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**Title: Status of Refugees in India: A case studies of Tibetans.**

**Research Question: What is the Current Status of Tibetans Refugees in India?**

### **Hypothesis**

Several variables, such as legal frameworks, cultural preservation, and socioeconomic integration, have an impact on the current situation of Tibetans in India. It is postulated that the Tibetan refugee community in India has effectively established a resilient presence, with varying degrees of socio-economic well-being and cultural retention, despite facing challenges related to displacement and cultural adaptation.

### **Literature Review**

India has long been grappling with the issue of Tibetan refugees, many of whom have fled their home country because of political unrest there. Through an examination of their socio-economic, political, and cultural assimilation since seeking asylum, this literature review seeks to present a broad picture of the present situation facing Tibetans in India.

In 1950, when the People's Liberation Army marched into Tibet, India stood firmly against this territorial violation. The Himalayas, a sacred place in the Hindu faith, held a deep significance for the Indian populace, and the sanctity of this region was not to be compromised. Initially, India sought to maintain diplomatic ties with China, adhering to the 'One China' policy enshrined in the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954. However, the 1959 Lhasa Revolt, followed by the Dalai Lama's seeking refuge in India, marked a turning point (Falcone, J. M., & Wangchuk, T., 2008). India's decision to shelter the Dalai Lama strained relations with China, leading to persistent border tensions. Tibet, became the pivot point around which India and China's post-colonial relationship revolved (Samphel, T., 1988).

The issue of Tibetan refugees remained a thorny point of contention. India, navigating its complex bilateral relationship with care, adopted a dual policy – publicly acknowledging China's sovereignty over Tibet while simultaneously providing support to Tibetan refugees. The intricate Tibetan matter intertwined with the disputed Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh, the latter claimed by the People's Republic of China (PRC) as part of Greater Tibet and therefore integral to its territorial claims. Arunachal Pradesh emerged as a strategic theatre where China sought to exert influence, mirroring India's perceived involvement in the Tibetan issue through its asylum for the Dalai Lama and other Tibetans (Chen, S. T., 2012). Despite Chinese pressure, India remained steadfast in its refusal to extradite Tibetan refugees, a testament to its nuanced stance on this complex geopolitical matter. Because of their shared Buddhist beliefs and cultures, which are firmly anchored in the magnificent Himalayas, India and Tibet have a close historical and spiritual relationship (Soni, S. K., & Marwah, R., 2011). The crucial choice to give the Dalai Lama asylum was a turning point that caused the bilateral relations between China and India to considerably worsen. By welcoming the Tibetan government in exile on Indian territory and reiterating its claim to sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh, India's political policies appear to be a calculated declaration of Tibetan independence. China's territorial sovereignty and the welfare of refugees are two topics on which the complex terrain of Sino-Indian relations continuously influences diplomatic discourse, or the purposeful silence, from both India. (Deepak, B. R. (2011). The Dalai Lama's recent visit to Twang is one example of how this is being done. India's closer ties to the US serve as a buffer against any unfavourable effects. In order to balance China's increasing dominance in the region, the United States fortifies its position as a regional hegemon by siding with India. Nonetheless, India struggles to maintain border security against China's frequent incursions,

especially given the disputed claim to Arunachal Pradesh, which puts the state at risk of increased geopolitical tensions. Since India is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol, it deviates from international norms in its treatment of refugees, particularly Tibetans. India claims that the definition of "refugee" in these frameworks is Eurocentric, and as a result, its domestic legal system labels Tibetans living inside its borders as "foreigners" rather than as refugees. The legal status of asylum seekers in India is further complicated by the lack of a specific domestic law protecting sizable refugee populations (Falcone, J. M., & Wangchuk, T., 2008). Rather, asylum seekers are subject to laws pertaining to foreigners (Hein, J., & Niazi, T., 2016). Because it is frequently laborious, the issuing of refugee cards—a procedure that is entirely under the control of the UNHCR (UNHCR)—adds another level of complexity.

