

China bars Tibetan writer from attending Freedom award in Oslo

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Oslo, March 03: Tsering Woeser, an influential Tibetan author writing in Chinese, has been effectively barred by Chinese authorities from leaving China for Oslo for a freedom of expression prize, according to a Norwegian Tibet group.

In December 2007, Norwegian Authors Union named Woeser the winner of its Freedom of Expression Prize-2007. The award ceremony was scheduled to take place during the Authors Union's Annual Meeting in Oslo on 8 March, 2008.

According to Chungdak Koren of Norwegian Tibet Committee, "Chinese authorities have effectively prevented Woeser, who is invited to Norwegian Authors Union's annual meeting on 8 March for the award, from travelling by not issuing her with a passport."



File photo of Tsering Woeser (L) and Wang Lixiong (Photo courtesy: Norwegian Tibet Committee)

Woeser is currently self-exiled in Beijing after Chinese authorities deprived her of her job, residence and freedom of movement inside Tibet, and her passport to leave China in 2003 for her politically sensitive writings on the ground realities of Tibet.

Mr Wang Lixiong, Woeser's husband, will now receive the award on her behalf during the award function.

The prize will consist of N.Kr 100, 000 and a certificate of merit.

Norwegian Tibet Committee will be organizing talk by Wang Lixiong on March 9 where he will share his views on the situation in Tibet and East Turkestan.

Mr Wang Lixiong, a well known essayist and fiction author in his own right, has also suffered persecution and harassment for his criticism of Chinese authorities and his country's politics. On the basis of extensive travelling in Tibet, Wang Lixiong has written and published several books on the conditions in Tibet.

He and Woeser have co-authored the book "Unlocking Tibet".

Woeser was recently awarded the freedom of speech medal by the Association of Tibetan Journalists based in Dharamsala.

Short background of Woeser:

Woeser lost her job and was put under permanent surveillance by Chinese authorities in 2004, with a refusal also of her right to leave China. The reason stated for this was that her collection of short stories 'Notes on Tibet' published in the Guandong province in 2003, referred positively to the Dalai Lama. From Beijing, where Woeser lives now, she launched a [blog](#), which had more than 300,000 visits, despite being repeatedly blocked by Chinese authorities.

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