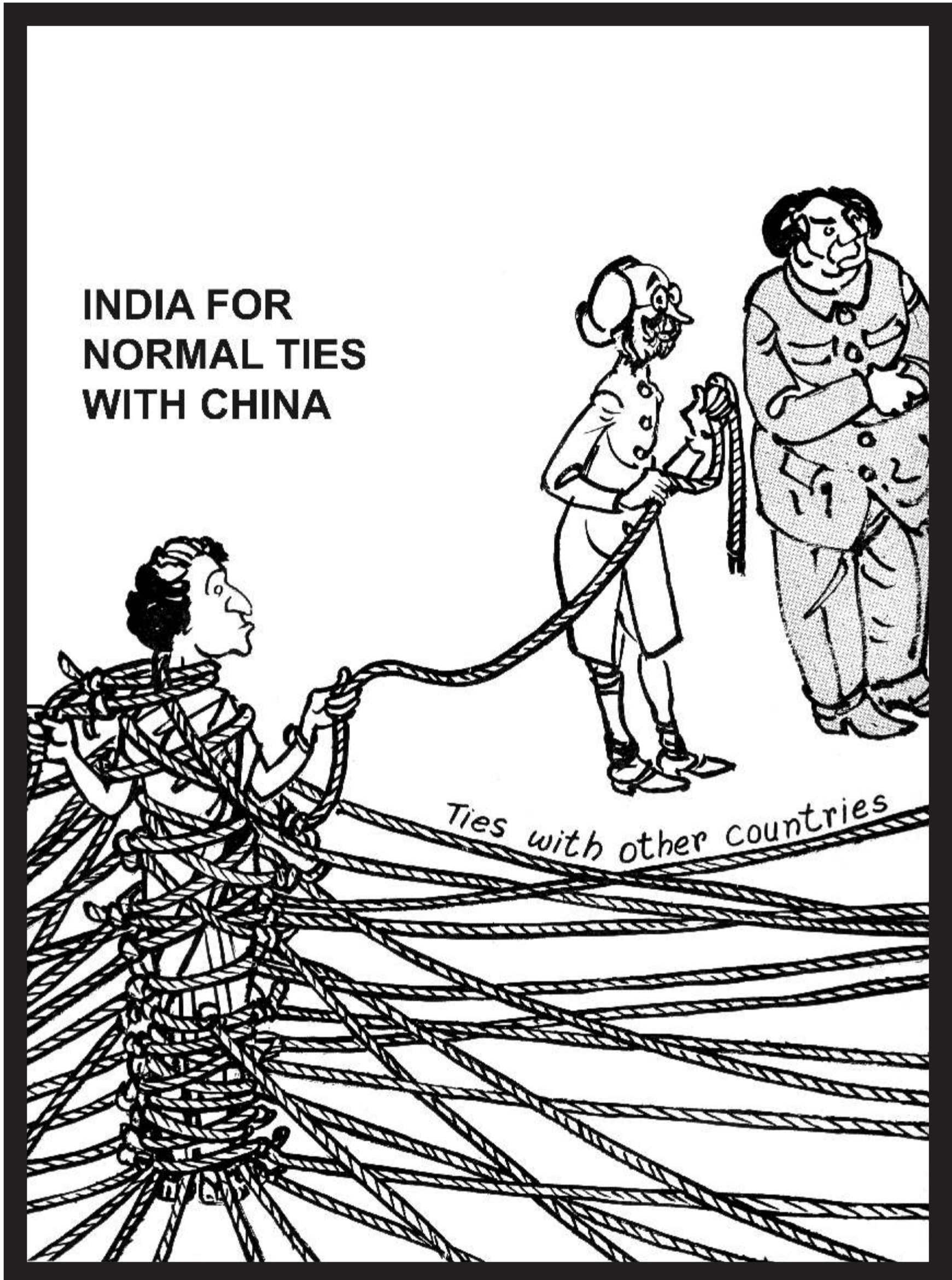
Day and night, Nehru is watchful: are Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai preparing a new attack?

During the first months of 1963, several Chinese intrusions were reported in UP sector, Sikkim and NEFA. Each Indian protest was rejected by Beijing which made counter-allegations saying that Indian troops had violated Chinese territory.



President Leonid Brezhnev and Chairman Mao are looking in opposite direction. This is the time (early 70's) of the Communist split. However, both States are wooing the United States. Both proclaim 'Understanding/Pact with America'. And of course, 'The Real Revolution Belongs to Me'.

President Nixon visited Beijing in February 1972 and tilted towards China. The CIA support to the Tibetan cause was stopped.



After 1962, India recalled its ambassador to the People's Republic of China. During the following years, Indira Gandhi managed to forge close ties with several non-aligned nations.

Unsatisfied with the situation, Delhi started sending feelers to Beijing in 1973. Foreign Affairs Minister Swaran Singh openly declared in the Parliament that India "was prepared to let bygones be bygones."



On May 28, 1972, bugging equipment was installed at the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate Hotel in Washington DC. Two years later, an inquiry indicting President Nixon forced him to resign.

