



# HUMAN RIGHTS

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HUMAN RIGHTS *update*  
is a fortnightly newsletter of  
the Tibetan Centre for  
Human Rights and Democracy.  
www@tchrd.org

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 1

## FOUR YEARS IMPRISONMENT OR DEMONSTRATION

Lobsang Dolma is a former nun of Garu Nunnery in Toelung Dechen County. In July 26, 1991, when Lobsang Dolma was 17 years old, she and seven other nuns initiated a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa. The demonstration was broken up by officials from the Public Security Bureau but four nuns, including Lobsang Dolma, managed to escape. The remaining four were arrested.

The arrested nuns were Gyaltsen Choe, Ngawang Lhamo, Gyaltsen Dolma and Gyaltsen Pema. Gyaltsen Choe and Ngawang Lhamo were sentenced to three years "re-education through labour" in Trisam and Gyaltsen Dolma to 18 months "re-education through labour". Gyaltsen Pema was released on medical parole after becoming ill while in detention. Lobsang Dolma returned to her nunnery after being in detention for a week.

A year later, 12 nuns from Garu Nunnery, including Lobsang Dolma, staged another demonstration in commemoration of the arrested nuns. They carried two national flags and distributed political leaflets. Five minutes into the protest, two plain-clothed policemen took the flags from the nuns. Lobsang Dolma was immediately arrested, followed by the other nuns. They were Gyaltsen Kunsang (24), Ngawang Dolma (22), Damchoe Gyaltsen (24),

Rinchen Sangmo (22), Ngawang Nyima (23), Lobsang Choekyi (20) and Ngawang Rigdrol (20), Ngawang Tenkyi (23), Ngawang Dadon, Ngawang Palkyi and Gyaltsen Nyinyi.

The nuns were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre and individually interrogated. During one interrogation session, Lobsang Dolma was kept standing for 12 hours until 2am. In another incident she was struck on the ear which permanently impaired her hearing. The nuns were detained at Gutsa for eight months and sentenced on April 23, 1993. Lobsang received a five year prison term with a subsequent two years deprivation of political rights. The rest of the nuns received varying prison terms. After their sentences were passed they were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

While in Drapchi, the nuns were subjected to labour including cleaning toilets and making yarn out of wool. They were also forced to participate in compulsory military exercises.

During her prison term, Lobsang fell ill with appendicitis. She received no medication after the prison doctor declared she was well. Her health deteriorated and on readmission to the hospital the doctors recommended surgery. However, the prison unit head refused to sign the necessary "agreement" papers to allow surgery, telling her to wait until after her release in two years. At this



Lobsang Dolma

stage, Lobsang's parents pleaded on her behalf and she was allowed the operation on the condition that she return immediately after the surgery. A week after her operation, her stitches were removed and she was given 11 days rest. She was then ordered to return to work and participate in military exercises. She continued under the regimented prison conditions despite being in constant pain.

Lobsang was released on June 14, 1997, upon completion of her prison term. She was constantly harassed by PSB officials and fled Tibet in September 1998 due to fears of re-arrest. She arrived in Nepal on 28 November 1998.



### NEW LOGO

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is pleased to introduce its new logo. The logo incorporates the image of a white dove rising out of flames. The dove and olive branch are the universal symbols of peace. The flames, drawn in traditional Tibetan style, represent violence and suffering as well as the concept of truth.

The logo is aimed at reflecting the work of TCHRD in its role to protect the rights of the Tibetan people.

## 240 expelled from monastery under Strike Hard Campaign

The majority of monks at Khanang Tso Monastery, in Yushul, "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture", have been threatened with expulsion by a "work team". Of the 315 monks at the monastery, only 75 have been issued with the relevant permits and permitted to remain. The expulsions follow a "re-education" campaign in the monastery since the "work team" entered in April 1998. The expulsion has been reported by the former caretaker of Khanang Tso Monastery who arrived in Nepal in December 1998 after fleeing Tibet.

The monastery was first targeted by a "work team" in early 1996, which placed a ban on all pictures of the Dalai Lama and instructed the monks to oppose the Dalai Lama. The "work teams" are authorised by the Chinese government under the Strike Hard Campaign which was introduced in 1996.

## Fined and expelled for arguing with "work team" members

During a "work team" visit at Mon Drup Choy De Monastery, a monk called Sangpo Gyaltzen (20) was fined 5000 yuan for disagreeing with "work team" principles and instructions. Jamyang Khenrab, a monk from the same monastery who is now in exile, reports that Sangpo was found in possession of a photograph of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and was consequently expelled from the monastery.

According to Jamyang Khenrab, the three member "work team" arrived at Mon Drup Choy De monastery in early 1996 and one remains.

The "work team" also set an age limit of 18 years for the recruitment of novice monks.

## Media control by China

The Chinese government continues to maintain strict control over all media in Tibet, including publications in the Tibetan language. Chak-mo Tso of Themching County, a journalist formerly employed by the 'Tsongon Mimang Nyin-re Tsakpar' (a major newspaper in Tsongon Province) recently arrived in exile and reports many restrictions over information dissemination.

The newspaper was established in 1958 and now employs 500 people, including only 38 Tibetan editorial staff. The paper is published daily in Chinese language and only every second day in the Tibetan language, thus discriminating against the Tibetan population in the area.

Chak-mo Tso reports that the vast majority of the research is conducted by Chinese journalists and translated into the Tibetan language. If Tibetan journalists wish to research issues involving indigenous farmers and nomads they are required to obtain a permit from the Chinese editorial section.

Each article must begin with "praise of the PRC government" or its publication would be refused by the Chinese editorial staff. Chak-mo Tso claims that there was no editorial freedom for the Tibetan section.

## "Work team" in Meeru Monastery

Members of a work team have been present in Meeru monastery since the beginning of 1997, states a former monk who arrived in Kathmandu in November 1998. Sixteen "work team" members first entered the monastery, in the region of Lhasa City, to conduct "patriotic re-education" campaign for five months. Two of the "work team" members have since remained.

The monks were banned from praying to the Dalai Lama and two monks who refused to obey were expelled. Four novice monks below the age of 16 were also expelled when an age limit was imposed on the monastery. Another two monks left the monastery when they felt they could not abide by the principles imposed by the "work team".

## Young Tibetan woman gang-raped while fleeing Tibet

A young Tibetan woman was reportedly gang-raped in late 1998 while fleeing from Tibet to India. The incident was witnessed by a 17 year-old female companion.

The young woman (T), aged 18, was raped by five uniformed men, believed to be policemen, after being detained in Ngari township prison. She was unconscious throughout the ordeal.

T and three female companions were arrested by the uniformed men while staying at a guesthouse in Ngari on their way to the Nepal border. The four were interrogated, beaten and accused of spying, before being tied up by the men. T was then struck on the back with an electric cattle prod and lost consciousness.

One of her companions, who was gagged at the time, stated that T was gang-raped by each of the five men. The incident lasted an hour. There were three Chinese and two Tibetan men involved in the rape.

T did not recover consciousness until the next morning, and was unable to move. She was hospitalised for three days. The following day, P and her companion continued their escape to India.

They were arrested again at the Nepali border and taken to Kathmandu. The two young women reached Kathmandu on December 19, 1998. The whereabouts of the other two women, who were present during the rape, is unknown.

There are few reported cases of rape while in detainment although it appears from testimonies that women are susceptible to sexual abuse if they are detained at the border. It is possible that many cases remain unreported because of the stigma attached to rape particularly for nuns.

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## NUN'S SENTENCE EXTENDED FOR RECORDING INDEPENDENCE SONGS IN DRAPCHI

**Ngawang Choezom was first detained for pro-independence activity. Like many Tibetan political prisoners, she was tortured throughout her detainment. Despite being imprisoned, she continued her pro-independence struggle and recorded songs and messages which were smuggled out of Drapchi. She is consequently serving an extended sentence of 11 years imprisonment.**

Ngawang Choezom (layname: Pasang Lhamo) is 27 years old and formerly a nun of Chubsang Nunnery in Lhasa. On March 21, 1992 Ngawang Choezom and four other nuns were arrested for initiating a peaceful pro-independence demonstration in Barkhor in Lhasa. She was accompanied by 24 year-old Phunstok Lochoe, also from Chubsang Nunnery; 22 year-old, Phuntsok Tsamchoe (layname: Dekyi); Yangzom (23) and Gyalsten Kelsang (22). Ngawang Choezom was 22 years old then. The nuns were initially held at Gutsa Detention Centre where they were interrogated and tortured.

Four months after their detainment, they were tried by the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court on charges of "counter-revolutionary" propaganda and incitement. Ngawang Choezom was sentenced to five years imprisonment, Phuntsok Lochoe to seven years and Phuntsok Tsamchoe to four years. The sentence of the other two nuns are not known. Reports received around that time indicate that they continued to be held in Gutsa Detention Centre.

Upon their sentencing the three nuns were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

Whilst in Drapchi Prison Ngawang Choezom and 13 other nuns recorded songs while in prison to be smuggled outside. The tape recordings included messages to their friends, relatives and well-wishers.

The messages in songs and poems conveyed their sufferings in prison, their gratitude to those who supported them and their dedication to the common goal of Tibet's independence and loyalty to the Dalai Lama. The tapes were discovered and the nuns were put in solitary confinement for about a month.

On October 8, 1993 their sentences were extended with Ngawang Choezom receiving an additional six years. Her entire sentence is currently 11 years. Ngawang sangdrol, the longest serving female political prisoner, also had her sentence extended as a result of her participation in the incident.

At the beginning of 1994, Ngawang was hospitalised in the Chinese military hospital after sustaining injuries from beatings and prison labour. She had to

undergo surgery for appendicitis. However, after her medication she was ordered to immediately return to the prison where she continued with her regular prison duties.

In May 1998, Ngawang participated in the protests at Drapchi Prison which is believed to have resulted in the deaths of 11 prisoners. Following this incident, she is reported to have suffered harsh beatings and was put in solitary confinement. She has been denied visitation rights. No further news has been received about her condition since October 1998.

Amnesty International has launched an action appeal for her immediate release.

TCHRD appeals to all friends of Tibet to take up the case of Ngawang Choezom and urge the PRC for her immediate release.

We ask you to initiate signature campaigns and write appeal letters to your local government and the government of the PRC on Ngawang's behalf.

Encourage your friends to join the campaign.

## Restructuring in Drapchi prison

Drapchi prison has recently undergone significant nominal restructuring, according to a witness account received this month. These alterations will impede future investigations as the international community has not been advised of the changes. The collection of information will be restricted as the placement of prisoners within the complex is no longer known. As a consequence, access to particular prisoners by visiting delegations will be more difficult to establish.

Lekshay Drugdrak, a former inmate of Drapchi Prison, witnessed many alterations during his three years imprisonment. He was released in

February 1998 and reported the change of a number of prison units in January 1999. Drapchi is estimated to have an

inmate population of 1100 prisoners, including both criminal and political prisoners.

### Nominal Changes to Drapchi Prison Units

#### Previous System

Unit 1 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 2 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 3 Female political prisoners  
Unit 4 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 5 Male political prisoners  
Unit 6 Criminal prisoners

#### New System

Unit 1 Criminal Prisoners  
Unit 2 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 3 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 4 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 5 Criminal prisoners  
Unit 6 Female political prisoners  
Unit 7 Female political prisoners  
Unit 8 Male political prisoners  
Unit 9 Male political prisoners

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The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is an independent centre which aims to promote and protect human rights and a democratic polity for Tibet. It attempts to educate Tibetans on human rights principles and to work with other human rights and democracy groups as part of a worldwide movement towards these ends. TCHRD is registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act 21 of 1860.

If you would like to subscribe to TCHRD's fortnightly Human Rights Update or to order one of our publications, please send your name and postal details (including email) to our office.

TCHRD's publications: 1996 Annual Report: *Tibet: One More Year of Political Repression* (English and Tibetan editions) 1997 Annual Report: *China in Tibet: Striking Hard Against Human Rights* (English and Tibetan editions) • 1998 Annual Report: *Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity* • *Behind Bars: Prison Conditions in Tibet* (1998) • *Closing the Doors: Religious Repression in Tibet* (1998) • *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • *Democracy: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *Fearless Voices: Accounts of Tibetan Former Political Prisoners* (1998) • *Human Rights: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *South East Asia: Human Rights NGO Seminar on Tibet* (Proceedings) (1998) • *Tales of Terror: Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *The Next Generation: The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998).

TCHRD also has an email discussion forum, the BARKHOR, to which you can subscribe by writing to majordomo@cyborganic.net and include "Subscribe Barkhor" in your message.

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### LATEST REPORTS FROM TCHRD

TCHRD has released two reports in January 1999. The Annual Report: **Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity**, is a comprehensive overview of human rights abuses reported by TCHRD throughout 1998.

**Tales of Terror: Torture in Tibet** provides accounts from former political prisoners who have been subjected to torture while in detention.

To cover the cost of printing and postage we would appreciate a sum of US\$ 5 for each report.

To order please send a cheque or international money order made out to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights & Democracy. Thank you.



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update

JANUARY 31, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 2

## ARRESTED FOR RETURNING FROM INDIA

Jampel Jinpa, aged 34 years, is from Hre Chuy County in Sichuan Province "TAP". He arrived in India in 1985 and joined Sera monastery in South India. He remained there until 1996. In 1996, Jampel Jinpa returned to Tibet to meet his relatives. On July 20, 1996, while en route to Lhasa, Jampel Jinpa was arrested by the Lhatse police for carrying Tibetan books.

The police took Jampel Jinpa to Shigatse and later moved him to Nyari Prison. He was detained at Nyari Prison for four months during which time he was regularly interrogated and tortured by up to eight PSB officers at a time. On some occasions he was tied up and interrogated while PSB officers kicked and struck him with any weapons that came to hand.

Jampel Jir.pa's official arrest was declared on September 24, 1996. He was charged with "keeping a Tibetan Independence flag, a picture of the Dalai Lama, literature about the Tibetan government-in-exile, a long life prayer for the IXth Panchen lama and 20 booklets recording a speech given by the Dalai Lama". The charges were pursuant to section 102 (52) and (63) of the PRC Criminal Law, which criminalises the act of propagating "counter revolutionary propaganda". Jampel Jinpa was sentenced to imprisonment for a period of one year and deprived political rights for a further period of two years. He was held in Nyari Prison where he was assigned to collect human waste and spread it on the vegetable farm as fertiliser. He was released in September 1997.

Dolker Kyab, aged 26, is from Machu County in Gansu Province "TAP". He visited India in 1990 and studied at the Bir Suja school for two years and seven months. Later he worked as a Tibetan teacher at the Chauntra school for a period of one year. In March 1994, Dolker Kyab returned to his home-town in Tibet and sought admission to Nubchung Mirig school until March 31, 1995.

During the period he was in the school, Dolker Kyab was arrested twice by Ganan "TAP" People's Investigation Office on political grounds. The first arrest was on March 27, 1995 and the second was on March 31, 1995. During the first arrest, Dolker Kyab was interrogated and severely beaten. At the time of the second arrest he was suspended in the air for 12 days and subsequently detained for a period of four months at Ganan Detention Centre. From Ganan Detention Centre Dolker Kyab was transferred to Machu County Detention Centre, where he was kept for a further three months. Then he was taken back to Ganan "TAP" Detention Centre and kept there until October 17, 1996. Eventually, he was taken to Lingshak Prison where his official arrest was declared.

Later, the Kainho People's Intermediate Court sentenced Dolker Kyab to imprisonment for a period of three years and deprivation of political rights for a further two years. He was charged with "propagating counter revolutionary activity", "propagating Tibetan independence ideology" and threatening the "unity of a socialist state" pursuant to

the PRC Criminal Law, section 102 (33), (52) and (60). After sentencing, Dolker Kyab was taken to Gansu Province Prison No. 2 for "reformation through labour".

### Gansu Province Prison No. 2

Gansu Province Prison No. 2 is located on the South side of Kajiu "Hoyrik" "TAP". The prison is divided into eight units and four sub-units. The prison population is approximately 2000 prisoners comprising Tibetans, Chinese, Uighurs, Mongolians and Muslims. The prisoners are required to carry out metal work, wood-work, weaving, mechanical work, tailoring, shoe making and repairs. Prisoners are forced to work from 8 am to 9 pm daily.

The informant, Dolker Kyab, was held in the fifth unit of this prison, where he was assigned the tasks of tailoring and stitching hand gloves. He reported that the prisoners were not treated well. Since 1992 the prisoners have been required to bring their own blankets, mattress and bed sheets to the prison. Medical facilities are not provided promptly in medical emergencies and, as a result, eight prisoners died in September 1997. Religious restrictions are imposed on prisoners during all religious festivals. There are also reports of sale of human organs removed from ailing prisoners.

During 1996 and 1997, approximately 40 to 50 prisoners died at Gansu Province Prison No. 2 after excessive beatings. Reports indicate that their body organs were often sold in the market.

## Closure of monastery

According to a recent report from Tibet Information Network (TIN), Jonang Kumbum Monastery, located on the banks of the Tsangpo river in western Tibet, was closed in 1997. The resident monks refused to denounce the Dalai Lama during the "work team" session that took place in the monastery in the first quarter of 1997. During that incident a monk named Yonten Gyatso was arrested. Many other monks fled from the monastery. The "work team" visited the monastery a second time on July 12, 1997. During the second visit, the "work team" failed to "extract satisfactory pledges" from the monks and ordered the closure of the monastery. The head of the monastery, 70 year old Ven. Kunga Yeshe, was detained for several months after the closure.

A monk from the monastery reported that the monks were treated like slaves during the "patriotic re-education" sessions.

## Restrictions on freedom of education in Tibetan Medical Schools in Lhasa

A 19 year old nun (name withheld) and former student of Lhasa's Sorig Lhobdra (Tibetan Medical School) reported that religious restrictions are imposed on students at the school by Chinese authorities. The students are prohibited from reading material or taking part in discussions relating to historical "political" topics. The students were also instructed to denounce the Dalai Lama in a meeting called by the school's Chinese authorities.

In 1993, Chinese authorities banned the teachings of 'Shepay-Thinyig' and other similar subjects relating to religion. In 1995, Chinese authorities banned the subject of 'Thampa Lha-Choes Kyi Choelam', taught from the textbook of 'Jawa-Choelam' ("Religious path on deeds"). These subjects teach human behaviour from a religious point of view. In place of the lessons, every Thursday students are forced to study Chinese political ideology, based on communist policies. At present no new students may

be admitted to the school.

The discontinuation of religious teaching in the medical school is consistent with the "atheist policy" imposed on Tibetan people in Lhasa by the Beijing authorities on January 8, 1999.

## Death of Tibetan boy in Chinese gunfire

On November 20, 1998, local Chinese security police began firing indiscriminately at a group of 47 Tibetan refugees who were trying to escape into Nepal. During the firing, a 15 year old boy named Yeshe Ngodrup was shot in the back and the bullet penetrated through to his navel.

During the same incident, a second escapee from Karze, named Sonam Tri, was shot in the left knee. 30 refugees from the group were arrested and 17 managed to escape. Both Yeshe Ngodrup and Sonam Tri were taken to a Chinese hospital and the next day Yeshe Ngodrup died. Chinese authorities retained his body for 15 days while a post-mortem was conducted. On January 23, 1999, his family travelled from Lhasa and the body was cremated in Saga County.