Interviews and written reports have shed light on many of the difficulties that the Tibetan refugee community has to deal with. The lived experiences of Tibetan refugee youth, as examined by (Mehrotra, A., & Bhardwaj, C., 2022), provide insight into recurring challenges like lodging rental, starting small businesses, getting into school, and travel. In addition to these obstacles, Tibetans also face cultural barriers and widespread racism. According to multiple interviewees, they have been victimized because of their facial features, which is like the kind of discrimination that people from northeastern India must endure. But it is important to note that academics have also highlighted the incredible economic development that the Tibetan community living in exile in India has experienced, as demonstrated by (Vasantkumar C., 2017). Moreover, the dynamic conservation of Tibetan culture and customs in residential communities throughout the nation is still a living example of the community's tenacity.

The United Nations convention on refugees does not grant Tibetans any specific rights, leaving them with a significant legal disadvantage. Furthermore, the entire range of rights granted to Indian citizens is not enjoyed by them (Ramanathan, P., & Singh, P., 2021). The 1946 Foreigner's Act in India covers Tibetans legally as well as other people fleeing persecution in their home countries. Though they live in India, Tibetans, like all other refugees, are legally considered to be foreigners, which means that the Government of India (GOI) may deport them just like it would anyone else who is foreign. Stateless people, including Tibetans, have been granted a "Registration Certificate" (RC) (Mehrotra, A., & Bhardwaj, C., 2022), which is a document that needs to be renewed every year and gives them a particular legal status under Indian law. Youth from Tibet are largely hindered by their stateless status, which prevents them from obtaining many jobs, especially in the central and state governments. Furthermore, there is an element of uncertainty and insecurity when one engages in economic activity outside of Tibetan settlements (Topgyal, T. (2011). As they are not allowed to own companies or obtain licenses for commercial activity, Tibetans are subject to significant restrictions (Mehra, P., 1990). Also, since Tibetans are not allowed to own or purchase land, there are restrictions on both land ownership and acquisition. Furthermore, the inability of Tibetans to obtain bank loans restricts their economic prospects. An 'Identity Certificate' (IC), issued by the Government of India (GOI), serves as a passport substitute, allowing travel outside of India. But to leave the nation, one must apply for an exit permit, and to return to India, one must obtain a re-entry permit (Bhattacharya, A., 2007). Despite being required, this travel document has caused difficulties for Tibetans at different airports because immigration officers are often not familiar with this kind of document.

In conclusion, the experience of Tibetan refugees in India captures the complex interaction of socioeconomic, legal, and cultural factors. Despite not being a signatory to important refugee conventions, India has historically and culturally hosted a sizable Tibetan population. However, the Foreigner's Act of 1946, which classifies Tibetans as foreigners, presents difficulties. The lack of specific rights for refugees exacerbates the situation, as being stateless poses significant obstacles to obtaining work, engaging in economic activities, and gaining access to certain privileges (McConnell, F., 2012). The difficulties Tibetan youth encounter in finding employment and the restrictions placed on their ability to pursue economic

activities outside of settlements highlight the consequences of their status as stateless people. Economic opportunities are limited by the ban on business ownership, the inability to purchase land, and the inability to obtain bank loans. The remarkable accomplishments of Tibetans in India are acknowledged by academics, who highlight their capacity to surmount social and cultural obstacles. The ongoing difficulties, however, highlight the necessity of ongoing study, lobbying, and policy focus to address the complexities of the Tibetan refugee crisis in India. As the community progresses, it is still critical to recognize and meet their unique needs to create a more welcoming and encouraging atmosphere.

## **Data**

There will be two main methods used for the data collection: primary(original) and secondary(subsequent). Primary data is information that will be gathered specifically for the first time and will not undergo statistical processing, while secondary data is information that has already been obtained by another party and can be found in publications such as books, articles, academic journals, reports, websites, and so on.