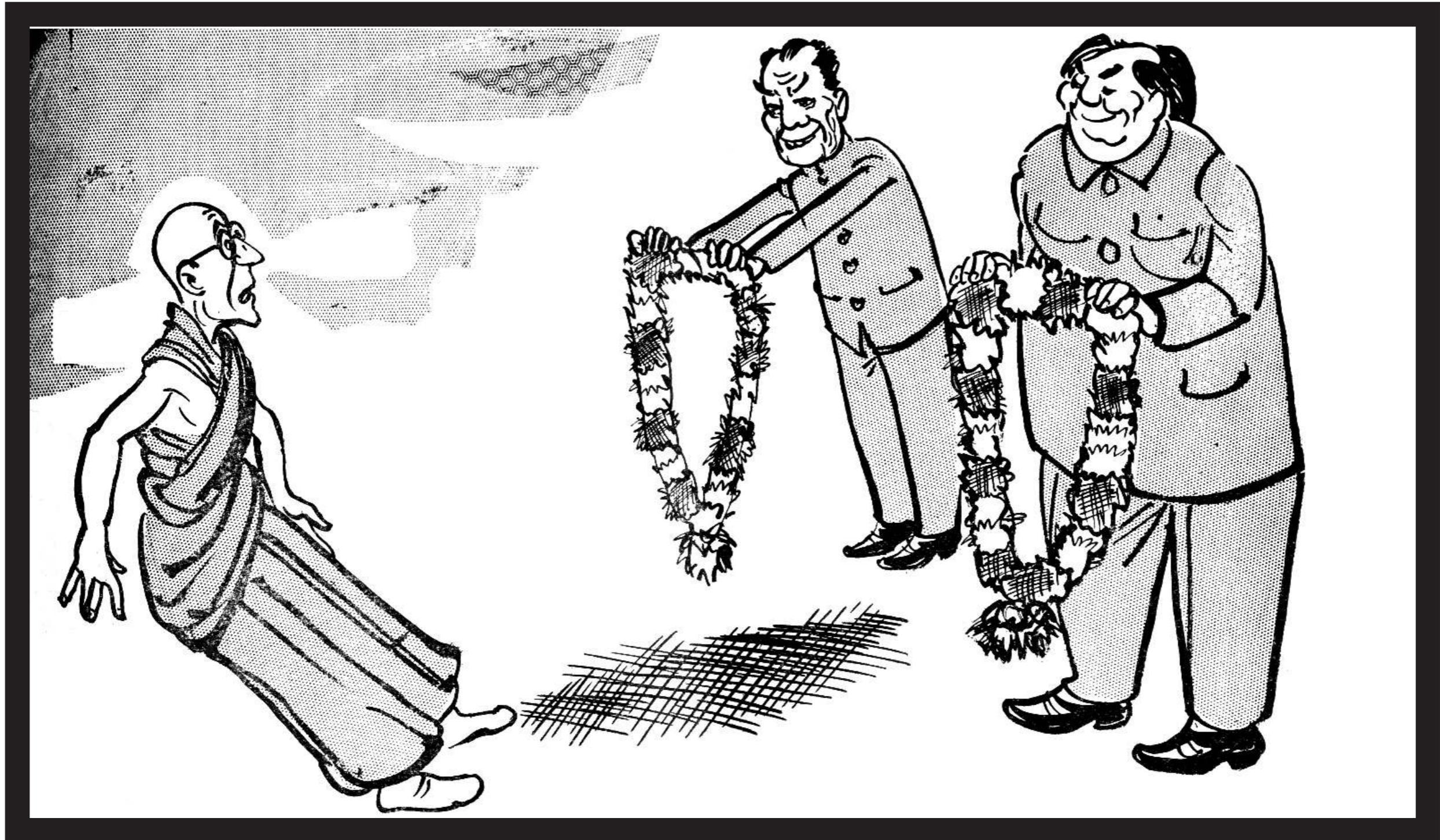
During that time, Moscow and Beijing strived hard to come closer to Washington.

The cartoonist uses the slogan 'unite to support bugging' to show how far the two Communist States are ready to go to befriend Nixon.



“Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom, Let a Hundred Thoughts Flourish”, was the theme of a campaign initiated by Mao Zedong in 1956–57 to ‘de-mask the intellectuals’ within the Communist Party.

In the seventies, several foreign leaders (like President Pompidou of France who was the first European Head of State to visit China in 1973) believed that Mao’s regime was opening up.