## Personal Account of a former political prisoner

My name is Jamyang Tsultrim. I was born in the third unit Arhang town in Horlung County, Tso Ngon Region "TAP". I attended school till the age of 11 and joined Khortsa Khar Monastery when I was 15 years old. Later I moved to Gaden Monastery in Lhasa City "TAR". While in Gaden Monastery, I saw many of my friends being arrested for taking part in pro-independence demonstrations. I, together with my teacher, made visits to almost all parts of Tibet. Through this I came to the conclusion that the Chinese have destroyed the Tibetan culture and religion. I had also visited India in 1992 and then returned to Tibet.

On August 14, 1992, I was arrested on suspicion by Lhasa Public Security Bureau (Lhasa PSB). I was held in detention in a secret place in the north of Lhasa for

seven days. I was released on parole but the Lhasa PSB kept following me. During this period many of my friends were arrested on political grounds. I returned to my hometown to avoid being followed by the Lhasa PSB.

On March 30, 1996, while I was living in Lhasa running a small restaurant, I was arrested again by the Lhasa PSB near the Central Temple, together with my friend Jigme Gyatso. After our arrest, we were taken to the criminal branch of the police. We both were manacled and handcuffed and severely beaten by the police.

The next day Jigme Gyatso was moved to Gutsa Detention Centre. I was interrogated intensively by the police to reveal any secrets that I had. As they were not successful I was thrown in a cell for nine days without water. On the tenth day I was taken to the prison complex ground, where 13 policemen beat me. On the fifteenth day I was moved to Gutsa Detention Centre.

At Gutsa, the authorities declared that the restaurant I owned was the main centre for organising "counter-revolutionary" activities and ordered that the restaurant be closed. This has destroyed my livelihood. On April 2, 1996, Lhasa City People's government sentenced me to two years imprisonment for reform through education (Laojoi). I was moved to Trisam Prison. The charges laid against me were: fleeing to India; attending Kalachakara; and helping organise "counter-revolutionary" activities. I was released from Trisam on January 22, 1998.

In prison I had to work on the prison vegetable farms. Two months after my release, on May 30, 1998, I was arrested in Lhasa by the Lhasa PSB. I was detained there for ten days. Later, I was moved to Arsha-Leephu County prison in Tathung County in Siling, Tso Ngon "TAP", where I was detained for a further 45 days. I was detained on the ground of suspicion.

Eventually I was released to the custody of my wife after paying 8000 Chinese yuan to the authorities. I was released on the conditions that I, first, reported once a month to the Lhasa PSB and, secondly, did not travel over a certain distance from Lhasa without proper permission from the authorities. I was unable to bear the tight restrictions and consequently fled from Tibet with my wife.

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## TEN YEAR SENTENCE FOR PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION

On February 18, 1992, Ngawang Tensang was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in Drapchi prison for his involvement in a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa.

Ngawang Tensang, a 29 year-old former Drepung monk, is from Toelung Sangmo Shang in Toelung county in the Tibet Autonomous Region. He is the fourth child in a family of eight (one of six brothers). His father died in 1991.

Ngawang Tensang attended the lower school (Mangtsuk school) in Toelung Sangmo Shang. After school he lived in his maternal aunt's house for about five years. He later joined the Drepung monastery.

While in Drepung monastery, Ngawang Tensang and four other monks from the monastery held a peaceful demonstration in front of the Tsuglhakhang (Lhasa's central temple). The demonstration took place on September 14, 1991 at around 12 noon. The monks dressed in ordinary clothes so as not to arouse suspicion. For about 15 minutes they shouted slogans of "Free Tibet" and "Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama".

All five monks were immediately arrested by a Fang Bao Due team (anti-riot force) and taken away to the Fang Bao Due office in two vehicles. The monks were, in addition to Ngawang Tensang, Phuntsok Jangsem (19) from Meldro Gongkar, Phuntsok Thutop (19) from Phenpo, Ngawang Choechok (16) from Toelung and Phuntsok Gonpo (19) from Phenpo.

"As soon as we arrived, the officials began to beat us everywhere on the body, kicking and boxing us," said Phuntsok Gonpo, one of the five

monks participating in the demonstration. Phuntsok Gonpo escaped to India in early 1998.

The monks were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre. At Gutsa, their names were registered and further beatings were administered.

"By that time we had been beaten so much that we were only half-conscious of our existence. My body was numb. Ngawang Tensang suffered the worst, probably because he was the oldest of us," stated Phunstok Gonpo.

On February 18, 1992, the Lhasa Intermediate Peoples' Court sentenced Ngawang Tensang to 10 years imprisonment and deprived him of political rights for three years on charges of "counter-revolutionary" activities (now described as "endangering state security" pursuant to a 1996 constitutional amendment). On similar charges, Phuntsok Jangsem was sentenced to imprisonment for a period of eight years; Phuntsok Thutop and Phuntsok Gonpo to imprisonment for five years and deprivation of political rights for two years; and Ngawang Choechok to imprisonment for three years and deprivation of political rights for one year. Ngawang Tensang received the highest sentence as he was alleged to be the leader of the group.

Following sentencing, the monks were detained in Gutsa for another one to two months. They were then transferred to Drapchi prison. As soon as they arrived at Drapchi, a police officer harshly scolded the monks and made sarcastic remarks about granting "freedom" to Tibet.

The monks continued to suffer torture at the hands of prison guards

at Drapchi. They were first required to study the prison regulations and then assigned to work. Ngawang Tensang was sent to work in the prison vegetable garden.

In 1995, Ngawang Tensang assisted a fellow prisoner who was sick during a regular prison exercise session. The prison authorities punished him. He suffered severe beatings and, subsequently, was kept in the solitary confinement for approximately one month.

On two separate occasions, Ngawang Tensang participated in peaceful demonstrations, which occurred at Drapchi. On both occasions, there was indiscriminate firing at unarmed prisoners. The firing resulted in the death of a total of eleven prisoners. Ngawang Tensang was severely tortured for his role in the demonstrations.

From the beginning of February 1998, Ngawang Tensang's visitation rights have been restricted. Since the most recent demonstration, in May 1998, none of Ngawang Tensang's relatives have been allowed to visit him. At one stage, his family members obtained information that he was in reasonable health and they were permitted to see him through a glass window. These concessions were made only after the family members paid bribes to the prison guards.

Ngawang Tensang is currently detained in solitary confinement. However, his family do not know whether he is still in Drapchi or has been transferred to another prison. Their main concern is his health. They have not been able to obtain any recent information regarding his condition.

## Life in Lhasa Prison

Jampa Choejor, aged 31, spent 18 months in Lhasa Prison on charges of "endangering state security." He was arrested along with nine other monks by members of a "work team" during the "patriotic re-education" session at Nalenda Monastery in Phenpo Lhundrup County, Lhasa City in March 1995. They were all arrested because they prevented the local PSB officers from searching the room of another monk.

The Lhasa People's Intermediate Court sentenced them to 18 months imprisonment on charges of "endangering state security" while at Gutsa Detention Centre and all ten monks were transferred to Lhasa prison.

During his imprisonment, Jampa

Choejor was made to carry out construction work. He described the prison as being located in the north of Lhasa City. It was established in the 1960s, initially to detain political prisoners arrested in 1959. Subsequently, non-political prisoners, serving sentences of five years or less, were also held in the prison. In the 1960s this prison was named "Outridi No. 5". In the 1980s the prison's name was changed to "Yitridu No. 1". By the end of 1990, it was renamed "Lhasa Prison". This prison is also labelled "Tibet Autonomous Region Prison".

The prison is divided into separate units holding a total of eight hundred prisoners. The number of political prisoners is very

low in proportion to non-political prisoners. In each unit there are 200 prisoners. Those in the first and third units are forced into hard manual labour (such as stone-breaking). The prisoners in the fourth unit must carry out construction work. Those prisoners in the second unit work in the automobile repair section.

Famous political prisoners such as Ven. Palden Gyatso have been detained in the prison since 1959. Jampa Choejor was released on September 6, 1996. After his release he was not permitted to stay at Nalenda Monastery. He fled to India to pursue his religious education.

## PRINTED MATTER • AIR MAIL



ត្រឡប់ទៅម្ចាស់ដើមវិញ  
RETURN TO SENDER

មិនទទួល / Refused  
 មិនស្គាល់ / Unknown  
 អាសយដ្ឋានមិនគ្រប់គ្រាន់ / Incomplete address  
 ក្មេងផ្លូវនេះ / No such street  
 គ្មានលេខផ្លូវនេះ / No such number  
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 ទ្រង់ស្រី / Deceased

Association of Nuns and Lamas  
of Cambodia, #7 Street 174  
Khan Don Penh  
Phnom Penh,  
Cambodia



Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy  
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### LATEST REPORTS FROM TCHRD

TCHRD has released two reports in January 1999. The Annual Report: **Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity**, is a comprehensive overview of human rights abuses reported by TCHRD throughout 1998.

**Tales of Terror: Torture in Tibet** provides accounts from former political prisoners who have been subjected to torture while in detainment.

To cover the cost of printing and postage we would appreciate a sum of US\$ 5 for each report. To order please send a cheque or international money order made out to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights & Democracy. Thank you.



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# HUMAN RIGHTS

update

FEBRUARY 15, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 3

## IMPRISONED AND TORTURED FOR VOICING RIGHTS

**Monks from Nalanda Monastery had been actively involved with pro-independence activities since early 1990's. Many of whom have spent time in prison for a considerable number of years one them continue to serve 12 years. Yet their spirit to struggle remain unabated. Lhakpa Wangyal, a former monk from Nalanda Monastery gave a complete account of the involvement and the subsequent arrest and detention of the monks from Nalanda. His account testifies the on-going violation of human rights by the Chinese authorities.**

In 1992, the 15 day of the fourth month of the Tibetan calendar on the occasion, the major pilgrimage to holy Tongtse Ri (mountain), Lhakpa Wangyal pasted wall posters in the circumambulating area reading "Tibet belongs to Tibetan", "Stop conversion of Tibet into China, and the propagation of Buddhism into blind faith" and "One must rise up for the independence of Tibet". He pasted the posters in three separate places. Lhakpa and others continued to paste up similar posters in the following years. By 1995 they had pasted or distributed about 600 posters in various places, including Lhundrup county, Sher Gonpa nunnery and areas in the Barkhor.

On February 22, 1995 a monk named Nyima Kelsang from Nalanda monastery hid a Tibetan national flag on his chest and proceeded towards Lhundrup County. The flag came to the attention of the Public Security Bureau officials and they arrested Nyima Kelsang and detained him in the Security Bureau's detention centre. The next day three monks from the monastery, Sonam, Migmar, and Sonam Dhondup visited Nyima Kelsang in the detention centre. Security Bureau officials subsequently arrested Sonam Dhondup. Sonam Dhondup (26) is from Phenpo Lhundrup County of Phentsa township. Penpa and Migmar returned to their monastery alone.

Later on the evening of February 22, approximately 70 Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People's Armed Police (PAP)

officials came to the monastery. They raided and searched Sonam Dhondup's room and found a poster, which read "Chinese quit Tibet". After finding the poster, the officials ordered Sonam Dhondup's roommates and disciple to bring them any document. In the process, one of the monks was severely beaten by the police. The other monks were infuriated and they began to protest against the officials by throwing stones at them. In retaliation, the officials used tear gas and opened fire on the protesting monks. For several minutes the monks were unable to could not open their eyes because of the effect of tear gas. That evening the police force returned to the County.

On February 28 1995, the PAP and PSB returned to the monastery with Chinese "workteam" members in three separate military trucks. When they reached the monastery, the armed police surrounded it. They conveyed a meeting for all the monks and announced the launch of re-education campaign in the monastery beginning that day. A number of groups each comprising of ten monks were formed. A leader was appointed in each group and the campaign started. By evening, eight monks including Penpa (34) (the chant master) had been arrested and were detained in PSB County detention centre. The work team officials had searched Penpa's room and found a Tibetan national flag.

On March 5 1995 six more monks were

arrested on charges of possessing a Tibetan national flag, distributing papers and opposing the work team. They were taken to the County detention centre where they were kept for one day. The monks were then shifted to Seitru prison. On the way to Seitru, the monk's hands were tied at their backs, and they were severely hit by police. When Penpa pleaded to the police to loosen his handcuffs, they hit him on the neck, almost rendering him unconscious. The monks were incarcerated for four months and for the first three months they were kept in separate cells.

In July 1995, Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa formally sentenced Sonam Dhondup to 12 years imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for a further five years. Tashi Loyak was sentenced to five years imprisonment and deprived him of political rights for two years. Tsewang Sonam received four years imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for two years while Penpa was sentenced to three years and denied political rights for one year. After a few days, the monks were transferred to Drapchi prison's fifth unit. In Drapchi they were routinely forced to do exercise and study the prison regulations. Occasionally, they were made to recite the prison regulations by heart. Anybody who failed to do so was severely tortured.

Penpa witnessed the death of a fellow prisoner, Sangay Tenphel in 1996. His death was caused by the poor living

conditions in the prison and the infliction of severe torture by the prison guards.

Penpa was finally released from Drapchi on February 22, 1998 after completing his prison term. After his release he was not permitted to rejoin the monastery. He was forced to remain at home doing farm work. Penpa was kept under strict surveillance and his movements were restricted. Unable to bear such conditions, he was forced to leave Tibet on November 23 1998 and reached Dharamsala on 14 January 1999.

Since the launch of this campaign about 32 monks were detained, some of them are still languishing in three separate prison and 70 monks were expelled from monastery. At present there are only about 70 monks in the monastery.

Lhakpa Wangyal is a 31 year-old former monk of Nalanda Monastery in the Phenpo County. He is from Phenpo Lhundrup County, Phayak village in Drokey township. He comes from an eight-member family with six brothers, two sisters and his parents. Lhakpa Wangyal went to village school (Mangtsuk) at the age of eight. After studying for few months he discontinued his studies due to his family problems and remains with his parents until eighteen years of age.

Lhakpa later joined the Nalanda Monastery from Phenpo area at the age of 18. During that time there were about 80 to 90 monks present in the monastery. The number of monks at Nalanda Monastery gradually increased. By 1995, there were approximately 180 monks in the monastery. At present there are only about 70 monks. Many have been expelled or imprisoned or imprisoned for political activities.

### Death of a former political prisoners

**Tenpa Phulchung a former political prisoner died at the age of 63 after a prolonged illness on November 29, 1998.**

Tenpa was an accountant in a tailoring factory co-operative in Lhasa city. He was arrested on December 15, 1987 and



Tenpa Phulchung at the age of 40

sentenced to seven years prison term for allegedly possessing posters advocating Tibetan independence. After sentencing, Tenpa Phulchung was held in the fifth division of Drapchi Prison.

On March 31 1991 two Drapchi prisoners tried to hand a letter to visiting US Ambassador, James Lilley. The letter co-trained a protest about prison conditions in Drapchi. Both prisoners were immediately taken to unlit isolation cells. On April 27 1991, fellow prisoners protested against the continued isolation of the two prisoners. Tenpa Phulchung was involved in the protest. Consequently, the two prisoners, Tenpa Phulchung and a fourth prisoner were chained by their foot hands and feet and taken to Sangyip prison. The following day, all four prisoners were transferred to Powo Tramo Labour camp in handcuffs only. There they were reportedly held in Damchu, a unit within the prison complex. Unconfirmed reports received at that time indicated that Tenpa Phulchung was held under a regime of harsh labour and was seriously weakened.

On December 15 1994, Tenpa was released after completing his prison term. On November 29, 1998 he passed away after a prolonged illness at the age of 63. He had spent most of his life dedicated to the struggle for the independence of Tibet.

### Injured Nun identified and confirmed death of another

**On May 1 and 4, 1998 a peaceful protest broke out in Drapchi prison initiated by prison inmates. Reports received since then indicated that 11 deaths occurred. However a complete list of injured has so far been unable to draw. According to a recent report a nun was identified as one of the injured and Lobsang Wangmo whose death was earlier unconfirmed was confirmed by recent arrivals from Tibet.**

Ngawang Zeden (lay name Nyichung) from Parto Nunnery was one of the injured nun during the protest in Drapchi Prison when prison guards opened fire on the protesters. Ngawang was among the group of participants who staged the peaceful protest on May 1 and 4, 1998 which resulted in the death of 11 prisoners. Ngawang is currently hospitalised in an Army hospital near Sera Monastery where it is reported that she is still critical.

Ngawang initially participated in a demonstration on February 15, 1995 along with Lobsang wangmo a nun from Lhasa Dorte Nanya nunnery and few others in Lhasa. Lobsang Wangmo is a 25 year-old from Phenpo Lhundup County and she was one of the victims of the crackdown on the protestors

Upon their arrest in 1995 for their participation in a demonstration, they were

continued on page 4



Lobsang Wangmo

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

# FOURTEEN YEARS IMPRISONMENT ON SUSPICION

Many Tibetans face arrest in Tibet without any formal charges. They are often held in detention centres for a long period of time without any legal representations and trial proceedings. Often the ones who visit India are more vulnerable to arrest. The following the story exemplifies such a case.

Phuntsok Wangdu is a 30 year-old from Taktse County in Lhasa City. He was a former monk of Gaden Monastery. As a child, he was taken care of by his grandmother. When he was eight years old, he studied in Mangstuk school for two years, then helped his parents at home.

When Phuntsok turned 14 years old, he joined the Gaden Monastery. In 1990 when work team members visited his Monastery to carry out the "patriotic re-education" campaign, 18 monks including Phuntsok were expelled from the monastery. The 18 monks had criticised the work team members and infuriated them. Moreover, they refused to be "re-educated". That same day the monks were taken to Taktse County where they were disposed off at their respective villages. The heads of the villages were specifically instructed not to allow any of them to travel freely.

Around October that same year, Phuntsok fled to India. He joined the Buddhist Dialectic school in Dharamsala, India. In 1993 during winter vacation, Phuntsok returned to Tibet to see his 90 year-old grandmother who was very dear to him.

On June 17, 1993, TAR Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers arrested Phuntsok on suspicious grounds and detained him in Sangyip Prison. No reason was provided for his arrest. In prison,

he was subjected to severe beatings and was held there for a period of six months without any legal documents relating to his arrest. During that time he faced no legal proceedings.

After six months Phuntsok was released with many conditions imposed including restrictions on his movements.

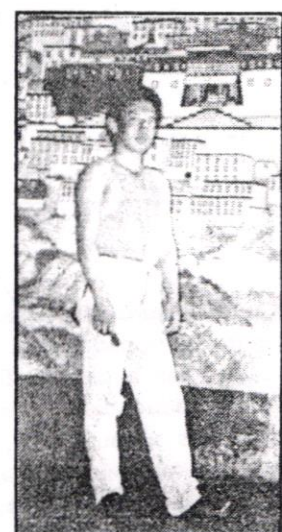
For about three years Phuntsok stayed in Lhasa. Then on the eve of 1997 Tibetan New Year, he was arrested at his house together with his brother and 19 year-old cousin. The three men were held in Gutsa Detention Centre where they were brutally beaten. Reports from unofficial sources indicated that Phuntsok's feet and arms were manacled.

In May 1997 he was singled out and taken to a police station, west of Lhasa where he was severely interrogated for a total of one month and fifteen days. He was made to confess crimes that he did not commit. In July 1997 Phuntsok was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre. Upon arriving in Gutsa he was subjected to further interrogations. On the grounds of suspicion of instigating political activities, Phuntsok was eventually charged with "espionage". He was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment in June 1998, by the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court. His brother and cousin were charged with "assisting a 'splittist clique'" and sentenced to

three years by the same court. Both men were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

Phuntsok continues to be held in Gutsa as he appealed to the PRC for a re-trial. His grounds for appeal is that he has committed no crime. It has not been confirmed whether or not his appeal was considered.

