

Rangzen flame reaches Paris

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By Tenam

Paris, June 22 - Hundreds of Tibetans, French supporters, Uighurs and others marched the street of Paris today to welcome 'Independence Torch Relay' by the Tibetan Youth Congress. The event was supported by Students for a Free Tibet, France.

"The main objective of launching the Tibet Independence Torch Relay is to highlight the historical fact that Tibet was always an Independent nation until the Chinese invasion in 1949 and to protest the 2008 Beijing Olympic torch relay through Tibet. The Tibet Independence Torch Relay will also bring awareness to the International Community regarding the dire situation inside Tibet under the colonial occupation of China," said the statement issued by the Tibetan Youth Congress.

The event started with the singing of 'Longsho' and the lighting of the flame. The flame was first carried by pala, one of the eldest Tibetans living in France. The flame started on its route from Place Denfert, center of Paris at midday. A total of 32 Tibetans, young and old and French supporters carried the torch that eventually reached at the front of the French Olympics Committee, south Paris, at around 4 pm, covering about 3 kilometres.

"This is an important moment in the support movement of Tibetans in France as for the first time an event has been organised with a clear independence goal," said Kunsang Lhamo, one of the event coordinator.

Many people came out of their houses to show their support for the torch relay. A group of kitchen staff even came out of the restaurant on the torch route to applaud the relay.

"This torch represents the promise of Tibetan Youth Congress to continue to struggle to regain our Independence from China and to show our solidarity with our brothers and sisters

inside Tibet who are brutally suppressed and denied basic fundamental rights and echo their call for Independence", said TYC.

The day concluded cultural presentation by Tibetans and Uighurs living in France. The torch is planned to visit few other countries before her eventual destination: Tibet.



The lighting of the Rangzen torch Paris. 22 June (Photo by Tenam)



Rangzen torch being carried through the streets of Paris, 22 June. (Photo by Tenam)



The torch relay ended in front of the French Olympics Committee, 22 June. (Photo by Tenam)