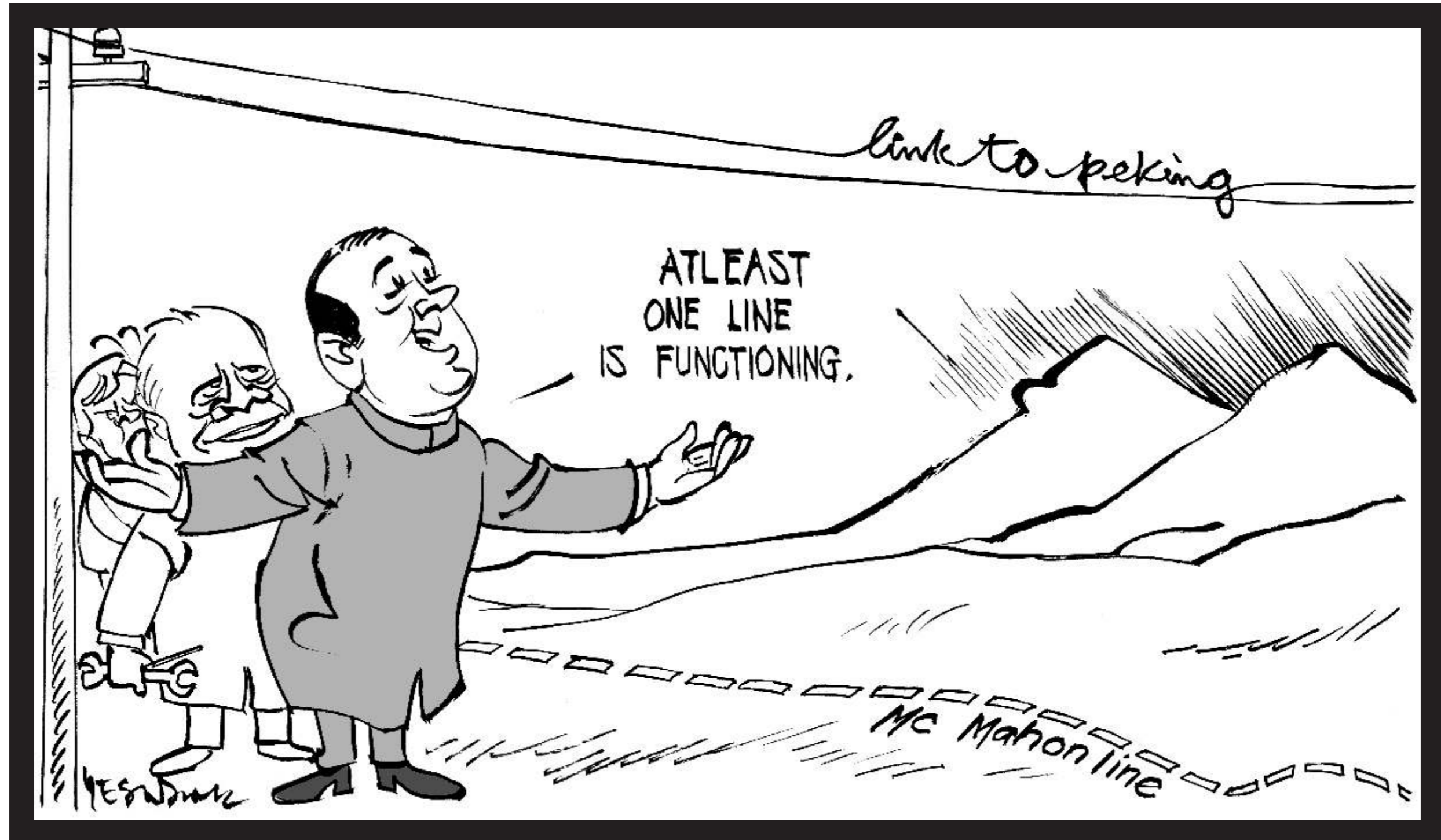
"The Dalai Lama, who is currently on a tour of some European countries, is reported to have expressed the hope that he would be able to return to Tibet soon."

The Dalai Lama has extensively travelled around the world. He is said to have visited more than 50 countries. His first visit to Europe was in 1973 when he met the Pope and the Irish President. For the first time during this visit, he expressed his desire to return to Tibet. In 1985, a trip nearly materialised. Today, he continues to live in exile in Dharamshala (Himachal Pradesh).



Hundreds of visitors and media persons were present in Lhasa, in September 1987 when protests erupted against the Chinese rule. These were led by Tibetan monks. Reports of the repression which followed were transmitted the world over.

A year later, Hu Jintao (today Chinese President) took over as General Secretary of the Region and clamped down martial law for a year. Hundreds of Tibetan died in the process.



Thirty four years after his grandfather, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi paid an official visit to China in December 1988. This marked a new beginning in Sino-Indian relations. Deng Xiaoping said: "Welcome, welcome my young friend, starting from your visit, we will restore our relations as friends."