Recently unofficial reports from visitors to the prison suggest that Phuntsok has been behaving in a peculiar manner indicating increasing emotional instability.



*Phuntsok Wangdu*

immediately taken into custody by Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials. Ngawang was sentenced to five years imprisonment and Lobsang to four or five years imprisonment. They were both transferred to Drapchi Prison and were serving their prison term until the protest in 1998.

Ngawang has a sister from Michungri who spent three years for participating in a protest in 1995. As a consequence of her daughters' political activities, their mother is facing a lot of harassment.

### Forcible loan scheme

A recent arrival from Rongshar Township in Dhingri County testified about the deteriorating livelihood of Tibetans in rural

areas. Phuntsok comes from a family of six members and he is unable to make ends meet. The annual yield of 30-40 khel (one khel is equivalent to 14 Kilograms) is insufficient to feed the family, after paying the required taxes. Phuntsok complained of having to regularly borrow money from other people to buy cereals, to eat. In his village there are about 30 families and about 28 of them usually end up borrowing money from the County office to buy cereals too.

In autumn 1997, the County authorities announced an 'interest free' loan policy to farmers and nomads of Rongshar township. The authorities gave loans of 1000 to 3000 yuan to all the families from the township. Many farmers and nomadic families borrowed money from the County

Office under this programme. On November 1998, the County authorities suddenly made announcements that they would make collections of interest on the loans issued in 1997. The rate of interest was settled at 30 yuan for 100 yuan. This caught the people by surprise and no one was exempted from the collections. The interest was forcibly collected from everyone who had participated in the loan scheme. The people were ordered to pay the interest in full by November that year. Many farmers had to sell their livestock or, in some cases, farmers had to sell their roofing material to pay off the interest. Phuntsok escaped to Nepal along with 16 other people from the same village.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

13

FEBRUARY 28, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 4

## TESTIMONY OF A FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER

Chungdak (42) a former political prisoner arrived in Dharamsala in February 1999 after fleeing Tibet. Chungdak had been released from Drapchi prison 1995 after seven years imprisonment. She was politically active throughout the late 1980s, when the first major pro-independence protests commenced in Lhasa.

Originally from Lhasa District, Chungdak was a saleswoman in one of the co-operative shops in Kyire street in Barkhor.

Chungdak first participated in a pro-independence demonstration on September 27, 1987 led by 21 monks from Drepung monastery and calling for the Freedom of Tibet. The demonstration was the first of its kind since 1959. A second major demonstration occurred in Lhasa on October 1, 1987 and Chungdak participated again. She was summoned by the Kyire Public Security Bureau (PSB) on October 27 and interrogated regarding her involvement. She was then further interrogated by the Lhasa police and was released after confessing her involvement.

A year later, December 10, 1988, another demonstration was staged to mark Human Rights Day. Despite her earlier detention Chungdak again participated in the demonstration. The People's Armed Police (PAP) used force to suppress the demonstration and demonstrators were shot by Chinese authorities. Other were detained and arrested although Chungdak escaped arrest.

Chungdak continued with her unabated struggle and for three days from March 5, 1989 she participated in demonstrations that would lead to her imprisonment. At this time, just before the Chinese authorities imposed Martial Law large number of arbitrary arrests and detentions followed the demonstrators. On the night of March 7, Chungdak's house was ransacked and her belongings searched. Eight days later, she was arrested and taken to Gutsa Detention Centre where she faced intense interrogations.

When she reached Gutsa, Chungdak was handcuffed for a month in total and subjected to interrogation. Authorities questioned her about other participants of the demonstration. She was beaten throughout the interrogation.

On October 6, 1989 Chungdak was tried by the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court in secret proceedings. She apparently infuriated court authorities by voicing her own views and shouting freedom slogans throughout the proceedings. She received a sentence of seven years imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. The sentence was reportedly harsh due to her behaviour in court. Over a month after her trial, on November 17, 1989, Chungdak was transferred to Drapchi prison.

During her term at Drapchi Prison, Chungdak remained politically active. In 1992, she was involved in a protest with the political prisoners of the 3rd unit (formerly the female political prisoners unit). The women had refused to wear the prison uniform in recognition of Tibetan New Year and were all beaten for breaching the prison rules. During the beating, Chungdak was struck on her face with an electric baton by one of the prison guards. Prison officials took her to Outridu prison camp where she was kept for eight days before being transferred back to Drapchi (political prisoners are often separated after involvement in political activities in prison). In Outridu, Chungdak was handcuffed and beaten.

Her political actions continued and she was reportedly beaten and placed in



Chungdak in exile

solitary confinement for almost a month for refusing to sing a socialist song in prison.

Chungdak was finally released at the end of her prison term in March 1995 after serving six years. She was reportedly released a year earlier due to international pressure. She stayed in Lhasa for three years, working in a shop. However, she was constantly harassed by PSB officials and security police after her release. These authorities frequently visited her home to interrogate her on suspicion of political involvement. Like many other former political prisoners, she became a suspect during any political unrest in the area and her statements and fingerprints were collected to monitor her movements.

Chungdak left her job and decided to escape from Lhasa to be free from the constant police harassment.

She paid 20,000 Nepali rupees [US\$XX] to a guide to travel from Lhasa to Nepal and finally onto India. She left Lhasa on January 14, 1999 and reached Nepal six days later.

## Press statement from TCHRD

TCHRD's response to US Senate's call for resolution at the United Nations on China's human rights abuses

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) supports the US Senate's overwhelming majority vote to urge President Clinton to sponsor a resolution which condemns China's human rights violations at the United Nations. The resolution is proposed to be tabled this month at a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva. A resolution, which includes human rights violations against the Tibetan people, has not been tabled by Commission members since 1997. The US Senate passed a 99-0 vote on February 26, 1999 in favour of condemning China for its human rights abuses.

"We welcome any move from the US government to bring Tibet into UN discussions," says Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. "The government of China has obligations to adhere to United Nations Conventions relating to human rights. However, they continue to abuse the rights of the Tibetan people in many areas. The Chinese government needs to realise the concern at an international level and put a stop to these abuses. We sincerely hope President Clinton will agree to his Senate's proposal."

A resolution on China's human rights violations was last tabled at the meeting of the Commission in 1997 by the Danish government. However, it did not reach the discussion stage, which requires a majority vote from the Commission. In 1998, an attempt by the US Congress to table a resolution was blocked by President Clinton. No other attempt was made by member states to table a resolution.

The issue of self-determination of the Tibetan people has only been raised three times at the United Nations General Assembly, and last discussed 34 years ago, in 1965. It was previously discussed in 1961 and 1959.

## Work Team operation continues

Nuns from Rating Samtenling nunnery in Phenpo County have been subjected to a "re-education" campaign since July 1998. Information has just been received by TCHRD this February from a former nun of Rating Samtenling.

The source said government "work team" officials from Lhasa City and Phenpo County were sent into the nunnery last July. It is believed that over 80 nuns have been affected by the work-team entry. They were either forced to live under restrictions or have been expelled.

During their occupation of the nunnery, the officials searched each nun's quarters and stipulated political pledges to be signed and complied by the nuns. These pledges included denouncing His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, and to accept that Tibet is a part of China - referred to as the "unity of the motherland". All the nuns vehemently refused to denounce the Dalai Lama, but would not directly comment on Tibet's independence.

The "work-team" officials rebuked the nuns and told them they were ignorant of the Chinese law. The nuns were allowed only restricted contact with their family members and were not allowed to return home.

The nuns refusal to sign a pledge denouncing the Dalai Lama and to accept the "unity of the motherland", resulted in a two month extension of the re-education sessions where the "work-team" carried out more in-depth search operations in the nuns' quarters. Relatives of the nuns were also searched.

Consequently 80 nuns who had refused to comply with the instructions were subjected to restrictions. They were forbidden from attending any religious sessions and were banned from offering religious services to outsiders.

Fourteen nuns were instantly expelled from the nunnery by the "work-team". 105 nuns now remain at the nunnery.

The "re-education" of the nunnery by government-appointed "work-teams" is part of a campaign instigated in 1996 by the Chinese authorities, called 'Strike

Hard'. The campaign is predominately focused at religious institutions. Rating Samtenling nunnery is the largest nunnery founded by Tsongkhapa Chenpo, the founder of the Buddhist Gelugpa tradition.

## Control in Press

A former Tibetan journalist who worked for a major newspaper in Qinghai Province has reported on her experience under Chinese rule.

Chakmo Tso (30) from Tsonub Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture was a journalist for the Tsongon Province daily newspaper. The paper is aimed at Tibetan nationals from the six regions of Qinghai Province. The daily version of the paper is printed only in Chinese language.

Chakmo Tso worked on the Tibetan section of the paper, which is a direct translation of the Chinese newspaper and produced every second day. Of the 500 staff on the paper, 38 are Tibetans, who all work on the Tibetan editorial section.

The newspaper was established over 40 years ago and is reportedly controlled by the government, which denies free editorial. Information on Tibetan farmers and nomads in the area is restricted and cannot be used for circulation, while editorial reports must begin by praising the Chinese government. Chakmo Tso said that stories which endorse the Chinese occupation of Tibet are well received. She said that stories are often concealed from the public.

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## 15 YEAR SENTENCE FOR EXERCISING RIGHTS

**Jigme Gyatso is serving 15 years for his involvement in political activities. Born in Vartha village, Kansu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Kansu Province, he is an only child and his father was killed in 1958 by the People's Liberation Army. His mother also died in 1997. Jigme is currently held in Drapchi Prison.**

In the mid-1980s, Jigme briefly visited India to receive a religious initiation. Upon his return to Tibet in 1987, he joined Gaden Monastery where he became involved in pro-independence activities. He distributed independence leaflets and pasted posters on the walls around Gaden Monastery and nearby Lhasa City.

Between 1988 and 1989, Jigme was the leader of a secret youth organisation named the "Association of Tibetan Freedom Movement". He was able to distribute freedom leaflets to visitors at the monastery as he worked in the administrative section.

In 1992, Jigme organised one of the major demonstrations that took place in Lhasa. Many of the demonstrators were arrested and detained by the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and the officials of the anti-riot department (Tib: Ngandon Nyentok Rukhak). Jigme was not arrested at that time although, officials of PSB suspected he was involved and kept him under strict surveillance. His movements were scrutinised. Unable to bear such inspection, Jigme felt compelled to leave the monastery.

A fellow member of the Association, Samdup Tsering, was arrested on July 2, 1993 for his involvement in political activities. At that time, an arrest warrant was issued for Jigme Gyatso and another member of the Association, Jamyang Tsultrim, castigating them as "wanted splittists". The authorities searched both men's residences. Samdup Tsering was later charged with inciting counterrevolutionary propaganda. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment.

The authorities continued to search for Jigme Gyatso until 1996. Jigme's friends were summoned and questioned about his whereabouts. They were

reportedly tortured when the officials tried to extract information about him.

At about 6.30pm on March 30, 1996 Jigme was in Tsongla Yangzom restaurant, located in front of the Jokhang temple in Lhasa when he was surrounded by People's Armed Police (PAP) and PSB officials. Jamyang Tsultrim, a friend of Jigme, owned the restaurant where the association would meet. The authorities closed down the restaurant after discovering that the Association used it as a meeting venue.

After his arrest, Jigme was immediately taken to anti-riot department. The department is on the same road as Drapchi prison. Jigme was detained there for one day and one night. Throughout that time he was ill treated and tortured while being interrogated. The following day, Jigme was taken to Gutsa Detention Centre and detained there for one year, until March 1997.

For the first six months in the detention centre, Jigme was put into "interrogation cell" where he was interrogated and tortured for passing a written message to his friend Gonpo Tseten. He spent the remaining six months with his hands and legs manacled. His case was also broadcasted over the radio station "Voice of America" which resulted in him being subjected to further torture and ill treatment.

Jigme Gyatso was formally tried in May 1997. He refused any legal representation as he felt it was futile. During the trial, Jigme accepted all the charges stated against him. The trial court asked him if he regretted his deeds, he replied "No, My acts are peaceful and non-violent". He also pleaded that all the charges and penalties imposed on his friends should be transferred to him. He argued that

his friends were ignorant and that they were not responsible for anything.

Jigme was finally sentenced to 15 years imprisonment on charges of disseminating counterrevolutionary propaganda; incitement and having illegally formed the organisation called "Association of Tibetan Freedom Movement". His friends were each sentenced to five years imprisonment. Their names are Dargay (28) from Meldro Gyama, Yeshe (30) from Tsang, Lobsang Wosel (30) and Tseten both from Meldro. Tseten and Lobsang Wosel were arrested on December 18, 1996 and Dargay and Yeshe were arrested on December 25, 1996.

Three months after sentencing, Jigme Gyatso and three of his friends were transferred to Drapchi prison. In October 1998, a group of Security officials from Kansu came to Jigme's cell. They held Jigme, banged him against the wall and then hit him with a beer bottle as punishment for his involvement in political activities in his home town in Kansu. The officials left Jigme unconscious from the beatings. They later took him to an unknown place for nine days during which he continued to be severely beaten and tortured.

Jigme was later returned to Drapchi prison where his visitation rights have been entirely denied. According to a source, who recently visited Drapchi, Jigme's head was covered with bandage, and that he has acquired jaundice. After the protests in Drapchi prison in May 1998, Jigme was again placed in solitary confinement. His current health condition is a serious concern to his friends.

In September 1998, one of the member of the Association Lobsang Wosel, was released from prison on medical parole. The others continue to remain in detention.

## Accounts from Tourists who visited Tibet

This is an incident of a solo protest witnessed by at least two Western tourists. The protester was immediately detained by police. No further information about the whereabouts of the man has been received.

In an unconfirmed report from a traveller to Tibet, a short solo demonstration took place outside the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa on November 29, 1998 at 4p.m. Our source testified that an elderly man shouted pro-independence slogans: "Free Tibet".

Two Chinese policemen were present but, did not immediately arrest him because Western tourists were watching. However, the police followed the elderly man as he continued to shout slogans around the temple. A tourists followed the protestor and the policeman. When they reached the police station, the two

policemen rushed up from behind the man and pushed him inside. Our source and his friend followed the men and stood in the doorway of the police station in an effort to deter from inflicting immediate illtreatment on the man. A higher ranking official immediately ordered that the man be transferred to another place. He was led past our source and his companion, across the Jokhang Square. The man reportedly did not resist the policemen. While leading him, one of the policemen violently twisted the old man's arm across his back, forcing him to bend forward while

he walked. Our source's friend instinctively grabbed the policeman's arm and pulled it away. The old man fell to the ground, which infuriated the policeman. The policeman yelled some words in Tibetan to the tourists while an elderly Tibetan woman pleaded with the policeman to release the old man. In the meantime, a large crowd had gathered around and more police came running to the scene. One of them pulled the old man away from the crowd and led him back to the police station. The crowd was told to disperse.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

17  
*update*

MARCH 15, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 5

## ATMOSPHERE OF "MARTIAL LAW" IN LHASA ON 5 AND 10 MARCH 1999

From the Tibetan New Year, on February 17, 1999 until the day of the 40th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising on March 10, 1999 severe restrictions were imposed on Tibetans living in Lhasa. Public Security Bureau officials, People's Armed Police and local police stations in Lhasa were issued with emergency orders placing them on alert for 5 March, the 10 year anniversary of the 1989 Tibetan demonstrations in Lhasa, and March 10 1999.

The authorities deployed a large number of armed officials in all "politically sensitive" areas in Lhasa to patrol the areas day and night.

"We have to be additionally cautious in terms of their [Tibetans] movements and activities of those who do not accept the great motherland", read the order issued to all the sections of the Public Security Bureau. The official circular was also sent to all educational institutes and government departments. Members of the institutes and departments were ordered to remain in their offices during both days. Any member who wished to travel was required to register his or her name with the local committee.

On March 5 1999, Chinese authorities deployed armed personnel from Public Security Bureau People's Armed Police and local security wings in all major congregation arenas, including the Barkhor and the area around Tsuklagkhang (Jokang, the central temple in Lhasa). The officers were assigned to continuously patrol the areas during the anniversary period. Prohibitory orders were proclaimed banning Lhasa residents from congregating and making it illegal

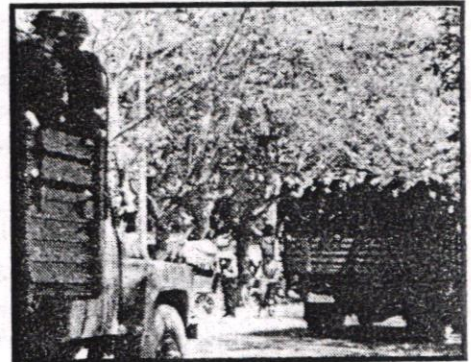
for two or more people to assemble in a public place for political reasons.

In spite of the restrictions, on March 5 1999 two young monks defied the authorities and called out from a crowd in the Barkhor that "Tibet is Independent". After a few minutes both monks were arrested by security officials and taken to a local police station near the Tsuklagkhang. According to witnesses, the monks were severely beaten at the police station.

Ten minutes later, an announcement was made through loud speakers installed in Tsuklagkhang stating that the "people are ordered to proceed in their own way and gathering at Tsuklagkhang is strictly prohibited". The announcer continued, speaking both in Chinese and Tibetan, and threatened that "public assembly and shouting are also prohibited and if anyone violates this instruction he shall face political reprisal and scrutiny".

On March 10 1999, the 40th anniversary of Tibetan Uprising Day, at approximately 4 am in the morning, armed police were sent to the Barkhor and all other major streets of Lhasa. Since the beginning of 1999, Chinese authorities have intensified police control in Lhasa through a strong show of forces and by creating a "martial law"-like situation. According to witnesses, the increased police presence has intimidated Tibetan people living in Lhasa.

1999 is a critical year for the Chinese in Tibet, and two important historical events will be 'celebrated'. First, 1999 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Communist government in China. Secondly, China will host the National



Chinese military convoy in Lhasa, October 1990

Minorities Sports Meet in Lhasa in September of 1999.

The authorities are determined to prevent any potentially embarrassing political activities from occurring during the events. They have directed all security wings to be alert and precautionary measures have been set up in and around Lhasa city.

The National Minorities Sports Meet will be the first-ever major, national event held in Lhasa. Authorities are expecting a large number of people from outside Lhasa to attend the event.

In February, the Central government deployed 200 specially-trained security personnel in Lhasa in an effort to crush any untoward incidents during the 50th anniversary celebration and the Sports Meet. The trained personnel are currently training and advising the different local security wings in Lhasa, preparing them to handle riots or any public disturbances.

For the upcoming events, the Chinese authorities have gone to great lengths to prepare all security measures beforehand, in order to ensure their success and to project a positive image.

## Farm Fields Confiscated for Building a Plastic Factory

Since 1997 the livelihood of 20 families in Cherigyab township has been affected by a large Chinese development project. Much of their land has been confiscated by the Chinese government so that a plastic factory could be built in their fertile valley. The people in Cherigyab township are mostly farmers that depend on the cultivation of their land to survive. Their primary crop is barley, which serves as payment for government tax quotas as well as for their own food. Now, with up to half of their land confiscated, many of these families cannot grow enough barley to pay the government quotas and feed themselves.