### **Primary data**

Detailed interviews with academics, legislators, p, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be used to gather primary data, which will aid in understanding the realistic and intellectual perspectives that different groups have on the conflict. Open-ended interview questions allow respondents to freely express themselves without being constrained to agree with a particular school of thought or idea. Moreover, it will filter out assumptions and preconceived notions to provide detailed information about individuals. Also, I will be using the following link from the UNHCR and UNDP official website and the official link of Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, India and The Ministry of Home Affairs, India, Committee on Refugees (2023), Migration Policy Institute,

- <https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20India%20factsheet%20-%20January%202020.pdf>
- <https://tibetbureau.in/>
- <https://www.undp.org/india?search=tibetan+refugees>
- [https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-08/FFR\\_ANNEXURE\\_A\\_17092019%5B1%5D.pdf](https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-08/FFR_ANNEXURE_A_17092019%5B1%5D.pdf)
- <https://cjp.org.in/worlds-most-successful-refugee-community-the-case-of-tibetan-refugees-in-india/>

### **Secondary Data**

This will include textual analysis of news websites, blogs, TV stations, and newspapers on a local, national, and international level. The study will also make use of historical methodologies, which will include an examination of past agreements, events, and the functions of different institutions to determine the context of the issue, knowledge of the disagreement. The information gathered from the sources will aid in comprehending the true situation regarding Tibetans in India as well as the Tibetan refugee issue. To correctly consolidate the data, qualitative data analysis will also be used.

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### Impact Factor of the Journal Cited:

Journal Name	Brief	Impact Factor
Psychology and Developing Societies	The Journal highlights the challenges and complexities associated with the notion of home for Tibetan refugees in a new cultural and geographical setting.	IF - 1.1
China Report	The Journal touches upon issues of identity, integration, and the impact of displacement on cultural practices.	IF - 0.9
India Quarterly	In this Journal, the authors highlight the need for refugee legislation in India while India celebrates its 75 years of independence.	IF - 0.5
Journal of Applied Gerontology	This Journal presents how older Tibetan refugees have adapted to changing social and economic conditions in India.	IF - 3.0
Journal of Human Values	The Journal explores the value systems and priorities of Tibetan soldiers serving in the Indian Army.	IF - 0.7
Environment and Planning D: Society and Space	The journal highlights how Tibetan individuals navigate their identity in exile, examining the role of cultural expressions and	IF - 3.8

	performances in maintaining a connection to their homeland.	
South Asia Research	The Journal shed light on the intricate interplay between religious and political structures, addressing questions of hegemony and the endurance of religious dominance in a political context.	IF - 0.8

, Culture & Society	This Journal elaborates a theoretical framework for making sense of Tibetans in Tibet who live as 'exiles in their own homeland'.	IF -1.7
Environment and Planning D: Society and Space	The Journal informs debates regarding the cultural context of governmentality and its relationship to territory.	IF - 3.8
China Report	The journal explores historical, political, and geopolitical aspects, assessing how the status of Tibet influences the Sino-Indian relations and territorial conflicts.	IF - 0.9
A Brief Conspectus. China Report	The journal touch upon historical, political, and strategic dimensions, offering insights into the complex triangular relationship. The term "elusive triangle" suggests a challenging or intricate nature of this relationship, and the conspectus is likely to provide a brief but comprehensive examination of the key factors shaping the interactions between India, China, and Tibet.	IF - 0.9
Asian Ethnicity	The journal reflects cross-disciplinary research on ethnic groups, identity and relations within China, India	IF - 1.6

	and the rest of Asia in the 20th and 21st centuries.	
<i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>	The journal explores the processes of identity construction and negotiation among Tibetans living in exile.	IF - 3.9
India Review	The Journal analyse an issue from a theoretical perspective test theory or competing debates against relevant data or provide a new historical treatment	IF - 0.8
Asian Ethnicity	The Journal explores the implications of the Tibet question on the broader understanding of China's politics, culture, and international relations within Indian academic circles	IF -1.6
Asian Ethnicity	The Journal explores the diverse viewpoints, diplomatic considerations, and historical contexts that shape the fundamental perceptions of these entities in the complex geopolitical landscape involving Tibet.	IF -1.6
Asian Studies Review	The journal sets out to showcase high quality scholarship on the modern histories, cultures, societies, languages, politics and religions of Asia through the publication of research articles, book reviews and review articles.	IF -1.2

Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	The Journal publishes the results of first-class research on all forms of migration and its consequences, together with articles on ethnic conflict, discrimination, racism, policies of integration.	IF 3.3
Strategic Analysis	The journal explores research on global and regional security issues from Indian perspectives, including foreign policy,	IF 0.9

	defence policies and strategic culture.	
India Review	The Journal explores social science research across disciplines on Indian politics, economics, society, and international relations.	IF 0.8