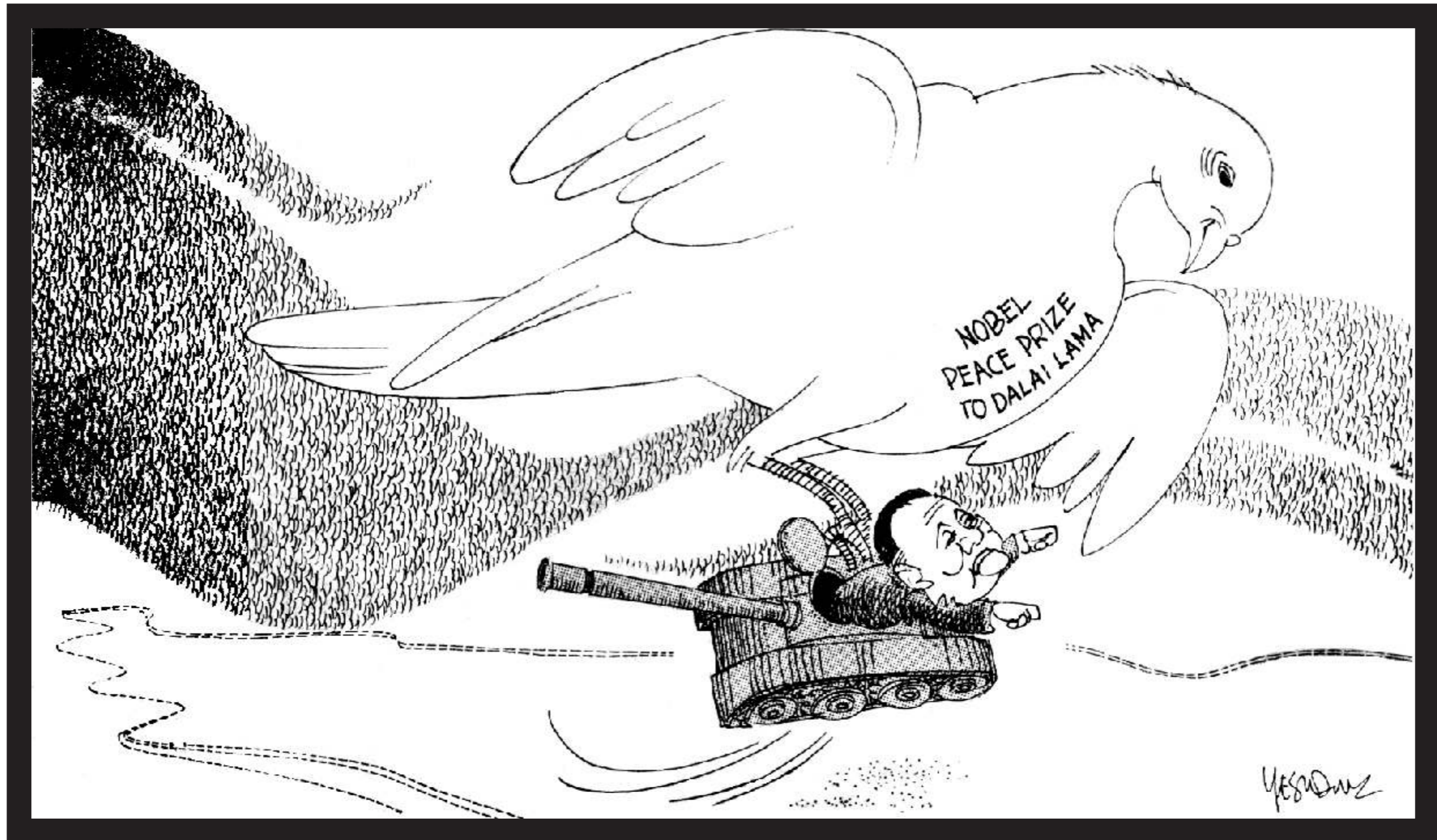
Unfortunately, though it was decided to set up a Joint Working Group to sort out the border issue, no progress could be made.



ചൈനീസ് കമ്മ്യൂണിസം പാർട്ടി മുഖപത്രമായ 'പീപ്പിൾസ് ഡേയിലി'യുടെ പത്രാധിപരായി സൈന്യത്തിന്റെ പ്രചാരണ വിഭാഗം തലവനെ നിയമിച്ചു.

“Chinese Government appoints the Chinese Army Publicity Chief as the editor of ‘People’s Daily’, the communist party mouthpiece”.
A journalist: “Comrade Editor, what headline should be given to this news item?” The Editor: “Give it without a HEAD.”

After the death of Hua Yaobang, a former General Secretary of the Communist Party in April 1987, Chinese students demanded his rehabilitation and the introduction of democratic reforms. The student’s movement ended tragically on Tiananmen Square on June 4. Thousands died when the hardliners ordered the clearing of the Square. A purge followed from which newspaper Editors were not exempt.



On October 10, 1989, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Dalai Lama. The citation says: "his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people." For the Nobel Prize Committee, "the Dalai Lama has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems."

It was 5 months after Deng Xiaoping ordered the tanks to roll on Tiananmen.