One farmer who wished to remain anonymous described his ordeal. He said that before 'development' his family depended on their 500 square meter plot of land to grow enough barley for them to subsist. On this land they grew about 6000 kg of grain every year. They were required to sell 1500kg of this to the government. In 1995 the construction of a governmental school siphoned off 125 square meters of their holdings. They were given no compensation for this land, and to their dismay, their tax quota was actually increased the following year to 2000kg. Two years later, when work on the plastic factory began, an additional 125 square meters of their land were confiscated by officials. With their fields now half their original size, the farmer says that his family does not have enough land to cultivate the amount of barley required for both the government quota and their own needs. In desperation they have had to resort to farming on adjacent land that does not belong to them.

The farmer concludes that his family's situation would be a little better if they could sell their grain at a fair market price rather than to the government. The portion of the crop allocated for the government is bought at a price far below market value. In addition, the money that the government pays for the quota is only allowed to be used by farmers to buy chemical fertilizer which the government sells. This now leaves his family with little

food, and no money to buy more if there is a bad crop year.

New development projects by the Chinese government, such as the plastic factory, often intrude on agricultural areas, making situations like the one above all too common. Many Tibetan farmers now have to search for ways to make ends meet on partitioned land.

## Arrested for religious gathering

Since 1988 elderly Tibetans in Lhasa have gathered around Jokhang temple in Sung Choe Ra. This assembly which has no political implications grew in number as more elderly Tibetans started to join. However, since mid-1998 the People's Armed Police (PAP), Public Security Bureau (PSB) and Intelligence Bureau of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) have started to harass the assemblage and disrupt prayer service.

The people are subjected to strict surveillance whereby about 80 elderly people from the group have been taken for interrogation. Questions such as What are your intentions? Why do you gather? are asked. This has gravely hampered the prayer ceremony. The government has taken this issue seriously by drawing suspicion on the prayers. A few of the participants were also arrested and detained on August 20, 1998. Their whereabouts remain unknown even today. Ama Lhundup Wangmo (whose case was already mentioned in the November 30, 1998 Human Rights Update), from Lhasa Tsemonling is one of those arrested. Others include Ama Tsepak from Lhasa Shol and Pa Tashi from Lhasa Chingu. In November 1998, another business woman, approximately 40 years old whose identity remains unknown was also arrested in addition to few others whose names are not available. The 80 people implicated were made to put their thumbprints on documents which state they have no dealings with political matters and that they gather purely for religious reasons. Moreover, the fact that most of them were elderly people meant that they were not subjected to detention. However, the prayer ceremony continues to be controlled and strictly observed.

## Appeal to member states of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

TCHRD has sent an appeal to each member state of the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) to plead for a resolution on Tibet to be raised at its meetings during the Commission in Geneva, Switzerland. The UNHRC will be sitting from March 22 to April 30 to discuss world-wide human rights violations.

The issue of People's Republic of China's (PRC) violations of human rights in Tibet was last tabled in 1997 by the Danish government. However, it did not obtain the two-thirds majority vote with the Committee to pass the resolution which would have censured PRC for its human rights violations. This year, the US Senate and Congress have both unanimously voted in favour of raising a resolution regarding PRC's human rights violations although the ultimate decision lies with President Clinton. As yet, no other member state has come forward to table a resolution.

Just few days before the Commission is due to sit, the PRC has released three dissidents. This is possibly due to the mounting pressure on the PRC to better the human rights situation. The PRC's moves to improve human rights or sign certain international instruments is often a symbolic gesture. These are often well-timed to influence member state's policy on PRC.

The Prime Minister, Mr Zhu Rongji was quoted admitting to the imperfect human rights record in China and that he himself was impatient for change on March 15, 1999.

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**We would like to thank Mr. Knut Traisbach for sponsoring this issue of the Human Rights Update and also for his significant contribution at the Centre while he was a volunteer.**

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## SENTENCE INCREASED FOR DEFYING PRISON RULES

Jigme Yangchen is a 31 year-old nun currently held in Drapchi Prison. She is reportedly in a precarious health condition. Arrested with five other nuns for staging a peaceful demonstration in the Barkhor in Lhasa, Jigme was sentenced to a seven-year prison term in 1991. On August 28, 1990, the six nuns, all from Shugseb Nunnery, shouted slogans such as 'Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama', 'Free Tibet' and 'Chinese quit Tibet' on the streets of the Barkhor. The six nuns were Woesser Choekyi (24), Rinzin Choekyi (29), Penpa Wangmo (24), Palden Choedon (24), Jigme Dickyi (24) and Jigme Yangchen (23). They were immediately arrested by the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and taken to a detention centre located east of Lhasa. There the nuns were harshly beaten by the authorities in charge and routinely interrogated. During each interrogation period, the nuns faced humiliation, beatings and punishment. They were constantly harassed by the officials who asked them the same question repeatedly while beating them. Jigme suffered severe physical injuries as a result of this treatment. In January 1991, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court passed her prison sentence. She was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and a further two years deprivation of political rights. A few months later in March, she was transferred to Drapchi Prison. In Drapchi, Jigme was made to perform prison duties such as processing wool and working in



Jigme Yangchen first from left

the vegetable fields.

In October 1993, while still in prison, Jigme participated in a clandestine activity of recording songs and messages onto a tape smuggled into the prison. The recording expressed devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, messages to relatives, friends and supporters of Tibet. The prison authorities discovered this activity. Jigme, along with the other 13 nuns involved, suffered greatly for it. All the nuns faced additional prison terms. Jigme's sentence was increased by five years, thus totalling 12 years.

During the Tibetan new year (Tibetan: Losar) in 1992 which coincided with March 10, Tibetan National Uprising Day, Jigme and approximately 23 other nuns blatantly defied prison rules and refused to wear prison uniforms. Reports received at that time indicated that 50-60 members of the People's Armed Police (PAP) beat the nuns continuously for three days. The nuns were tied with ropes, beaten with rods and belts

and jolted with cattle prods. They were all seriously injured and some sustained permanent impairment as a result. Jigme is reported to be in an extremely poor health condition. She is literally reduced to skin and bone and is very pale. She suffers from various internal ailments due to the numerous beatings she has received from prison officials during interrogations. Recent reports state that Jigme is restricted from receiving visitors. This indicates that she may have been involved in the protest that took place in May 1998 in Drapchi Prison and is being punished with the ban on visitors as a result, although this has not yet been corroborated.

Born in Kyimshe township in Lhoka Gongkar, Jigme stayed at home with her parents until she was 17 years old. In 1987, Jigme joined Shugseb Nunnery in Chushul County, TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) and was there until her involvement in the demonstration in August 1990.

### Senior monk beaten to death

Sometime in July - August 1997 a re-education programme was conducted by 20 members of the officials from Justice department (Ch: sai fa ting) team headed by an official called Khampa Chodrak in Sungrabling Monastery. He has a reputation for being very harsh and high handed.

The head lama of the monastery, Geshe Choephel was instructed to order his students to follow the re-education program, but he refused. After one particularly intensive four-day period of re-education, he was taken back to his home in Kyimshe village in Lhoka Region and severely beaten by the police. According to another source, he was

actually taken back to the police station at Kyimshe and beaten there. He was detained in the police station for 15 days. He became very sick after this and died on September 24, 1998 as a result of these injuries. He was about 71 years old.

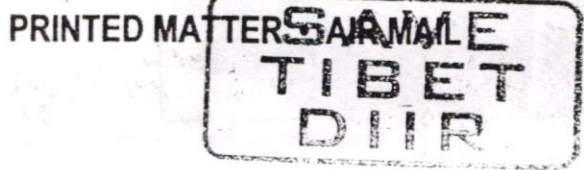
People who were witnesses at the sky burial have said his finger bones were broken.

After a search by the police in the residence of Geshe Choephel, a letter from Desi Rinpoche (who is currently residing in India) and his personal seal were found in his room. There were originally 30 monks in the monastery, and 29 were sent away after the re-education programme. The one who is still in the

monastery is Choenze or Choenyi or Gedun Dundag. There were also two local lay persons, Lungtrag and Gyatso Yonten.

Sungrabling monastery is located in Gongkar county, a village in Drib valley, Lhoka region, South East of Lhasa. It is a branch of Drepung Loseling College.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

# update

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MARCH 31, 1999 TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY — VOLUME IV NUMBER 6

## DEATH OF UNRELENTING FREEDOM ACTIVIST

In late 1998, one of Tibet's most enduring political activists, Hor Lobsang Tsundue died in Drepung Monastery, Lhasa. Released from prison at the age of 86 years, he was one of the oldest and longest serving political prisoners in Tibet. He had spent nearly 22 years, in total, behind bars.

Hor Lobsang was from Nagchu region and former monk of Drepung monastery. At the time of his death he was 88 years old. At seven years of age he left his hometown and joined Drepung Monastery. He remained there until 1960. In 1960 Hor Lobsang tried to escape to India but was arrested by the army and detained in the monastery for 15 days. In 1965 the Chinese government launched a 'three points' education campaign in the monastery, in an effort to force the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama.

He was arrested in 1965 and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in Yitru du Prison, Lhasa. While in detention authorities tried to force Hor Lobsang to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. His vehement refusal to comply led to severe torture. Hor Lobsang never complied with any of the Chinese demands to reject the Dalai Lama.

In 1971 the Chinese authorities renewed their campaign in the prison. Hor Lobsang's continuous refusal to comply with the Chinese authorities' demands resulted in an increase in his sentence of another ten years. During this time his physical condition became very weak. In 1979, he was transferred to Outridu Prison, and was finally released in the late 1980. Upon his release Hor Lobsang rejoined Drepung Monastery.

In 1988, during the time when the Chinese officials were preparing for Lhasa's Monlam Festival, Hor Lobsang discouraged the people from joining the Festival. He argued that the Chinese were

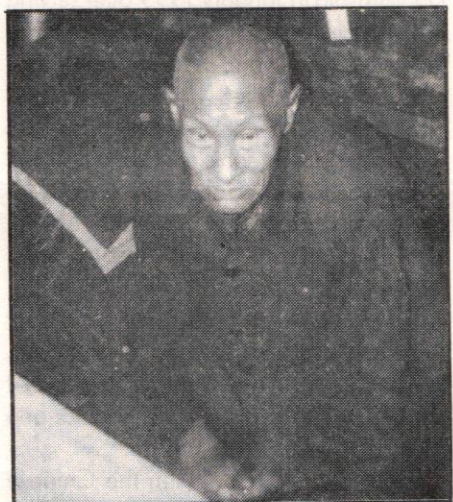
deliberately using the Monlam festival to project an impression of religious freedom in Tibet and that in reality there was no such freedom in Tibet.

On March 20, 1988 after the Chinese authorities learned about his action, Hor Lobsang was arrested by the TAR Security officials and detained in the TAR Public Security department. While in detention Hor Lobsang was interrogated by PSB officials. When the officials asked him about his involvement in the September 27, 1987 pro-independence demonstrations which involved 21 Drepung monks, he proudly said the 1987 demonstration was a great political act by the monks, and therefore not a crime.

In 1990 Hor Lobsang joined the Drepung Monastery. In the early 1990, just after the Tibetan New Year, Monlam Festival was held in Drepung Monastery. At that time the Chinese official work team visited the monastery.

During a work team visit, while religious debate was going on, Hor Lobsang raised his voice calling for "His Holiness the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet", and that "Tibet should be freed immediately". After few minutes he was arrested by the work team and taken to Gutsa Prison. While in prison he was repeatedly tortured. He refused to reform. His determination is still regarded among most of his fellows inmates, including non-political prisoners. Many of prisoners and ex-prisoners have talked about his bravery.

In May 1990, Hor Lobsang was formally sentenced by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa to six years imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for a further two years. He said that he would never regret his activities. He was transferred to Drapchi and while preparing for the transfer, he thanked the prison officials for relocating him as he had many like-minded friends in



Hor Lobsang Tsundue

Drapchi.

While in Drapchi he continued to be tortured. Former inmates claimed that Hor Lobsang suffered immensely from torture in the prison, but his spirit never wavered during the independence struggle. He was kept in solitary confinement more than five times, once for more than six weeks.

In 1991, Hor Lobsang was hit hard on his back with rifle butts by a PAP official. As a result he fell unconscious. This was just one of the many such incidents. He was released from prison in 1996, and he joined Drepung Monastery. Although he was officially expelled from the monastery, he was still looked after by his friends there.

In total Hor Lobsang served 21 years and nine months in prison. Although he spent so many years in prison calling for Tibetan independence, his determination and courage remained unshakable. His high spirits remained until his death in late 1998 in Drepung Monastery. Hor Lobsang's contribution to Tibetan independence and the suffering that he endured was immeasurable.

## PERSISTENT POLITICAL ACTIVISTS



Jamyang Dhondup

Jamyang Dhondup arrived in Dharamsala in January 1999 after serving five years in Ngapa Prison. It was then that he saw his five year-old son for the first time and was reunited with his wife. He fled Tibet to escape the intolerable restrictions placed on him after his release.

Jamyang Dhondup (36) is from Ya Dzung village, Cho Tsang township, Lithang county, Kartse Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. Jamyang is the oldest with three sisters and four brothers. His family is semi-nomadic, farming the land and rearing livestock. At the age of 14, he attended school for one month.

In the late 1960s, when the Chinese commune system of farming was at its peak, Jamyang was forced to work on a commune. This work prevented him from continuing his studies. Prior to the 1949 Chinese invasion, Jamyang's grand parents belonged to a higher social class. This made Jamyang an even bigger target for communist equalisation. His grandfather, Gonpo Tsering, was arrested and detained in Lithang Prison for several years, solely because of his social status. After his release, his health was severely affected due to the beatings he received while in prison. For some years Gonpo continued to suffer in the Communist struggle sessions and was later classified as a Black-Hat (meaning a threat to the unity of China). His family believes that the continued harassment by the authorities eventually led to Gonpo's premature death.

In 1978, when the Chinese authorities announced the implementation of religious freedom in Tibet, Jamyang, at the age of 18, joined Lithang Monastery. After seven years, at the age of 25, Jamyang left the monastery. He began to carry out political

activities from 1989, inspired by listening to cassettes of H.H. the Dalai Lama. On the cassettes, His Holiness spoke about the forceful occupation of Tibet and the political repression of the Tibetan people. After hearing the cassettes, Jamyang went to Lhasa where his political awareness grew. He felt even more encouraged to get involved in political activities.

During the 1991 Lithang Monlam festival, Jamyang, together with his friends Shulu (28) and Chomphel (29) distributed leaflets in the presence of some 2000 monks and hundreds of lay people in Lithang Monastery. The leaflets read "Tibetan and Chinese are different"; "Tibet is a country with a history"; "China has illegally occupied Tibet"; "Many of the Tibetans have died of starvation", and "Many families were separated as a direct result of Chinese rule".

On August 2, 1992, Jamyang and two other men from Lithang, Ta-Lobsang and Ngawang Chomphel wrote a leaflet of about 1000 words reading "Chinese are like poisonous snakes"; "Tibet is independent"; "Chinese are deceiving us", "Tibetans have nowhere to go"; "We Tibetans have to unite", and so on. They distributed the leaflets during the anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) held in the Lithang horse racing arena. Although Chomphel and Jamyang were not arrested at the time, they feared their imminent arrest, so the men left for India in early 1993, as part of a larger group. Upon reaching the airport near Sher Kumbu, twenty members of the group were arrested by the Nepali Police and handed over to the Chinese border security personnel at Dram. Jamyang was captured and detained in Dram for seven days. He was then taken to Shigatse. After one day in Shigatse, he was released. Ngawang Chomphel successfully escaped into exile in India. Jamyang, however, was forced to return to Lithang.

Ta-Lobsang and Jamyang again prepared leaflets on July 29, 1993, but were unable to distribute them. On July 30, 1993, Chomphel returned to Tibet from India. The group of three then proposed to launch a major protest throughout many of the counties in

Lithang. The People's Armed Police became aware of this plan. As a consequence, when Jamyang returned home from a day of field work, he was told by his mother that the police had come to the house to question him. He immediately headed to Chomphel's house which was about 40 km from his home. They discussed their options and finally decided not to flee, but to voluntarily present themselves before the police. On August 19, 1993, Jamyang along with his cousin Gyatso, went to the local police station. Jamyang and Ngawang Chomphel were arrested on the same day. Over the following two days, most of Jamyang's other friends were arrested, including Ta Lobsang (28), Lo-Drakpa (28) a statue maker, Tsundue (44) a businessman, Chomphel (27) and A-Ngag (35) a musician. All of the men are from Lithang area. They were detained in Lithang Detention Centre by the Public Security Bureau officials.

For the first few days in detention, Jamyang was interrogated and beaten. Electric cattle prods were jammed against his body by nine police officers. During the interrogation the police officers asked him questions such as: "Who led you to do such acts?", "Who are your companions?" and "For what reasons have you decided to do these activities?" He was kept for four days with his legs and hands manacled. As a direct result of this treatment, he fell unconscious for four days in total, and was detained for four months in Lithang Detention Centre, during which time he was kept in solitary confinement. Later, Jamyang, Gyatso, A-Ngag and Ta-Lobsang, were transferred to Kartse Detention Centre in late December 1993.

Jamyang's friend and fellow prisoner, La-thak, died in the Lithang Detention Centre from excessive beatings by prison guards. Lithang Detention Centre gave official the cause of death as suicide.

In Kartse Detention Centre, Jamyang and the other activists were not beaten as regularly, but suffered from poor nutrition. They were provided with half a steamed bun in the mornings, half a plate of rice during lunch and diluted rice noodle soup in the evening. Due to this poor diet, Jamyang's hair colour turned yellowish. Throughout his time in Kartse, he was

cont. on page 4

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

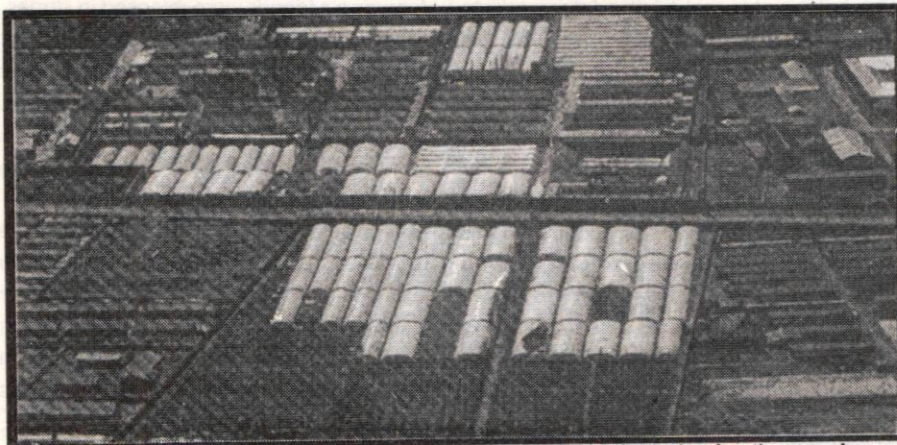
## NGAWANG'S HARD FALL IN LIFE

Ngawang Nordon is currently in Drapchi Prison. She walks with a limp because working in the prison greenhouse, she once fainted and hit a rock as she fell. Ngawang is serving a seven-year prison term that began in 1992 and is due for release this year if she stays out of trouble with prison officials.

