

Dalai Lama rejects rosy view of Tibet

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(Xinhua; Reuters) The Dalai Lama has rejected a depiction of Tibet as 'open and happy' by Gyaltzen Norbu, the 16-year-old boy claimed by the Chinese authorities to be the 11th incarnation of the Panchen Lama, and therefore effectively the highest Buddhist leader in Tibet. The Dalai Lama said that the young man had obviously wanted to please Chinese authorities when he praised Tibet's political stability and prosperity. In a recent rare interview with Chinese state media, Gyaltzen Norbu told Xinhua: *"I've been to many places in the past decade and witnessed the ample freedom enjoyed by individuals and religious organisations alike."* In a separate interview with Reuters however, the Dalai Lama rejected this view saying that torture and human rights abuses were still the norm. He said he was saddened by reports monks had been killed and tortured by Chinese authorities for refusing to denounce him as a 'splittist' bent on damaging China. *"I had stressed if they have to denounce me then please denounce me — no problem,"* he said. *"Their safety is more important. Just please denounce me."*

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