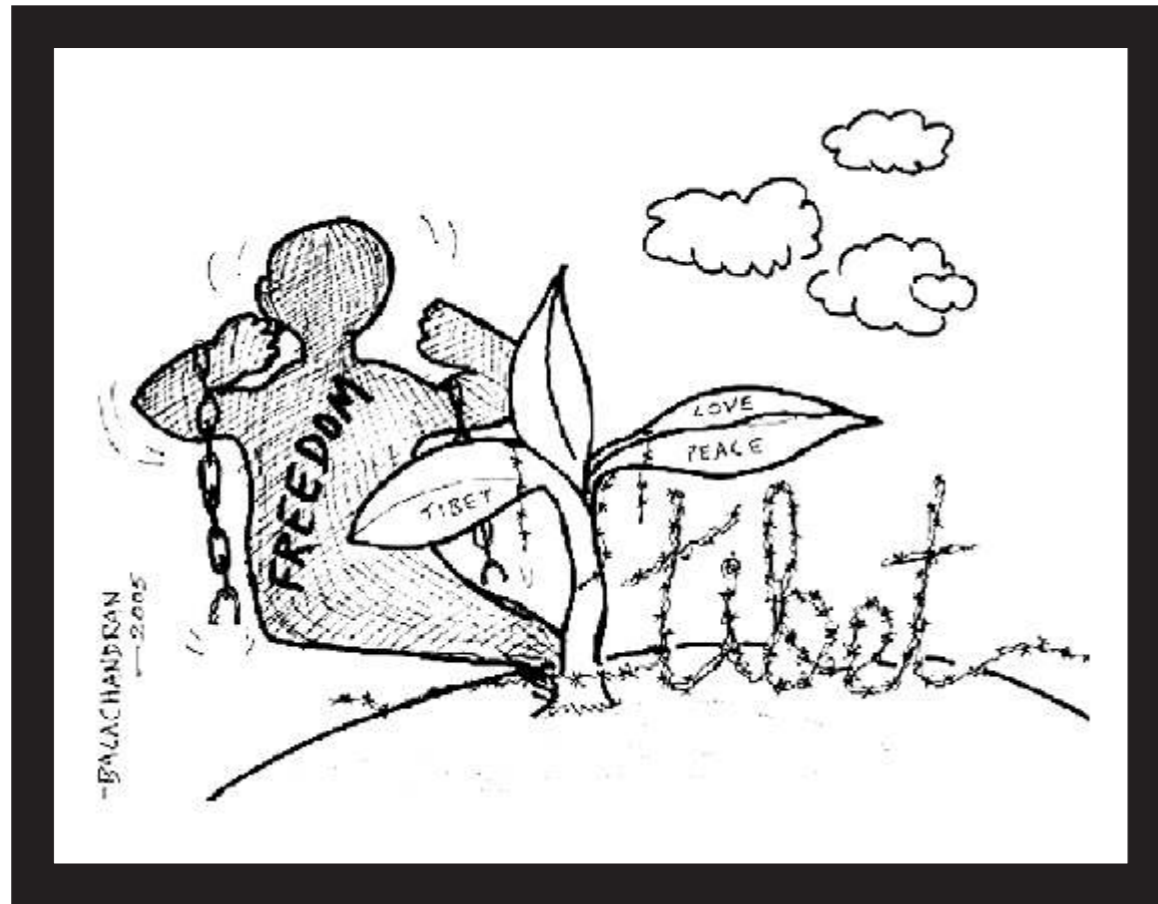
During the visit of Zhu Rongji, Chinese Premier to India in January 2002, the Premier discussed several topics of mutual interest with his Indian counterpart. Their main concern was a new 'economic cooperation' between India and China. For Delhi the opening of the "Great Mall of China" to Indians goods was of particular importance. The situation of Tibet figured nowhere in the talks.



Accepting the Nobel Peace prize, the Dalai Lama explained his philosophy: "No matter what part of the world we come from, we are all basically the same human beings. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. We have the same basic human needs and concerns. All of us human beings want freedom and the right to determine our own destiny as individuals and as peoples. That is human nature."

True freedom is freedom of the mind.

Balu / June 2005



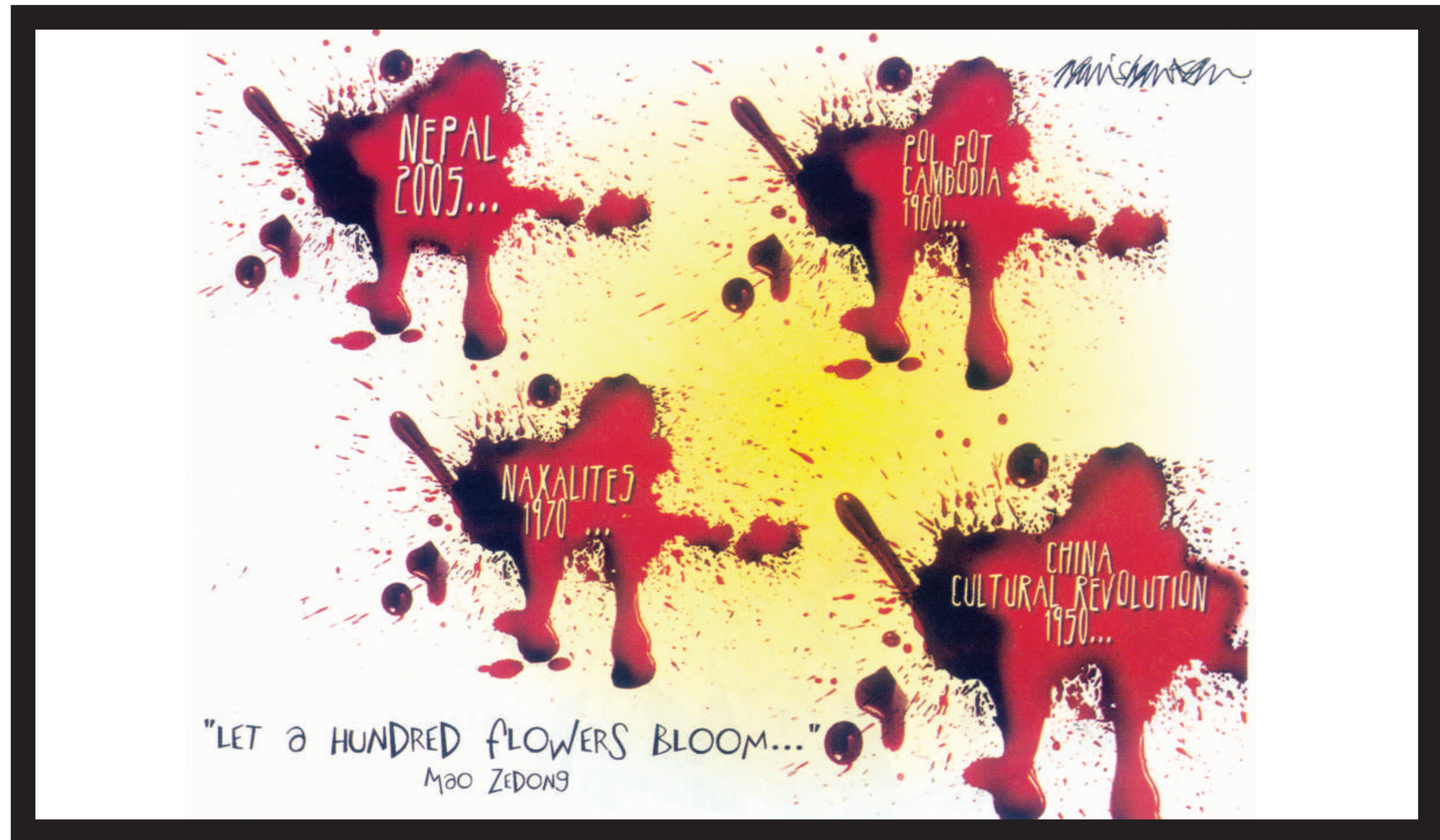
The Dalai Lama has lived for the past 46 years in exile. Since 1959, he has sown his message of peace, compassion and universal responsibility the world over. But the Great Paradox is that the Tibet cause has not progressed politically, the Roof of the World remains occupied.