On May 24, 1992 Ngawang and five fellow nuns from Nya Samdrup Doma Lhakang Nunnery went to Lhasa. At around 11 am, they initiated a peaceful demonstration in the Barkhor. They started shouting slogans like "Tibet is a free country", "Chinese get out of Tibet" and "Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". The five other nuns were Ngawang Phudron (27); Ngawang Tsamdrol (27); Ngawang Lochoe (23); Ngawang Choekey (28), and Ngawang Tendrol (23).

Immediately after their demonstration started, officials from the anti-riot department of the Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) arrested them. They were beaten as they were forced into the PSB vehicle. The nuns were taken to the nearest detention centre at Gutsa. The moment they reached Gutsa, they were separated and each nun was put in a different cell. Each nun was subjected to intensive interrogation separately. When the nuns did not give the interrogators the responses they wanted, they received further beatings.

Finally, in November 1992, Ngawang Nordon was sentenced to seven years imprisonment by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court.



Drapchi Prison showing the greenhouses

She and five other nuns were charged with "instigating counterrevolutionary activities and propaganda". Ngawang was also deprived of her political rights for a further two years.

In February 1993, she and her companions were transferred to Drapchi Prison. In Drapchi, Ngawang was made to work in the prison greenhouse. At Drapchi, she continued to receive beatings from the prison guards over trivial matters. In June 1993, the combination of the intense heat under the plastic-covered roof of the greenhouse and injury from the earlier beatings, caused Ngawang to collapse. When she fell her leg hit a hard rock. The next morning she could not lift her leg to walk. Ngawang was taken to the hospital where she was told that she had high blood pressure. Nothing was done to follow-up her treatment. Today Ngawang walks with a limp.

In May 1997 when protests broke out in Drapchi Prison, there were unconfirmed reports that Ngawang was one of the

participants. If not, Ngawang should be released this year after the completion of her prison term.

Ngawang Nordon is 30 years old from Nyen township, Toelung Dechen County. As a child she helped her parents with the farm work. She is the youngest of nine children. Ngawang joined Nya Samdrup Dolma Lhakhang Nunnery when she was 18 years old.

### CORRECTION

In our March 15, 1999 Human Rights Update (Volume IV, No. 5) we reported on Jigme Yangchen's increased prison sentence in Drapchi. In the photograph accompanying the report, we identified Jigme Yangchen as the first on the left (of the group of five women). Jigme Yangchen is second from the left in this photograph. We apologise for the error.

cont. from page 2

constantly being forced to confess his crimes and to reform. He was kept in solitary confinement in Kartse for a total of 14 months.

In September 1994, the group was formally sentenced by the Intermediate People's Court of Kartse Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Jamyang Dhondup was sentenced to five years imprisonment and a further three years' deprivation of political rights. Ngawang Chomphel was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and denial of political rights for five additional years. Ta Lobsang received a five year prison term and three years' deprivation of political rights.

Subsequently, they were all transferred to the Ngaba Prison, Mao County (Nga-

Cheyon ), Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. In the prison at that time, there were about 2000 prisoners, 1600 of which were Tibetans, including approximately 10 Tibetan political prisoners. The prisoners were assigned work detail such as breaking rocks, making bricks, and carpentry. Jamyang's friends were released in stages. A-Nggg and Tsundue were released after eight months of detention, and Chomphel and Lo-Drakpa after four months. Ta-Lobsang was released along with Jamyang, after serving a five-year prison term.

Ngaba Prison has two complexes; one is the main complex and the other a subsidiary prison which is located outside of the main complex. Jamyang was imprisoned in the main complex, which has four units. Jamyang remained in this

prison for three years and ten months. While in prison, his visitation rights were denied. In any event, the distance between his hometown and the prison was about four days by vehicle, which made visits difficult even if they had been allowed. Consequently, Jamyang did not see his son or his wife for the entire time he was in prison. He found out his wife was pregnant with their son just two months after his arrest.

After Jamyang's release from the prison, his movements were strictly monitored and all his activities were scrutinised. Unable to bear this intolerable situation, he felt compelled to leave for India. He was then reunited with his wife and was able to see his son for the first time.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

update

APRIL 15, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 7

## TIBETAN DIED AS A RESULT OF TORTURE IN PRISON



Sonam Wangdue after medical parole

Sonam Wangdue, a 44-year-old trader also called Shugden died in late March 1999 at his residence in Lhasa. His death is directly linked to the torture and inhuman treatment he suffered while detained in a Chinese prison. Sonam Wangdu was arrested in April 1988 for his alleged involvement in the killing of a Chinese policeman during violent crackdown in a massive Tibetan demonstration on 5 March 1988. Many Tibetans were killed during the demonstration. Sonam Wangdu was sentenced to life imprisonment after he was accused of the killing of the Chinese policeman. He was first imprisoned in Gutsa Detention Centre. In Gutsa, he was severely tortured resulting in permanent internal injury. His kidney was damaged

and his back was broken. After the sentence, in 1989 Sonam Wangdu was transferred to Drapchi prison where he continued to suffer inhuman treatment, including being struck on his damaged kidneys. Consequently, he suffered urinary damage and the lower part of body was in a paraplegic state. In 1993, when he was released on medical parole, the lower part of his body had become permanently paralysed and he remained incontinent. He had to remain in a wheelchair, with a plastic tube used to drain his urine.

Sonam Wangdu's life-sentence was preceded by almost one full year of pre-trial detention at Gutsa Prison. During that time he was constantly tortured, as officers tried to make him confess to an involvement in the killing of the Chinese policeman. In addition to other methods of torture, he was beaten with electric cattle prods and manacled by his legs and feet for a period of six months. He was kept suspended from a tree for five days, and put in solitary confinement for one week. He had his head forced into a bucketful of water and had blood forcibly extracted from him. As a result of the torture he was, in April 1988, in a critical medical condition, according to another former political prisoner, Bhagdro.

On 17 January 1989, Sonam Wangdu was taken to the heavily guarded Armed Police Force headquarters, located below Chakpori Hill in Lhasa, for trial. During the trial, he and his fellow accuses were asked to confess to the crime. Their plea of not guilty so enraged the Chinese police, who had tortured them for almost a year, that they started beating them in full view of the court.

"They grabbed us and stopped us from talking", stated Bhagdro. The court

adjourned for the day and the five accused were led out by the back door, away from the view of the public, and thrown to waiting Chinese police personnel. Hidden from the public view behind a barricade of army trucks they were subjected to savage beatings. "Sonam Wangdu started vomiting blood, and unable was to endure the beatings, but tried to fight back. Then they put a gun to his temple and took him back to Gutsa," stated Bhagdro, who recalled that by the end of the day they were all semi-conscious.

The following day, the prisoners were again produced before the court, along with 16 others who had taken part in demonstration, and sentenced immediately. Another round of beatings behind the courtroom followed the sentencing.

They were then taken to Drapchi prison to serve their prison terms. The men were all put in separate cell blocks. Sonam Wangdu's condition had been a continuing cause for concern. According to Bhagdro, who escaped to exile sometime in mid-1991, when he last saw Sonam Wangdu he "looked like a lost person". After his release from prison he was permanently double-bent and unable to straighten his back. His ears were also badly damaged from beatings to his head and face, and there was fluid running from both of his ears.

According to reports, prior to his death Sonam Wangdu's lung, head, kidneys, liver and intestine were seriously damaged. He suffered excruciating headaches, and his hearing and speech were impaired. These symptoms, as well as his inability to pass urine or empty his bowels, were conditions that physicians in India say are consistent with a serious head or spinal

ry He was said to be able to move only in a hunched position and with the aid of a wheelchair.

Sonam Wangdu was one of the most brutally tortured of political prisoners. After successful attempts to make him "confess" to his "crime" for about one year, he was finally sentenced to life imprisonment on 18 January 1989. Among the other four persons implicated with him, Tsang Tenzin was sentenced to death, suspended for two years; Gyaltsen Dzoepel was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment; Tsering Dhondup was sentenced to 10 years; Tamdin was sentenced to 5 years; and Bhagdro was sentenced to 3 years. According to Bhagdro, none of the five people had met before, much less carried out a murder.

The death of another Tibetan due to torture is a poignant backdrop to the expected visit by United Nations expert on torture and detention to China in the first half of 2000, pursuant to the Chinese government's invitation. Sonam Wangdu's death illustrates the extent of the atrocious and inhuman treatment that Tibetan political prisoners have suffered and continue to suffer in Tibet.

detained during the 1949 Chinese invasion and subsequently during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. He suffered severe physical torture including "hard-reform-through-labour". After the Cultural Revolution, when the political climate was relatively more relaxed, he was released.

Upon his release, Phuntsok initiated some constructive work for the improvement of the lives of Tibetan people. He described the problems and difficulties faced by the Tibetan people in his area to former Communist Party Secretary, Hu Yaobang, during the Secretary's visit in June 1980.

Gyaye's village is situated closed to Tsongon-po (Lake Kokonor), and the surrounding area has rich, green pasture and fertile land. Most of this land is now occupied by the Northwest Landrou military battalion, which has caused a scarcity of agricultural land for the local nomads. After Phuntsok learned about this problem he, and a group of nomads, approached the officials of the Landrou military battalion to present a case for the return of the land. His efforts resulted in the return of half of their lost land and an expansion of water and electricity facilities.

Due to the difficulties that local children were facing in gaining an education, Phuntsok sought permission from the relevant authorities to set up a school. He finally obtained it and built a permanent lower school in the area. Most of the school's funds are received from private donations and German aid. Phuntsok looked after the overall administration of the school with its six permanent staff members.

The school has over 60 students who are taught Chinese, Tibetan, English, and math. There is one German man who teaches English in the school. This school is the first of its kind to have English as one of the core subjects. The students who attend the school are from the area's poorest families and previously lacked basic Tibetan language education.

The local people in the area greatly revere Phuntsok and have high praise for his contribution to the community. They elected him as their popular representative. He was also appointed by the Chinese authorities as the Gong-hai County's political consultative member of Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province.

In March 1992, Gyaye Phuntsok visited India on a pilgrimage with valid Chinese travel documents. Upon his return from India in June 1992, he was interrogated several times. He remained under strict surveillance from the intelligence wing of the Public Security Bureau. In August 1998, his house was raided, searched and some booklets containing speeches by H.H the Dalai Lama were confiscated. Gyaye Phuntsok was then arrested and taken away in a truck by officials of the National Security Department.

According to sources inside Tibet, Phuntsok is believed to be detained in a Qinghai prison, but his exact location of incarceration is not known. After his arrest, some of the nomads from his area tried to trace him but to no avail. When they inquired about Gyaye Phuntsok the officials threatened them by saying they could also be imprisoned if they persisted. In his absence, a number of his projects such as the school he set up, are deteriorating.

## Silent protest banned

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy received information from Tibet in March 1999 regarding new policies that prevent stall holders in the Barkhor from closing their stalls in recognition of the anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising.

New restrictions were imposed by the Lhasa Barkhor Local People's Committee (BLPC) in September 1998. Stall holders in the Barkhor have been ordered to leave their stalls open on all significant political dates including March 10, September 27 and October 1. The stall holders were warned that they would risk losing their stalls if they defied the rule. The dates coincide with the anniversaries of political protests initiated by Tibetan people against Chinese rule. The stall holders acknowledge the anniversaries by closing their stalls in an expression of solidarity.

There are approximately 800 stall holders in the Barkhor, selling all kinds of goods. The stalls are these people's main source of income. In August 1998, all the vendors were summoned to a meeting by the BLPC. At the meeting the vendors were allocated uniform stalls, blue in colour and numbered. Many of the vendors were shocked with the decision because the new stalls were much smaller in size and many

## Dedicated Tibetan disappeared

Officials of the People's Republic of China (PRC) National Security Department arrested Gyaye Phuntsok, a 68-year-old monk from Qinghai Province, in August 1998.



Gyaye Phuntsok

His present whereabouts are unknown. Phuntsok is from Gyaye village, Rigmon Township, Ghonggo County, Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province.

He was born into a nomadic family in 1931. At a young age, he joined Dibser Monastery where he studied Buddhist philosophy, Tibetan language, and mathematics. Gyaye Phuntsok was first

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## MONKS IMPRISONED FOR PASTING POSTERS

In June 1993 Tsultrim Topgyal, a monk from Sungrabling Monastery, and four of his fellow monks, pasted pro-independence posters and leaflets in Lhoka Chideshol town. The other monks were Tsultrim Gyaltzen (27), Shilog (25), Tsultrim Sherab (24) and Ngawang Jinpa (23).

Around August that same year, the Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials of Chideshol town identified Tsultrim and his fellow protestors as suspects in relation to these activities. When the officials arrived at the monastery to arrest the suspects, a large crowd gathered to prevent them from doing so. Members of the crowd even hurled stones at the PSB officials.

One month later, in the first week of September 1993, a large group of PSB officials and People's Armed Police (PAP) came to Sungrabling Monastery in the middle of the night. The PAP forces surrounded the monastery while Tsultrim and the other four monks were singled out and put on the back of the PSB vehicle. That same night the monks were taken to Lhoka PSB detention centre where they were detained for a total of six months.

While in detention, all five monks were severely beaten.

They were not allowed visitation rights for the first five months and their parents and relatives were not given access to any information on their well being.

After months of intense sessions of interrogation, the monks were tried in Lhoka Intermediate People's Court, in January 1994. They were all charged with having committed "counter-revolutionary" activities. Tsultrim and Shilog were sentenced to six years imprisonment and three years deprivation of political rights. Ngawang Jinpa was sentenced to five years imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights, Tsultrim Gyaltzen to four years imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights and Tsultrim Sherab to a three and a half year prison term and one year deprivation of political rights.

In February 1994, the five monks were all transferred to Drapchi Prison in Lhasa. In Drapchi, Tsultrim Topgyal suffered exhaustion as a result of working in the vegetable garden greenhouses under hot plastic covers. Like the rest of the political prisoners in Drapchi, he was also made to participate in military exercises. At times, he receive brutal beatings for not doing the

training as "required" by the PAP forces.

Tsultrim Topgyal, also known as Penpa, is from Kyimshe township in Lhoka region.

Tsultrim is the youngest of six children. His parents passed away when he was very young and his brothers and sisters raised him. He comes from a farming background. When he turned eight years old, his brother and sister sent him to school, which he attended for six years. In 1988, Tsultrim Topgyal joined Sungrabling Monastery.

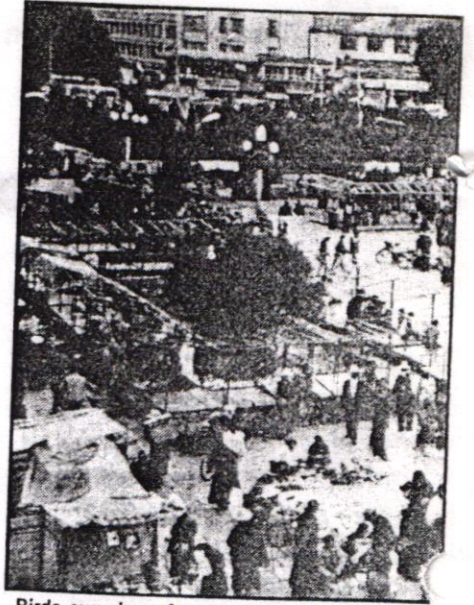
The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy received information last year that Sungrabling Monastery was completely closed down due to the arrival of the Chinese "work team" members in May-June 1997. Monks in Sungrabling Monastery refused to obey instructions under the "patriotic re-education" campaign launched by the People's Republic of China in May 1996.

of their goods would not fit on the tables. Three days later, on 12 August 1998, the tables were stacked outside the Barkhor Police Station waiting to be distributed. About one hundred businessmen approached the Lhasa City local government appealing to it to enlarge the size of the tables. The officials at the Lhasa local government claimed that they had no knowledge about the entire issue. Wangdue, a party chief of Barkhor, came to calm the people, urging them to report their appeal to the concerned BLPC office. By the time the group reached the BLPC office, its number had decreased to about 26 people. The officials scolded and reprimanded all of them. Each one was fined 100 yuan for trying to defy set rules.

In September 1998, BLPC and Barkhor Police Station called the stallholders together

for a second meeting. At that time an announcement was made that they were to keep their stalls open on the symbolic dates. The official distribution of tables took place with each numbered stall allocated and registered to an identifiable individual. They were also informed that taxes would increase as would other smaller tariffs.

In addition the BLPC office is now offering employment to unemployed youth in Lhasa. Their job is to keep a check on disturbances created by political demonstrators. They are issued uniforms and paid 300 yuan per month as salary. The authorities allocate each youth a small area which he or she is to guard. If the youths succeed in arresting any "troublemakers" in their allocated areas, they are granted 500 yuan as reward. If they fail, they risk losing their salary and facing serious repercussions.



Birds eye view of a side of the Barkhor market.

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APRIL 30, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY —

VOLUME IV NUMBER 8

## THE 55TH UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND TIBET

The United Nations Human Rights Commission did not consider a draft resolution proposed by the United States, (co-sponsored by Poland), on human rights in China, following a no-action motion tabled by the People's Republic of China (PRC). The vote on the no-action motion was 22 votes in favour to 17 against and 14 abstentions. A no-action motion is a procedural manoeuvre, which enables the PRC to block the resolution at the initial stage so that no further discussion is forthcoming.

The United States proposed the resolution because of its concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in the PRC since 1998, and in particular the situation in Tibet. It specifically raised the issues of the 11th Panchen Lama and the PRC's refusal to hold dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Had the resolution been accepted, the Commission would have expressed concern at the continuing reports of human rights violations, severe restrictions on the rights of citizens to freedom of non-violent assembly, association, expression and religion as well as the absence of due legal process and the right to a fair trial in China.

The Commission would have expressed concern at increased restrictions on the exercise of cultural, religious and other freedoms of Tibetans. It would have called on the government of the PRC to release all political prisoners, and preserve and protect the distinct cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity of Tibetans and other ethnic groups.

Also, it would have called on the PRC to strengthen its bilateral dialogues and its co-operation with the Human Rights Commission and to co-operate fully with

all thematic Special Rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy would like to express its deep regret, disappointment and frustration that the PRC has again been able to avoid being made to account for its continuing disregard for human rights. Unless there is a way to offset the no-action motion, the PRC will continue to circumvent formal scrutiny over its deteriorating human rights situation. This will have grave repercussions for the Tibetan people. The UN Human Rights Commission must address this issue in the interest of upholding the doctrine of universal human rights.

On a positive note, the PRC failed to secure seven votes from African countries. The African members of the UN body have traditionally voted in favour of the PRC.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy applauds the stance taken by the African nations, who either voted against the motion or abstained. The Centre hopes that their support will continue.

From April 5, 1999 three Tibetans commenced a hunger strike in front of the UN building in Geneva to draw attention to Tibet's current human rights situation. The strike was called off on April 30, following assurances from the High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, as well as heads of states, that they would address Tibetan issue whenever possible.

The issue of violation of human rights by the PRC was last tabled in 1997 sponsored by the Danish government. The draft resolution failed to obtain the simple majority within the Commission, and was not passed.

## Ngawang Woesser adopted as PEN Honorary Member

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy is pleased to announce the adoption of Ngawang Woesser as an Honorary Member of the Scottish Centre of International PEN.

A worldwide association of writers, PEN is an independent, non-government organisation, free from political affiliations. Its membership is drawn worldwide and it is non-western dominated.

PEN's mandate is to promote literature throughout the world and to champion the freedom of the written word.