The spirit of Freedom may break out of all the human chains, but Tibetans are not free to decide their future in their own land.



Published in Mid-Day after Tenzin Tsundue climbed the 14th floor of the Oberoi Towers in Bombay to protest the visit of the Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji.

The cartoonist plays on the Chinese Prime Minister's name, using the polite Hindi form "Ji" to address him. The "wrong" refers to the Chinese policies in Tibet. This had been indirectly acknowledged when the Premier ordered a ban on logging in Eastern Tibet in 1998. Beijing realised that indiscriminate logging had caused the severe floods of the Yangtze. The cartoon also refers to the human rights violations which were not addressed.



On the theme “Let A Hundred Flowers Bloom”, this cartoon highlights some of the bloodshed committed in the name of Mao Zedong’s Thought.

Tibet is not mentioned, about a million people died directly or indirectly from the so-called Chinese ‘liberation’ of the Roof of the World.

“Power flows from the barrel of the gun” professed Mao.



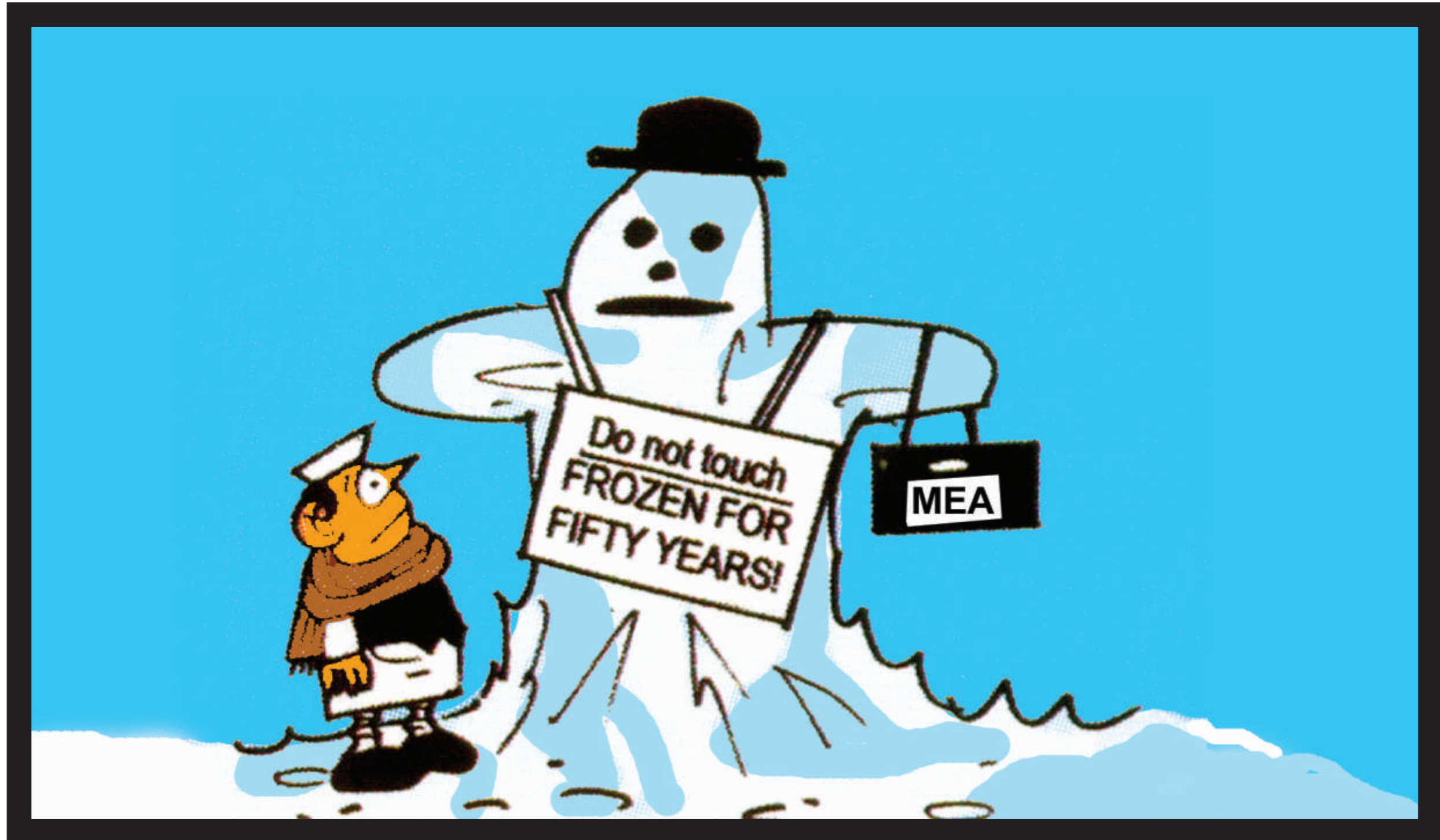
“Our share of world exports is much too small compared with our nation’s potential and when we look at what a country like China has achieved in the last 20 years. I think that’s the role model that we have to look at” declared the Indian Prime Minister.

But is China really a role model for India?

In fact, a democratic India should be role model for China.



A few days before his visit to India, Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Premier emotionally spoke of India and quoted the Upanishads: "May we not hate anyone. Let there be peace, let there be peace, let there be peace!" During his stay in India, the economic relationship between the two Asian giants were strengthened, but the Tibet issue was forgotten and no real progress was made on the border issue.



The position of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Tibet has remained frozen since the day Tibet was invaded.

In November 1950, Nehru admitted that Tibet enjoyed an autonomy verging on independence. However, he decided: "we should seek some kind of understanding with China... we cannot save Tibet".

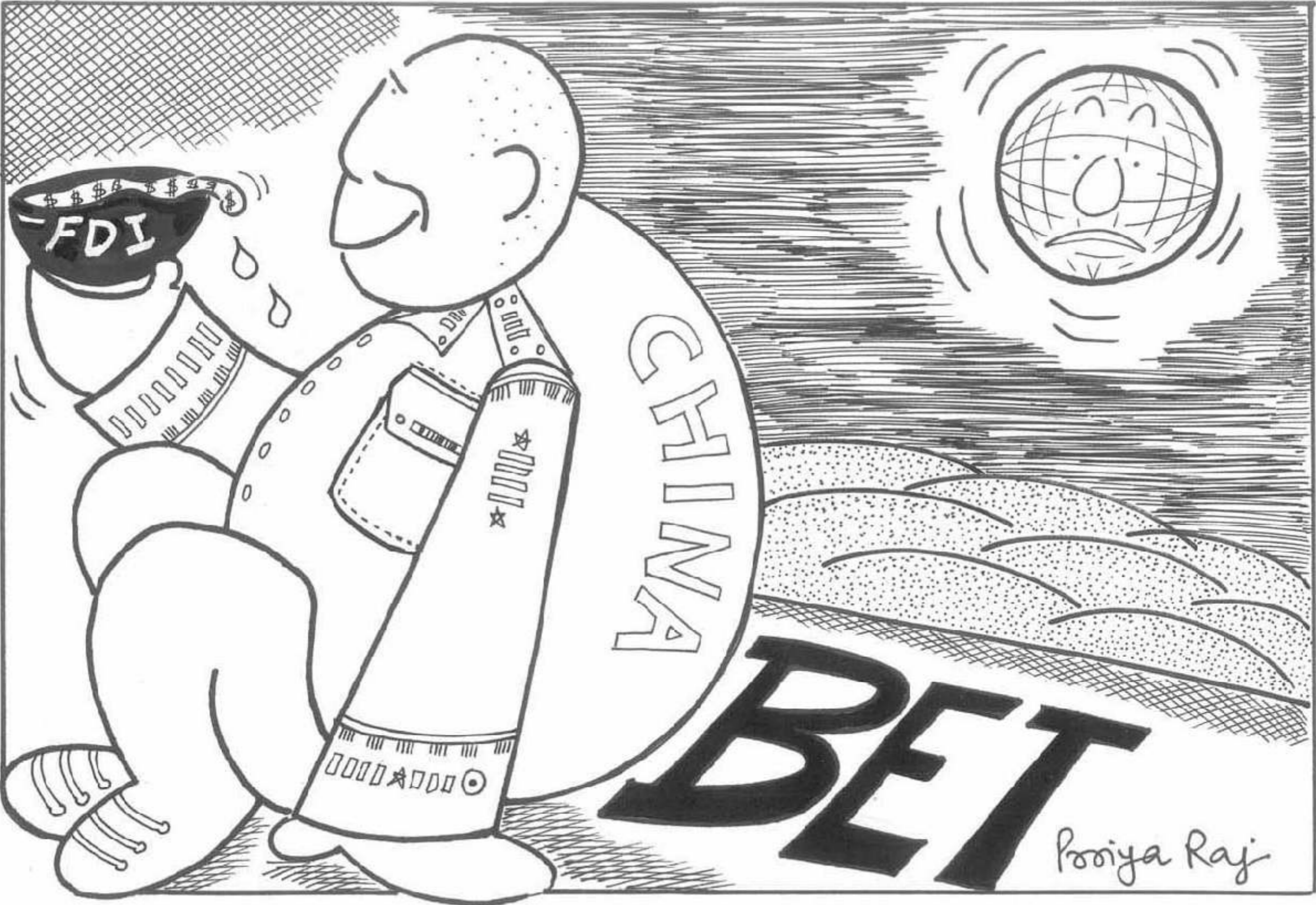
Today the MEA considers Tibet as an autonomous region of China.