Ngawang Woesser was profiled in our October 31, 1997 *Human Rights Update* (Volume II Number 20). He was one of the 21 Drepung monks who initiated the famous Lhasa demonstration on September 27, 1987. He was also a founder of the Drepung printing group, which published a number of important documents including a Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Originally from the Lhoka Region, Ngawang joined Drepung Monastery when he was 23 years old. Ngawang was first arrested on September 27, 1987 but was released less than six months later. His early release from prison on January 21, 1988, was the result of repeated appeals by the 10th Panchen Lama to the Chinese government. He was later re-arrested when the continuing activities of the "Organisation of Ten" were discovered.

Ngawang is currently incarcerated in Drapchi Prison where he is serving a term 17 years imprisonment. At the end of his prison term he will be deprived of his political rights for a further five years. Ngawang was imprisoned for his

involvement in various Tibetan freedom activities. These included the formation of a secret organisation, called the "Organisation of Ten", distribution of speeches given by the Dalai Lama, and the translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a document produced by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, "Future Democratic Constitution of Tibet".

Ngawang will complete his sentence in the year 2006, if it is not increased while he is in detention.

PEN would like Ngawang's family to know that he is in its members' thoughts and that they are working hard for his release.

## 15 year-old boy detained two months on suspicion

15-year-old Yeshe Yarphel was detained in late February 1999, accused of being a spy for the Tibetan Government in-Exile. In 1991, Yeshe's parents sent him to Dharamsala to receive a proper Tibetan education in India. After studying in India for eight years, Yeshe left school in late February 1999 because of family problems.

Yeshe's father is a former political prisoner who served 18 years imprisonment in a Chinese prison. While in prison, Yeshe's father suffered severe torture. As Yeshe is the only son, when his father turned 60 years old there was no one to look after his aged parents. Consequently, Yeshe was called back from school in India.

Yeshe was arrested by the People's Armed Police in late February 1999 who suspecting him of being spy. He was taken to Nyari detention centre in Shigatse. PRC officials later alleged that Yeshe was carrying out espionage activities for the Tibetan Government in-Exile. He was released in late April 1999 after being detained for a total of two months in Nyari Detention Centre, merely on the basis of suspicion. During his detention, Yeshe's parents were not allowed to visit him. Despite his youth, the authorities treated him in the same manner in which they treated adult prisoners.

## An appeal letter from Tibet

The following letter was handed to an Australian traveller in Tibet on the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), December 9, 1998. It is written by the "Cholsum Tibetan's Youth Organisation" in Tibet:

*Honourable Excellency UN Secretary General, High Commissioner United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, Heads of the States of all the countries, President of Amnesty International, government and non governmental organisations, learned dissidents and leaders of the Chinese democratic movement.*

*We the Tibetan people, would like to strongly appeal to you all, from the core of our hearts, that from September 27, 1987 to December 1, 1998 monks, nuns and common Tibetan people initiated non-violent processions and demonstrations based on reason and truth on numerous occasions to free Tibet from Chinese occupation.*

*Imprisoned political prisoners under Chinese rule are severely tortured and their blood is extracted. Some are secretly killed and forced to perform continuous hard work with chained feet. Sick prisoners are left to die as they are provided with either no medical treatment or treatment that is too late. Even those prisoners who are released, after serving their sentences face immense hardship. Monks and nuns are expelled from their monasteries and nunneries and those from offices and co-operatives are dismissed as their names are struck off the work register. Chinese officials closely watch those who are independent technicians and businessmen, making their lives miserable and impossible. It is sheer shamelessness on the part of Chinese government, and still it continues. Above all, Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama, ten year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, is being detained and the whereabouts of this child and his health condition are still not known.*

*Since 1993, under the instruction of the Chinese government, notices were served to discontinue all teaching of Tibetan culture and to halt teaching in the Tibetan language in Tibet University. Elementary Tibetan lessons in primary school are taught by Chinese methods. According to the notice, classes conducted using Tibetan Buddhist methods could expose teachers as counter-revolutionaries. In November 1998, at the Lhasa Elementary School one question for the "No. 1 Examination", Lhasa Educational Board exam was, "Who is the head of the splittist movement?" When the students avoided answering the question, the helpless teacher told them that there is no alternative but to answer that the "head of the splittists" is the Dalai Lama.*

*The Chinese population is increasing each passing day and, at the same time, Tibetan women are restricted to having only one or two children. After the birth of their first child, women must wait for another three years before they may have a second. If a child is born before the expiry of three-year gap period, a penalty of 500 yuan is levied on the child.*

*We hereby appeal to everyone concerned to deal with the deteriorating situation of Tibetans, free Tibet from Chinese occupation and support the just struggle. International bodies need to intensify their existing support and to transform actions into tangible result for the Tibetan people. They need to emphasise the need to exert more pressure on the Chinese regime through the United Nations Human Rights Commission, exposing China's shameless and ruthless behaviour in Tibet.*

*From the World Peace loving, Cholsum Tibetans and Tibetan Youth Organisation involved in the Independence movement in occupied Tibet, on December 7, 1998.*

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## DISTRIBUTION OF LONG-LIFE PRAYER LEADS TO MONK'S ARREST

Kalsang, also known as Jamyang Gyatso, is a 29 year-old monk from Gyalste Palchoe Monastery in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

In November 1996, Kalsang visited Drepung Monastery in Lhasa to seek blessings from the revered Lamring Rinpoche. While he was in Lhasa, Kalsang obtained a copy of the long-life prayer composed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the reincarnate Panchen Rinpoche, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. He took the prayer back to his monastery where he distributed it to his fellow monks and other people in his locality. At the same time, he informed local people about the plight of the 11th Panchen Lama.

The 11th Panchen Lama is revered as the second highest religious leader of Tibet, and has been missing since 1995. His Holiness the Dalai Lama recognised the reincarnate 11th Panchen Lama in May 1995, when the boy was six years old. To date the Chinese authorities have not permitted any independent human rights monitor

or UN official to visit the child or his parents, despite repeated requests. The Chinese justify holding the child in custody on the basis that his parents allegedly sought "security for the child from external danger".

In the meantime, the PRC has appointed its own Panchen Lama and pressures Tibetans in Tibet to recognise him as the true reincarnation. Many Tibetans have been arrested for acts as simple as printing and distributing the long-life prayer, composed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the true reincarnate lama. Pictures of the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama are installed in monasteries and nunneries all over Tibet, including the Potala Palace.

The Gyaltsé Public Security Bureau (PSB) became aware of Kalsang's activities and, on November 20, 1996, he was arrested. He was immediately taken to Gyaltsé Detention Centre where he was interrogated. He faced brutal beatings during the interrogation and was detained for a period of one month. After one month, he was transferred to

Nyari Detention Centre in Shigatse.

In Nyari, he continued to suffer severe beatings at the hands of the prison authorities. In March 1997, he was tried on a charge of distributing "counter-revolutionary propaganda". He was sentenced to four years and six months in prison. He was also deprived of all political rights for a further year.

After four months of incarceration in Nyari Detention Centre, Kalsang was transferred to Drapchi Prison, the TAR "No. 1" prison, where he continues to serve his prison term.

Kalsang is the youngest of four children. He comes from a reasonably well-to-do family. Prior to his retirement, his father was the mayor of his town and one of his brothers trained to be a doctor. Kalsang attended school for seven years and completed his primary school in Zhuntsug schools, which were established by the PRC government. He joined Gyaltsé Palchoe Monastery when he was 16 years old as a novice monk and was ordained in 1987.



### STOP PRESS!

#### President Nelson Mandela to visit China

On May 5-7, 1999 President Nelson Mandela will visit the PRC. The visit will be one of his last official foreign visit as the President of South Africa.

As an international advocate for peace and an active supporter of the Tibetan community, TCHRD is hopeful that President Mandela will voice his concern for the PRC's human rights abuses in China and Tibet.

## Patriotic re-education campaign continues

The patriotic re-education campaign is still in force in monasteries in Tibet. On December 3, 1998 a Chinese work-team issued an order to the monasteries in Ngaba County to gather at the township the following day, according to local monk who wishes to remain anonymous. Prior to the announcement, the authorities distributed re-education booklets in the monasteries, including the local Drongu Monastery. On the evening of the order, the informant monk worked from 8 pm, until 12 midnight to sketch the Tibetan national flag and write out 30 pages of political slogans. The slogans included pleas such as "Long Live H.H the Dalai Lama", "Tibet is independent" and "Denounce the Panchen Lama selected by Chinese authorities". The monk hoisted the national flag and pasted the slogans as wall posters,

in the town. The following day, seven County work-team officials arrived at the town at 9 am. They were enraged to see the flag and posters. They immediately ordered the monks to pull down the Tibetan flag and remove all of the posters. The officials later threatened the monks for almost three hours, explaining the serious consequences that the culprit or culprits would face if caught.

The following day, on December 4, 1998, at 12 noon the work-team commenced the patriotic re-education campaign at Drongu Monastery. Every monk between the ages of 18 and 50 years was required to obtain an identity card. All other monks were to be expelled from the monastery. Implementation of the orders would mean that only 30 of 170 monks would be entitled to remain in the monastery. Many senior

monks are concerned about the effect of the order on religious education.

Seven members of the work-team returned to Dongru Monastery on the evening of December 16, 1998. They pretended to know who had carried the protest activities and interrogated several monks for the following three days. The work-team members were unable to uncover any information.

The patriotic re-education campaign is clearly continuing in Dongru and all other monasteries in Ngaba County. Due to the religious repression in his monastery, the informant monk left Tibet on March 17, 1999 and arrived in Dharamsala on April 25, 1999. He was imprisoned by the Chinese border police in Nyelam and Dram for a total of eight days before he was able to make it to India.

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 9

MAY 15, 1999

## DREPUNG MONK RE-ARRESTED



Ngawang Samphel

A Tibetan monk from Drepung Monastery in Lhasa, Ngawang Samphel (33), was arrested in early April 1999 on suspicion of political acts. His present whereabouts are unknown. This is the second time that Ngawang has been arrested. He was previously detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for taking part in a demonstration, on September 27, 1988.

On September 27, 1988, Ngawang Samphel and five other Drepung monks, Ngawang Zegen (22), Ngawang Chemey (30), Ngawang Thosam (28), Jamphel Wangchuk (28) and Jamphel Sherab (31), staged a peaceful demonstration in the Barkhor in Lhasa, shouting slogans that called for Tibetan independence.

Officers of the People's Armed Police (PAP) and Public Security Bureau (PSB) immediately arrested the monks. They were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre,

located to the east of Lhasa. While in detention, all six monks were subjected to severe torture. As a result of the torture, Ngawang's friend, Ngawang Zegen from Toelung County, died in 1989 approximately one month after his release.

In recent years, despite the strict Chinese policy of religious and patriotic re-education, Tibetan independence posters continue to be seen in Drepung Monastery. The Chinese re-education "work-teams" have recently imposed stringent restrictions on all activities in the monastery. In order to check the growing dissent among the monks, PSB officers are now permanently stationed at the monastery.

In early April 1999, these officers raided Ngawang Samphel's room. Nothing was found that could have implicated him in any political activity. Nonetheless, Ngawang was subsequently arrested on the ground of suspicion of political acts. Since his arrest, no information has been available regarding his well-being or whereabouts. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy is concerned about the fate of Ngawang Samphel, particularly as this is the second time he has been arrested for political acts. Unless immediate intervention and action is taken on his behalf, the Centre fears that his life will be in danger.

Ngawang Samphel is from Phenpo Lhundrup County, "TAR". He joined Drepung Monastery in 1983, at the age of 16. He was imprisoned from September 27, 1988 and was released after nine months detention. After his release, Ngawang returned to Drepung monastery where he remained until he was rearrested in April 1999.

## TORTURED FOR UN LETTER

Tibetan political prisoner Ngawang Kyonmey suffered severe beatings and maltreatment from prison officers in Gutsa Detention Centre, according to information received from a Tibetan refugee in March 1999. Ngawang was arrested in early September 1998 on suspicion of conspiring to hand a letter to Mrs Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who visited Tibet in October 1998.

In September 1998, Chinese officials visited Drepung Monastery, Lhasa, in response to information that posters calling for Tibetan independence had been pasted on the walls of the monastery. The officials searched the rooms of the monks and discovered a Tibetan national flag, picture of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a letter addressed to the High Commissioner, Mrs Mary Robinson, in Ngawang Kyonmey's room. He was immediately arrested and taken to Gutsa Detention Centre where he reportedly continues to be held, although the charges against him have not been finalised.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy received reports that Ngawang's body reveals the distinct marks of severe beatings, which evidently took place during interrogation by prison officials who used violence and torture to obtain names of other Tibetans involved in the preparation of the letter.

Ngawang is now 28 years old and was originally from Toelung Dechen County.

Ngawang's case was submitted to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in January 1999. Its lack of response is in spite of Mrs Mary Robinson's recent assurances to three Tibetan hunger strikers on April 30, 1999 that Tibetan human rights issue would be addressed at every possible opportunity.

## Religious Crackdown in Kirti Monastery



Kirti Monastery in Tibet

Lobsang Sherab, who arrived in India in 1999, reported a number of arrests took place in Kirti Monastery in Ngapa County following incidences of independence activity. Kirti Monastery is the largest Gelukpa Monastery in Ngapa County, Ngapa Prefecture.

The first reported incident was in October 1997, when Gurtson Sherab was arrested and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Sherab was arrested for pasting independence posters around the Kirti Monastery and he is currently detained in Mong County Prison.

The second arrested monk's name is not known, although he is known to be the son of Choy, a tailor. The monk is from Amdo County and was also arrested in 1997. He was arrested on the charge of pasting independence posters in the Kirti Monastery. He is currently detained in Mong County Prison.

The third monk, Gtome Gotra, a third monk from Kirti Monastery, was arrested in 1996 on the charge of pasting independence posters. He was later released. Following his release, he was expelled from his monastery. Chinese "work team" members arrived at Kirti Monastery in April 1998. Senior monks, Lama's and teachers of the Kirti Monastery were called to accept the principles of "patriotic re-education". When they refused, they were kept under house arrest for some weeks. Pictures of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama were banned from the monastery and throughout Ngapa County. The "work team" members announced severe penalties for any offenders.

In March 1999, an official ceiling was placed on the number of monks allowed to stay in Kirti Monastery. The Chinese "work teams" ordered all monks below the age of 18 years and above the age of 50, to leave the monastery. They emphasised that sooner or later they would be expelled. The monks above the age of 50, were reported to be extremely worried as they have nowhere else to go if they are forced to leave.

When the announcement was made, many monks protested to the Chinese authorities. The authorities called on the People's Armed Police (PAP) forces who surrounded the monastery to counteract any reprisals.

Since the beginning of 1999, the "work team" members have had to call the PAP forces on three separate occasions to control the monks. There are currently around 2,300 monks in Kirti Monastery. If the forced depopulation materialises, it is estimated that only about 600 monks will remain.

### Control of Kirti School

In 1994, a man named Soyopa Naker of Amdo Ngaba County, built a private school in Kirti County which he donated to the Kirti Monastery. Most of the students who attended the school were younger novice monks from Kirti Monastery who could attend without having to pay any fees. The local Chinese authorities persisted many times to force Soyopa Naker to handover the administration of his school to the local authorities. They threatened to impose restrictions on the attendance of monks from Kirti Monastery.

Eventually, Soyopa Naker had no choice but to handover the administration of his school to the authorities in January 1999. Thereafter, the Chinese authorities took total control of the school and gradually instructed monk students to wear laymen's clothes in classes. The students were notified that if they refused to obey the Chinese rules, they would not be allowed into their classrooms. All 40 of the monk students from Kirti Monastery who attend the school now wear laymen's clothes.

Moreover, Chinese authorities have now appointed new Chinese teachers to the school. The subjects of Chinese politics and socialist ideology were introduced, and made a compulsory part of the monks' school curriculum.

Lobsang Sherab, also known as Ponggo, is an 18 year-old monk from Tharpa town in Ngaba County which is in Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. He arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on April 19, 1999.

### Kirti in Dharamsala

Kirti Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies has been established in exile in Dharamsala, for the purpose of offering young monks from Tibet the opportunity to study Tibetan culture and religion in a conducive environment. The Institute hopes that its students will ultimately return to their monasteries in Tibet.

IF ANY READERS WISH TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT KIRTI INSTITUTE, OR OFFER FINANCIAL SUPPORT, PLEASE CONTACT DIRECT: [kirti@tcrclinux.tibdsala.org.in](mailto:kirti@tcrclinux.tibdsala.org.in)

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

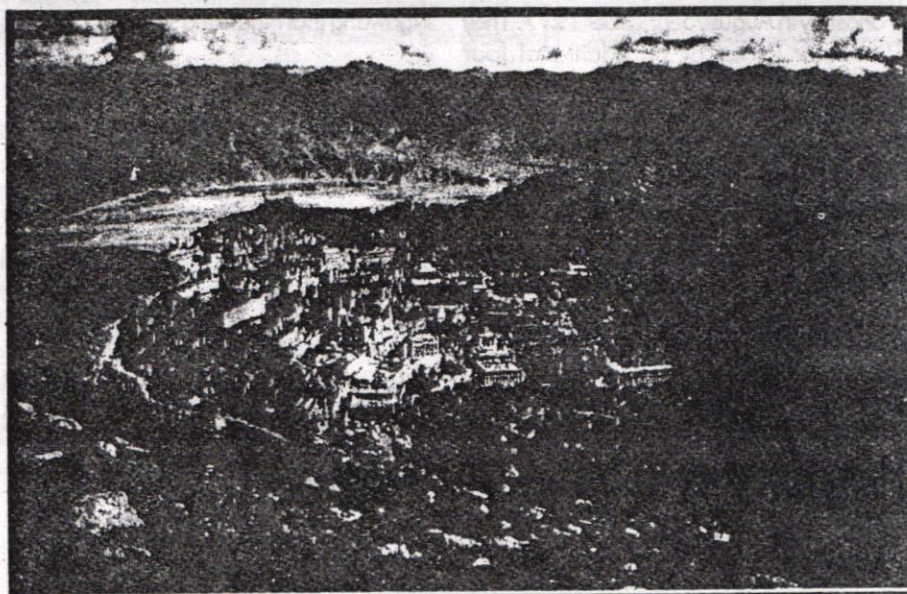
## 15 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR GADEN MONK

Bhagdro is a 30-year old former Gaden monk. He is from Lhasa City, Meldro Gongkar County. He comes from a farming family and is one of three sons. When Bhagdro was young, he studied in the Mangtsuk (Public) School for three years.

Following his schooling, he stayed at home to help his parents on their farm. In 1986, Bhagdro joined Gaden Monastery. Initially he worked as a labourer at the monastery, helping with renovations. Later on he started learning scriptures.

On May 6, 1996, a Chinese "work team" at the Gaden Monastery imposed a total ban on pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The ban was announced during the "re-education" session conducted by the "work team". Subsequently, a large number of monks disrupted the session. The monks, who numbered about 200, caused an enormous commotion, which left the 18 members of the "work team" with no choice but to abandon the session.

Soon after, the large group, led by Bhagdro, approached the "work team" members in their rooms and appealed to them not to carry out the ban as announced. They reasserted that the monks would sacrifice their lives but would not give up pictures of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. The "work team" members appeared to be threatened by such a big group and immediately left the monastery. That same night the "work team" members returned with reinforcements from the town. About ten trucks full of People's



Gaden Monastery in the early 1990's

Armed Police (PAP) forces and Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers arrived. The officers surrounded the monastery. When the officers tried to enter the monastery, the monks started throwing stones at them. The PAP started shooting. Two monks were injured in the exchange and eventually the officers overpowered the monks.

The next day the "work team" members and the Democratic Management Committee of the monastery called a meeting with the senior monks. They were ordered to bring their younger students. At the same time, all the pictures that were displayed on the shrines were taken down.

The officers recognised Bhagdro from the protest the day before. He was arrested and immediately taken to Gutsa Detention Centre, along with another monk identified as Jampa Lodroe (Poloe). Bhagdro

was reportedly severely beaten, while being transported to Gutsa.

More monks were arrested over time. Some fled from the monastery to other places to escape arrest and punishment. For two months the monastery remained closed. By the end of August 1998, a total of 62 monks and one layman had been arrested. Those who were released after only a few months of detention faced expulsion from the monastery.

In August 1996, Bhagdro was sentenced by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court. He and Lodroe were both sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and transferred to Drapchi Prison. The remaining arrested monks were sentenced to two to 15 years imprisonment. Some of the monks were detained in Trisam "re-education through labour" unit. Bhagdro is currently held in Drapchi serving a 15 year sentence.

## Expulsion of monks in Drayab Monastery

Ngawang Jampa is an 18 year-old monk from Drayab Monastery. He fled Tibet reaching Nepal on March 3, 1999, following religious crackdown in his monastery. Jampa joined Drayab Monastery when he was 13 years old.

Four "work team" members came to his monastery in August/September 1997. They were later joined by an additional four members. While it was at the monastery, the eight member "work team" banned the display of pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and ordered the expulsion of all monks below the age of 25 years.

Prior to the "work team's" arrival in April/May 1998, some monks had pasted independence posters on the walls of the monastery. The posters were hand-written and carried the slogans, "Free Tibet", "No religious freedom" and "Stop banning

HHDL pictures". The day after, the slogans were pasted, Drayab County officials came to the monastery and interrogated the monks individually. The officials ordered all monks to provide hand-writing samples. They arrested a total of four monks. Jampa later learned that the four monks were each sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and are detained in Chamdo Prison. Only one has been identified and his name is Ngawang (not Ngawang Jampa).

## Crackdown at Drupdre Monastery

Lhapsum Gyaltzen is a 34 year old former monk from Drupdre Monastery. He became a monk at the age of 23, in 1988. By 1998, there were 71 monks in Drupdre Monastery.

In August/September 1998, a six member "work team" came to the monastery from Diru County. For an entire month the "work

team" stayed at the monastery conducting "patriotic re-education" sessions. 16 monks who refused to comply were expelled and "stay passes" were issued to 38 more monks. The 17 remaining monks were neither expelled nor issued "stay passes".

Lhapsum, although one of the 38 monks issued with a "stay pass", preferred not to remain at the monastery. He fled Tibet at the end of 1998 and reached Nepal on January 28, 1999.

Lhapsum comes from a nomadic family in Diru County, Nagchu Prefecture. His family's livelihood was gravely affected during the snow storm disaster that took place end of 1997 and beginning of 1998. In his county, about 20 families suffered heavy losses. No sufficient relief aid was provided by Chinese authorities, who received bulk international relief funds for the same disaster. Many members of the families affected by the storm have resorted to begging to survive.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

37  
*update*

MAY 31, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY —

VOLUME IV NUMBER 10

## A PROMINENT POLITICAL PRISONER RELEASED



**Namloyak**

Namloyak from Amdo (Ch: Qinghai province) was imprisoned for four and a half years on charges of 'endangering national security' and released on November 14, 1997. Subsequent to his release from Delingha Prison, he escaped to India in 1998.

The 29-year-old prominent political prisoner was arrested in May 1993 for his suspected involvement in a secret, political and espionage activities. On the evening of May 9, 1993, Namloyak was stopped by the head of County Public Security Bureau and two officers in the street of the Xinghai town. On the pretext of offering a drink, the officers took him to the County hotel where a group of security personnel, including the head of the National Security Department, was waiting to arrest him.

After the arrest, three officials were left to guard Namloyak while the remaining nine went to search his home. He was handcuffed behind his back and taken

away in a truck at 4.30 am the next morning. From his house the officials had confiscated a photo album and secret letters relating to education and social development. It was reported that Namloyak was subjected to torture during extensive interrogations following his arrest.

In December 1992 in Xining City, Namloyak, together with two friends, Lukar Jam and Tsegongyal, were suspected of forming a political organisation called 'Dare to Die' (Tib: Chi Pö). The trio were then accused of trying to distribute state secrets to the outside world, but at no point did they admit to the allegations of 'espionage'.

On July 28, 1994, following the order issued by the Qinghai Security Department, Tsonub Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), (Ch: Haixi) Intermediate People's Court conducted a secret trial involving officials from the Haixi Procuratorate and the Tsonub Security Department. The three men were denied any rights to be represented by a lawyer.

The men were found guilty of committing 'espionage activities' and forming a 'counter-revolutionary' group by the Tsonub TAP Prefecture Intermediate People's Court. The court sentenced Namloyak to 12 years imprisonment on July 28, 1994.

Lukar Jam and Tsegongyal were sentenced to 17 years and 16 years imprisonment respectively. All three appealed to the Qinghai Higher People's Court arguing that the sentences imposed on them were unjust and the charges against them groundless. However, no action has been taken to date.

During imprisonment, Lukar Jam's physical condition deteriorated. In early

1995, the Tsonub People's Hospital physicians declared Lukar's condition extremely serious and warned of his possible death. Fearing accusation of ill treatment, the prison authorities immediately released him on medical parole.

While in prison, they defied prison rules by staging several hunger strikes. Their further continued resistance hampered the Chinese security and 'reform' activities in the prison. It was therefore deemed necessary to release both men on bail, in accordance with clause 26 of the Detention Laws of the People's Republic of China and Section 24 of the Chinese Criminal Procedure Law. And during his time of detention Tsegongyal remained sick and was under medication.

On June 24, 1997 Namloyak and Tsegongyal were released for two months on bail. They were re-arrested on August 13, 1997 before the expiry of their bail.

In consideration of the appeals made by Namloyak and Tsegongyal two years before, the Higher People's Court formed a committee to review the earlier verdict issued by the Tsonub Intermediate People's Court. In its verdict of September 7, 1997, Qinghai Higher People's Court concluded that the defendants had committed crimes that threatened the 'national unity' and therefore were liable to be punished for their acts. However, the High Court stated that the sentences imposed on the defendants by the lower court were in excess of the punishable crime. Therefore, the earlier ruling of the Haixi was made null and void and a fresh ruling was issued reducing the prison terms of Namloyak to 4 years and Tsegongyal to 6 years.

Born January 10, 1970, in Lharde village, Thangnag Township, Xinghai County in Qinghai Province. Namloyak attended his village boarding school for four years (till 1984), after which he went to the county's Intermediate Nationalities school where he completed 'Middle School'.

He then joined Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's Teacher Training school and the Qinghai Province's Special Teacher Training School. His studies completed, Namloyak worked as a researcher in the county's Education Department and in December 1991, he visited India returning to Tibet after studying one year in Dharamsala.

Namloyak has been incarcerated in various Chinese prisons. Dro-tsang County Detention Centre in Tso-shar and prisons in the counties of Menlho and Phenyen, Delingha in Tsonub, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

Tsegongyal is still being held in Tsojang (Ch: Haibei) Prison and is expected to be released in September 2000. Chinese document shows that he is suffering from tuberculosis.

Namloyak fled Lhasa this year on February 21, 1999 and reached Nepal a month later on March 21, 1999. He arrived Dharamsala on March 30, 1999.

## 'Work Team' in Tsang Monastery

Thap-Shay is a 24 year-old monk of Tsang Monastery from Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sogo County (Ch: Hainan) Arik village. He reports that in June 1998 eight officials from County and Province office came to his monastery where they stayed about one month instilling 'patriotic re-education' sessions. The monks were instructed to study books and documents distributed by the officials. The 'work team' officials divided the monks into four groups (Tib: Tsok-chung). Each group was assigned to two 'work team' officials and given a book to study. This entailed learning the laws of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and

opposing His Holiness Dalai Lama (HHDL).

For the whole month, 'work team' officials called regular three-hour meetings twice a day, once in the morning and again in the evening. Every monk had to attend each meeting. If they were late, the monks were rebuked, slapped, punched or kicked.

The monks were forced to oppose HHDL and 'splittism'. After every session, one of the monks was made to 'oppose the Dalai Lama', to 'denounce the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama' to 'accept the unity of the motherland' and 'to accept the Chinese selected Panchen Lama'. The monks were threatened with serious punishment if pictures of the Dalai Lama or the Panchen Lama recognised by the His Holiness were discovered. The 'work team' officials introduced an official quota of 300 monks. The remaining monks would be expelled. The age limit for admission into the monastery was then set at 18 years.

So far seven monks, including Thap-Shay, have been expelled from the monastery. It is believed that each monk who failed to attend the 'patriotic re-education' session were to be expelled.

After one month the 'work team' members left. The monks were informed by the officials that they would return after two months.

Tsang Monastery, in Thun-dhay is about 500 years' old and was founded by Tsang 'Pandita' Lobsang Gyatso. At the time Thap-Shay left the monastery there were about 800 monks in Tsang Monastery in Thun-dhay County.

Thap-shay also related that because of the land partition by the Chinese authorities between the Nyogra and Arik village, 28 Tibetan people were killed in the conflict over the land. Since then, the latest fighting has occurred in March 1999 in which three people from Arik village have been killed.

Officials from Beijing often promise to settle the disputes immediately but after having visited the area twice, the authorities have resolved nothing. Furthermore, all the expenses for these officials have been borne by the local Tibetan people. It is believed that instigating confrontations amongst the Tibetan people is an intentional move by the Chinese.

The Thap-shay family are nomads

consisting of 11 members.

Thap-shay has never been to school but at the age of 15 joined the Tsang Monastery at which time there were approximately 300 monks. He arrived in Dharamsala on May 21, 1999.

## Birth Control in Nyang-dren town

In a report that appeared in 'Tibet Daily' of March 23, 1998, the birth control policy introduced in Nyangdren town in Lhasa City was a huge success. This successful policy has been implemented with regard to both the family planning procedures of the People's Republic of China and the existing conditions of Nyangdren town. The report also states that the family planning authorities have sincerely carried out the policy with full cooperation from the local people and have applied other new approaches in the implementation of the policy.

Documents relating to the birth control policy were distributed by the County Health Department who were specifically invited the year before by officials of Nyangdren town. The documents were distributed so that the people could study them before the actual execution of the plans. In total, 33 meetings were held in which 756 people attended out of which 515 were women. In Nyang-dren town, 342 out of 379 married women underwent sterilisation and 295 women were provided with contraceptive pills. The figure comprises of 90.23 per cent of the total married women. The town Department of Health had invited medical experts from the United States.

It was also reported that an official of the town authority applauded the successful performance of the Department of Health. The official supplemented his comment by complimenting the control over the population growth. "This has directly resulted in the alleviation of the living conditions and reasonably increased the economic growth of the people" added the official.

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## LITHANG MAN SERVING TEN YEARS FOR 'COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY' CRIME

Ngawang Chomphel initially started his political activities during the Lithang Monlam festival in 1991. Chomphel, together with his friends Shulu (28) and Jamyang Dhondup (36), distributed leaflets. Approximately 2000 monks and hundreds of lay people were present in Lithang Monastery. The leaflets read "Tibetans and Chinese are different"; "Tibet is a country with a history"; "China has illegally occupied Tibet"; "Many of the Tibetans have died of starvation", and "Many families were separated as a direct result of Chinese rule".

On August 2, 1992 Ngawang Chomphel and two other men from Lithang, (Ta-Lobsang and Jamyang Dhondup) wrote a 1000 word leaflet which read "Chinese are like poisonous snakes"; "Tibet is independent"; "Chinese are deceiving us", "Tibetans have nowhere to go"; "We Tibetans have to unite", and so on. They distributed the leaflets during the anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) held at Lithang racecourse. They were not arrested but were faced with that possibility at any time. The two men, Ngawang Chomphel and Jamyang Dhondup left for India in early 1993 as part of a large group. Upon reaching the airport near Sher Kumbu, twenty members of the group were arrested by the Nepali police and handed over to the Chinese border security personnel at Dram. Jamyang was captured and detained in Dram for seven days. Ngawang Chomphel successfully escaped into exile in India.

In the meantime, Ta-Lobsang and Jamyang again prepared leaflets on July 29, 1993, but were unable to distribute them. On July 30, 1993 Ngawang Chomphel returned to Tibet after being in India for about five months. The

group of three then proposed to launch a major protest throughout many of the counties in Lithang. The People's Armed Police (PAP) became aware of this plan. Considering their options they finally decided not to flee, but to voluntarily surrender themselves to the police. On August 19, 1993, Jamyang along with his cousin Gyatso, went to the police station. Ngawang Chomphel was arrested at his residence by the PSB officials of the Lithang County and was taken to Lithang County Prison on the same day as Jamyang. Over the following two days, most of Ngawang's other friends were arrested, including Ta Lobsang (28), Lo Drakpa (28), a statue maker, Tsundue (44), a businessman, Chomphel (27) and A-Ngag (35), a musician.

Ngawang and his friends were detained in Lithang Prison for four months during which time they were interrogated and beaten. Electric cattle prods were used on them to extract information and confessions to the alleged crime. During interrogation, the police officers asked Ngawang questions such as: "Who led you to do such acts?", "Who are your companions?" and "For what reasons have you decided to do these activities?" After the PSB officials failed to draw any satisfactory answers, the two men were transferred to Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's Detention Centre in late December 1993. They were kept there for another 10 months and interrogated further.

Ngawang Chomphel's friend, La-thak, died in the Lithang Detention Centre from excessive beatings inflicted by prison guards. The authorities of the Detention Centre gave the reason for his death as 'suicide'.

In Karze Detention Centre, Chomphel and other activists were not beaten as

often, but suffered from poor nutrition. They were provided with half a steamed bun in the mornings, half a plate of rice during lunch and diluted gruel in the evenings.

In September 1994, the Intermediate People's Court of Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture formally sentenced the group. Ngawang Chomphel was indicted as a 'counter-revolutionary' activist and ringleader of the group and therefore sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. He was also deprived of his political rights for five years. Treated more harshly by the court, for having previously fled to India, he was under suspicion for associating with 'outside' people and organisations. Jamyang Dhondup was sentenced to five years imprisonment and a further three years deprivation of political rights. Ta Lobsang received a five year prison term and three years deprivation of political rights.

Subsequent to their trial, they were transferred to Ngaba Prison which is known as 43-4 Prison, Mao County, Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province. At the time, the prison held about 2000 inmates 1600 of whom were Tibetans. There are four units here. Ngawang Chomphel is kept in unit number one along with approximately 10 other Tibetan political prisoners.

Ngawang Chomphel's health has deteriorated. He has developed swellings on his body. His feet are so swollen he is unable to wear shoes. His friend Jamyang, in India, says his spirits are high, and he is determined to do anything for the cause of Tibet. Ngawang says that he has never regretted his deeds or his present condition. His friend Jamyang, however, fears that he will die in prison as he has no one to take care of him.

## Discrimination at Zoge school

Tsering Gyatso is a 17 year-old student of Zoge County, Sichuan Province. Tsering left Tibet in December 1998 to flee to India. He was arrested and detained in Shigaste Detention Centre for a month. Upon his release, he made escape plans and finally reached India in May 1999. Tsering gave a brief account of the school he attended in Tibet and the discrimination he was experienced against the Chinese students.

In the Zoge County School, there are around 200 students. The school is divided into Tibetan and English sections. The Tibetan section holds 150 students and the remaining 50 are in the Chinese section. The students receive grants directly issued from the County government. The Chinese students get 60-100 yuan a month and the Tibetan students get only 25-30 yuan a month. Gyatso's school however, does not exempt fees. In fact, the Tibetan students are discriminated against to pay more fees than their Chinese counterparts who have

to pay only 1500 yuan whereas the Tibetan students pay 3500 yuan per month. This fee excludes the 'miscellaneous fees' for buying school materials. There are approximately eight teachers out of whom five are Tibetan and the rest are Chinese. Younger teachers replace the senior (older) Tibetan teachers. Gyatso believes the reason behind this is that the younger teachers will have little or no knowledge about the historical and cultural aspect of Tibet.

In 1997, three Tibetan students were arrested and detained in a prison for a

month for pasting publicity materials on the Tibetan government-in-exile on the school notice board. The three implicated students, Tsering, Kunga and Tenpa were interrogated and detained in the County Prison for a month and were later released. The three students were expelled from the school and ordered to return to their homes.

Since this incident, the Tibetan students are treated with suspicion. They are regularly given 'instruction' that restrict them from talking anything remotely political.

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

HUMAN RIGHTS update is a fortnightly newsletter of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. <http://www.tchrd.org>

JUNE 15, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 11

## NUN DETAINED FOR EIGHT MONTHS ON SUSPICION

Tibetans continue to be arrested and detained for attempting to flee Tibet.



The duration of detention does not conform with International law or China's own domestic laws. Monks and nuns are more vulnerable to torture and beatings as resistance towards Chinese policies has often emerged from the monasteries and nunneries. Tibetans without any political linkage are also often held for long durations. The following story is one such account of a nun from Garu Nunnery.

Gyaltzen Tenchoe joined Garu Nunnery when she was 23 years old in 1994. While she was at the nunnery, ten 'work team' members came to conduct a 'patriotic re-education' campaign. From 1993 to 1995, Chinese officials from the county came five times to the nunnery. Usually the officers would leave in the evenings as Garu Nunnery was close to Lhasa, however, they would sometimes stay at the nunnery for at least a week.

The constant visits and 're-education' hampered the nuns' daily spiritual practices. The officers consistently reminded the nuns that they were being prepared for the arrival of future 'work team' members who would conduct a more intensive campaign. The 're-education' mostly embodied opposing His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This resulted in disturbances and instilled fear in the nuns' minds. Tension started to brew and nuns were contemplating leaving voluntarily before the 'work team' officials arrived.

In March 1996, Gyaltzen and two other nuns chose to evade 're-education' by fleeing Tibet. After two days of walking

they were close to Sakya County when they were arrested by Sakya security officials. They were taken to Shigatse Police Station where they were detained for the night. The entire night they faced interrogations. The next morning they were transferred to Nyari Detention Centre. In Nyari, the nuns saw many other Tibetans arrested and detained for attempting to flee Tibet. In the female section the three nuns were kept with three other women.

During the first month of detention they were interrogated and instructed to plead guilty to pro-independence activities. The other Tibetans held for trying to flee Tibet were released a month after they were brought into Nyari. The nuns, however, were detained longer and security officials constantly told them to admit that their reason behind fleeing was their political connections. They were told that if they did not admit this they would continue to be detained. After the first month the intensity of the questions became more severe. The officials started beating the nuns. They were separated and kept in different blocks. They were interrogated further and ordered to accept their crime. At one stage the authorities attempted to trick each of the nuns separately into believing that the other two nuns had confessed. They did this by playing false tapes of muffled voices confessing to involvement in pro-independence activities. This trap failed for the simple reason that none of the nuns had any such involvement or anything to 'confess' to.

Gyaltzen's relatives came to know about her plight and went to visit her. However, they were not allowed to see her and had to return home.

Prison conditions were poor, there was no light at all at night and the food was very bad. In total, they were arbitrarily

detained for eight months under these conditions. They were denied legal representation and visitations from their families.