Nanda Soobben / 2000



Nanda Soobben / 1999



priyaraj@rediffmail.com



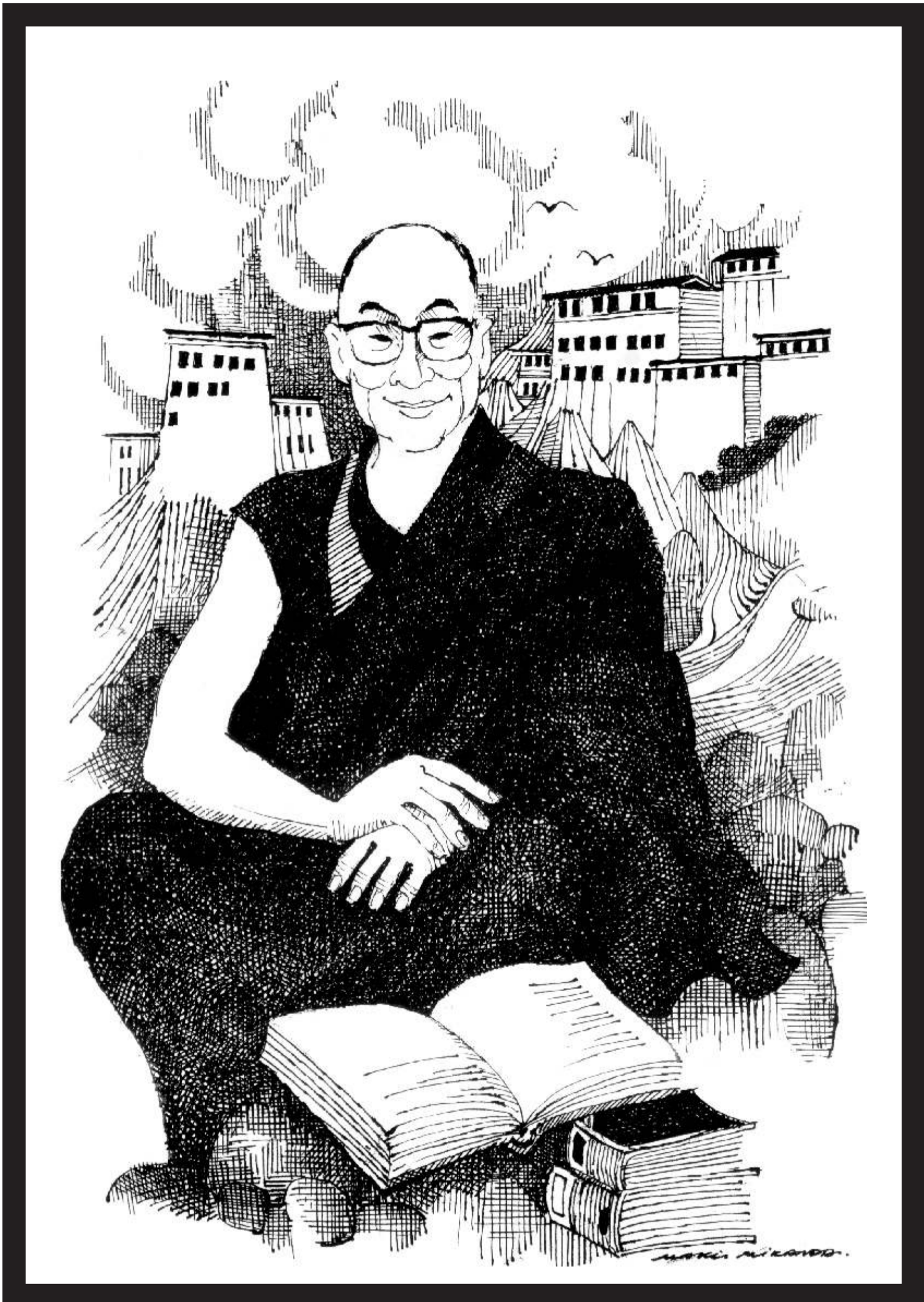
DO YOU REALLY SEE A CLEAR AND BRIGHT LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL, GRANDSON?

TIBETAN ISSUES

Prriya Raj

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The Dalai Lama is seating in front of the Potala, the Palace of the Dalai Lamas in Lhasa. Despite 46 years in exile, His Holiness keeps his smile and peace of mind.

For 1.35 lakh of Tibetans in exile and 6 million in Tibet, he is the only hope that one day their suffering will end.

NEVER GIVE UP
No matter what is going on
Never give up
Develop the heart
Too much energy in your country
Is spent developing the mind
Instead of the heart
Be compassionate
Not just to your friends
But to everyone
Be compassionate
Work for peace
In your heart and in the world
Work for peace
And I say again
Never give up
No matter what is going on
around you
Never give up.

HH the XIV Dalai Lama



“With Gratitude”

Shankar

Ranga

OV Vijayan

Ravi Shankar

RK Laxman

Rajinder Puri

Mario Miranda

Yesudasan

Kaak

Balu

Madhu Omalloor

Thommy

Ponnappa

Morparia

Prakash Shetty

Nanda Soobben

Priya Raj

Abe Gowda

Claude Arpi

Shankar's Weekly

Mid-Day

India Today

Witness

The Week

Bombay Times

Malayala Manorama

Design & People



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