Eventually, after eight months, in November 1997, the trio and four others from Lhasa arrested on similar charges were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre in Lhasa. In Gutsa, they were detained for ten days and kept in separate cells where they were again subjected to interrogation.

Finally they were handed over to Toelung Dechen County police station. There, the police authorities informed them that they were expelled from the nunnery and that they could not go further than the county without permission. With these restrictions they were told to return home. None of the three nuns met again. Gyaltzen escaped as soon as she had the opportunity and reached India on June 13, 1999.

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Readers,

Please note that as of July 1999, our fortnightly Human Rights Update will be made a monthly publication. This change is to enhance the quality of the content of our publications.

We hope the change does not inconvenience you. We assure you that any urgent information which needs to be immediately relayed shall be done so in the form of press releases.

## Discrimination in schools in Ngapa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Gonpo Sonam (22) was a teacher at the Ngaba 'Middle school' Sichuan Province, Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous prefecture (TAP), Zoge County.

At the age of seven he attended Lobchung (primary) school in Jhamey Township for five years. He then completed another five years of Lobdring (middle) school in Ngapa TAP. After that, he joined Nubjang (Chi: Xi biai) Higher Nationalities School (Landrou, Gansu Province) and studied there for three years. In July 1996 he joined Luchu County Nationalities Middle school. After completing his teacher training he was immediately appointed as a teacher in Ngaba TAP's Tibetan Middle school (Lobdring) in August 1996 and worked there until December 1998.

While Gonpo was in Lobchung he only had to pay around 10-20 yuan for four text books. At the time of his schooling 'free and compulsory education' for children up to the lower middle school was implemented as a fundamental right enshrined in the Chinese Constitution. This policy has ceased to exist. Each year there are two semesters, one semester used to cost 300 yuan then, however today, it has increased to about 500-600 yuan.

In Nubjang Higher Nationalities School, the students were required to pay 700 yuan per semester. However, Chinese students do not have to pay anything. Currently, the fees have increased to 1200-1300 yuan per semester.

Gonpo studied 15 different subjects including: Tibetan Philosophy; Public relations; Chinese Revolution history; Marxist ideology and socialism. All of these subjects were taught in Chinese. There were around 3,000 students, of which only 200 of them were Tibetan and 600 were from different ethnic origins. The rest of the students were all Chinese.

After completing Lobdring, Gonpo was provided with a teachers training course free of cost at the Ngaba Teachers Training School. When he finished his course, he returned to his hometown as a teacher in Ngaba Middle School. He taught Tibetan grammar and books written by Mao Zedong and other popular Chinese leaders. The teachers were instructed not to give any 'counter-revolutionary'

lessons to the students. Gonpo was paid 500 yuan per month as his salary.

In March 1999 Gonpo, along with his friend Wangchuk, travelled to Lhasa to join the teacher training School in the Tibet Autonomous Region High School. When they approached the school authorities to register their names, they were shocked to find five Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials from Zoge County waiting for Gonpo. The PSB officials interrogated him in the TAR High School and accused him of preaching 'counter-revolutionary' instruction to the students whilst teaching in the Ngaba Middle School. The PSB decided to take him to Ngaba and cancelled his admission to the High School. That same evening, Gonpo made preparations to escape to India. He left Lhasa on April 1999 through the Nagchu and Gyala border. He reached Nepal on May 4, 1999 by paying 800 yuan to a guide. He arrived in Dharamsala on June 3, 1999.

Upon arrival in India Gonpo testified in detail about the situation of education for Tibetan children in Tibet while he was a teacher in Ngapa Middle School.

"To attend Lobchung school, parents are required to pay 300 yuan. The subjects taught are Tibetan, Chinese, and Science. In recent times two additional subjects, psychology and ecology are included in the curriculum. In Lobdring the subjects taught are: Tibetan; Chinese; Math; political science; History; Geography; Environment Science; Chemistry; Biology; Socialism and Mao Ideology. Subjects taught in College are similar.

In the Ngaba TAP there are 13 counties. Each county has one Lobdring. These schools are said to be for Tibetans and are given Tibetan names. However, in reality the Tibetan language is given the lowest priority. Socialism and Communist Ideology are the main subjects taught in the schools. Most of the teaching materials are Chinese books translated into Tibetan. Teachers are restricted to teach only those subjects stipulated by the authorities".

In July 1998, Gonpo was appointed as class teacher of a 43 student class. Besides teaching he was responsible for guiding the students in discipline and likewise.

Once, when talking to one of the classes, he spoke on the importance of national identity and language.

In 1997 the PSB of Zoge County set up a five member PSB security wing. Each five member was appointed on the basis of his loyalty to the Chinese authorities. The task of this security wing was to investigate how the teachers conduct classes and to ascertain whether any reference to politics is made.

The PSB security wing of the school informed the county PSB about Gonpo's talks. Subsequently, an order was issued from the county PSB informing the principal to remove him from the post of class teacher. Gonpo was removed from his post in August 1998, however, he was allowed to continue teaching. The principal reasoned that he was "too young and inexperienced to take on the responsibility of a class teacher".

Gonpo fears that within ten years time, Tibetan language and culture will be completely wiped out. "These days Tibetan children are not showing much interest in the Tibetan language. Further, parents discourage children from studying Tibetan as it does not fetch anything good for them, either in terms of money or social status. Other Tibetan children who have grown up in Chinese schools and Chinese culture feel superior to their own people and even make derogatory remarks about their own parents.

Many Tibetans speak less in Tibetan language as they get an inferiority complex. Therefore, they try to speak Chinese as much as possible. Even school examinations are assessed on the basis of the marks scored in Chinese, English and Math. In both the primary and middle school the number of Tibetan related subjects are minimised. The religious institutions are probably the only place where one can study Tibetan language".

Gonpo estimates that those Tibetans who are indoctrinated by the Chinese are about 70 per cent, the ones who are not affected even after indoctrination, comprise of only 5 per cent. The remaining 25 per cent are completely ignorant about anything.

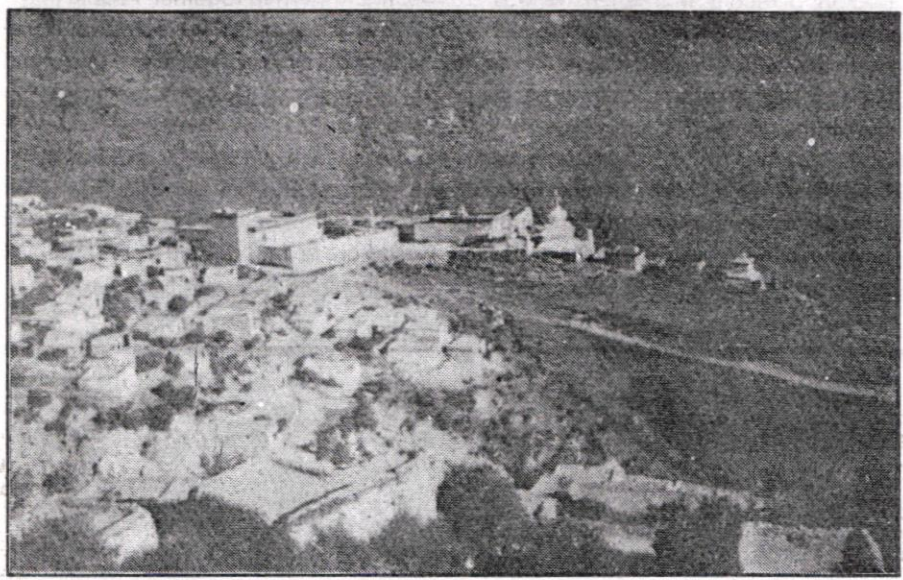
Gonpo also reports that Jamyang Gyatso, a monk from Taktsen Monastery

contd. on p.4

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

# NUN DETAINED FOR SIX YEARS FOR FREEDOM ACTIVITIES



Shugseb Nunnery in Tibet

Jampa Choekyi is 27 years old from Chusur County Tsena Village. From the ages of 8 to 13, Jampa attended lower school (Lobchung). She completed her lower school to 5th standard after which she stayed at home to help her parents in the field. In 1988, she joined Shugseb Nunnery with both her parents' consent. When she was at Shugseb she studied scriptures. With instructions from her nunnery she became a caretaker at Lhasa Lubum Lhakang for a year. During this time she witnessed a lot of political disturbances in Lhasa. It was around the time when major political demonstrations took place and a large number of Tibetan people were arrested and detained. This made a huge impression upon her about the legality of the Tibetan freedom movement. Moreover, she was aware of the several nuns from her nunnery who were already serving prison terms for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

She decided not to remain passive about the issue.

On December 9, 1993 Jampa along with seven other nuns from Shugseb Nunnery went to Lhasa. There they initiated a peaceful demonstration condemning the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Putting their lives at stake, the eight nuns shouted pro-independence slogans such as "Free Tibet"; "Chinese quit Tibet"; and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" in front of Lhasa City Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers. Plain clothed PSB officers immediately arrested the nuns.

The identities of the nuns are Rinzin Tsundue (26); Namgyal Choedon (26); Shilog Dolma (27); Norbu Yangchen (25); Lodroe Palmo (29); Choenyi Dolma (26) and Norzin (24). The nuns were transported to Gutsa Detention Centre. The nuns suffered brutal beatings and torture at the hands of the prison officials at Gutsa on a routine basis. When the nuns were

being interrogated, the officials used as weapons anything that came to the reach of their hands. The family members of the nuns were not allowed to meet them at all. Relatives lived in constant anxiety about the nuns' well being.

Finally, after five months of arbitrary detention, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court tried the eight nuns. The nuns were denied legal representation. The eight nuns were charged with 'counter-revolutionary' activities. Jampa Choekyi and Rinzin Tsundue were sentenced to six years imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. The rest of the six nuns were sentenced to five years imprisonment. After the trial, all eight nuns were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

While in Drapchi, the nuns were again subjected to brutal prison beatings in order to humiliate them and to show the might of the prison officials. Some were sent to the prison vegetable garden and the others for wool work. They were also forced to attend political classes. The prison officials often did things as they pleased which meant that if there were any prisoners that they personally did not like, they would get the worst treatment.

Except for Jampa Choekyi and Rinzin Tsundue, the rest of the six nuns have been released from prison. They have been strictly instructed not to rejoin their nunnery or join any other nunnery. Jampa and Rinzin remain incarcerated in Drapchi prison where they still endure prison adversities.

contd. from p. 2

in Zoge County was arrested in February 1994 for having painted a snow mountain. He was arrested whilst he was going to county to fix the frame for the picture. When he returned to his monastery, three PSB officers were already waiting for him in his room. He was taken to the county PSB office and detained there for ten days where he was severely interrogated. He was later transferred to Ngaba Higher People's Court where interrogations continued for three months. They interrogated him as to why he drew a picture which depicts the Tibetan national flag. He replied that snow mountain is the landscape of Tibet and is not a national flag.

Regardless of his defence he was implicated and sentenced to one and half years' imprisonment by the Ngaba Higher People's Court.

He was released in December 1995. After his release, he was not allowed to rejoin his monastery and is now no longer a monk.

Gonpo recalls that when he was a student in Nubjang High School, a fellow student informed Gonpo that since 1992 Chinese authorities were actively carrying out dumping of nuclear waste in the Mangra Township, Thundhe County in the Tsolho TAP. "One of the newspapers from Sichuan Province reported that Qinghai and the TAR are the best places to dump nuclear waste because of the vastness of

the areas and low population. The paper justified that the area is also most suitable because of the cold weather conditions which helps to keep the waste stagnant and limit vapour emission" said Gonpo.

Gonpo also reported that sometimes several trucks full of nuclear wastes were brought into the area. "Both the truck and waste are burned together. People in the surrounding areas have found many rubber gloves. Areas like Palkyi and Thepo Township in Zoge County are also used to dump nuclear wastes. New born babies in these areas are more frequently born physically handicapped, blind or crippled. It is believed that the nuclear wastes are being dumped by the Lho-Nub Military camp in Chengdu".

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### NEW REPORT

"Briefing Paper for travellers to Tibet" is the latest addition to our publication. This book provides travellers with background information on the Tibetan situation and some travel guidelines.

This book is free of cost like our other reports but we would appreciate a donation to cover the cost of postage. Thank you.



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# HUMAN RIGHTS *update*

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY — VOLUME IV NUMBER 12

JUNE 30, 1999

## RE-ARREST OF A FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER

A 20 year-old Tibetan girl "P" arrived in Dharamsala on June 13, 1999. She and a group of 76 people were arrested while attempting to flee Tibet in February 1999. P reported that in her group she encountered a former political prisoner (name withheld) who had served time in Drapchi Prison for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa in 1990.

P reported that she was taken to Gutsa Detention Centre. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy is concerned about her welfare and seeks to ensure that she does not face further imprisonment due to her background and previous activities.

Details of her identity are being withheld by the Centre for her protection and will be released upon confirmation that it would not pose any threat to her well being.

The group had hired a guide who charged each member 1200 yuan. After travelling for 13 days, about a four hour drive from the Tibet-Nepal border, the group stopped for the night. They were immediately surrounded by 15 Public Security Bureau officials of Nyima County, and taken to Nyima County in Ngari Region.

The group was detained in Nyima County for three days and then transferred to Panga County where they were detained for two more days. Then they were transferred to Nagchu regional prison where they were repeatedly interrogated for five weeks. The group maintained their claim that they were on a pilgrimage to Mount Kailash. However, the officials refused to believe them and the group was further interrogated in separate cells.

P escaped from the prison window in Nyima County with four other people but she does not know what happened to the rest of the members in the group.

## 'PATRIOTIC RE-EDUCATION' IN SCHOOLS

Namdhar Tsering (18) is from Tsongon Province (Ch: Qinghai Province) Thungren County Rigomo Township. He was a student at the Tsolho (Ch: Hainan) Daru Middle school. He started his schooling when he was six and completed his primary school by the time he was twelve. He continued his studies in the Hainan Prefecture ethnic nationality middle school. This school is divided into lower, middle and higher middle school.

Namdhar gave the following account on the school he attended in Hainan.

"There are approximately 800 students in this school out of which there are only 10 Tibetans. The land where the school is situated belongs to a Tibetan. This is the biggest and the best school in Hainan Prefecture. The Chinese students are mostly children of the Chinese officials and big Chinese businessmen. There are a few Muslim children. Not many Tibetans can attend this school. It is only children from rich families or those who have parents working for the Chinese government who can afford to attend this school. There are about 50 teachers, none of whom are Tibetan, but there are two Chinese Muslims. The school holidays honour the Muslim and Chinese calendar but not a single Tibetan festival is observed".

The main subjects taught are Chinese, Maths, English, politics etc. There are no Tibetan studies. The language of instruction is Chinese. The Tibetan children are taught political science by teaching atheism, and opposing His Holiness the Dalai Lama. However, the school officials often contradict their views about atheism by enforcing respect and recognition of the Panchen Lama selected by China. We are told to denounce the Panchen Lama recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In 1996 one of my Tibetan friends gave me a small pendant with a picture of His Holiness in it; I would wear it all the time. One day in class I was feeling hot and removed a shirt button exposing my pendant. One of the Chinese teachers saw it and took me to the staff office where they snatched the pendant off my neck. They told me that I was not allowed to wear it anymore. They added as part of their admonishment that His Holiness is a splittist. I felt terrible but because I was a mere student I could not say anything. I was at the mercy of these people.

I completed this course in three years after which I sat for an entrance test in July 1998. If I passed in this test I could easily be designated a job. I failed in this test, but despite my failure I was employed in a business sector in August 1999. This office which had in recent times faced bankruptcy due to the increase in private enterprises had no capital to pay wages to its employees. I chose not to take up this job".

**Correction**  
Although published in our previous Update, Namloyak had never before visited India. He was confused with his friend, Lukar Jam. We apologise for the mistake.

## 'Work team' in Pekarhang Monastery

Gendun Gyaltzen started primary school at the age of eight at Mepa village school. He studied there for about six years. When he turned fifteen, he joined Thunri County ethnic nationality middle school and he studied there for three years after which he intended to join a teacher training school in Rebkong County. Due to his entrance examination failure, he was unable to join this school. One month later, on December 3, 1993, he decided to become a monk and join Pekarhang Monastery in Mepa village in Thunri County. This monastery was of the Gelug sect order and had only 60 monks. Despite the relatively small number of residents, the monks had to bring their food supplies from their homes.

In March 1996, a 15-member 'work-team' from three levels of the government - Region, Prefecture and County - visited the monastery and ordered all monks to assemble for a meeting. During the meeting, the monks were told the principles around which their religious practice should revolve; 'splittism', pro-independence ideologies and possession of pictures of the Dalai Lama were few of the restrictive principles imposed on the monks. The monks were left with no choice but to leave the monastery after 10 days of 're-education'.

In July 1997, 'work-team' members returned to the monastery. Further intensive 're-education' was given to the monks. They stayed at the monastery for 15 days and made several violent attacks on the monks. The monks were forced to accept the instructions chalked out by the 'work-team' members. The monks who were 18 and older were made to sit for an 'entrance test' and the 20 monks below 18 were expelled. The test was to ensure complete adherence to the 'work team' members' indoctrination. The members also announced that those who failed to give satisfactory answers would not be accepted, thus they would eventually be forced to leave the monastery. Two monks failed the entrance test and were subsequently ordered to leave the monastery. Some of the expelled monks eventually returned to the monastery

following the departure of the 'work team' members.

It was reported that in June 1998 an eight-member 'work-team' visited the monastery for the third time and they stayed for 20 days. This time the 'patriotic re-education' was conducted even more seriously. The monks were made to sit for another gruelling political test whereby the answers were already prepared and the monks just had to select the 'correct' choice. The questions included opposing the Dalai Lama. The monks were compelled to sign the answer sheet upon completion but they refused and made excuses about being sick and illiterate. The 'work team' members ordered the Disciplinary Management Committee of the monastery to get the papers signed by the monks. The members subsequently left the monastery. The problem still persists.

Gedun left the monastery before being forced to do the things against his virtues and wishes.

After his departure from the monastery, Gedun heard that the 'work team' members would come again to conduct the final 're-education' in 1999.

In October 1997, Gedun reached Garchi village on his way to Amdo Rebkong County. While he was in Garchi, a violent dispute between Ling village and Shonpa Village broke out over pasture lands. There were several shootings and consequently nine people were reportedly injured in the fight. They were taken to the Rebkong County hospital. The Chinese government does not try to solve these problems and actually does what it can to foster tension and disputes within the Tibetan community.

## Tibetan students face dual problems of unemployment and confiscation of land

Sangye Kyab (26) reached India in June 1999. He is a former student from Trika County, Tsolho TAP in Tso-ngo Province. He came into exile because despite his education, he was facing

severe problems stemming from his unemployment. Sangye had entered Lob-chung school (Primary school) at the age of nine and studied Tibetan and Chinese for three years. In Lob-chung a year course is divided into two semesters. Students are charged 60 yuan for each semester. After completing Lob-chung, he joined Lobdring School (Middle school) which is divided into two sections, Lower Middle School and Upper Middle School. The duration of each section is three years.

In the Lower Middle School every residential student has to pay 250 gyama of barley, 30 gyama of oil, and 150 yuan as tuition fees for each semester. For non-residential students fees are only 150 yuan. (1 gyama is equivalent to 500 grams)

In 1991, Sangye Kyab joined Tsolho Teachers Training School and completed it after two years. In Upper Middle school students are required to pay an amount of 300 yuan as tuition fees, 250 gyama of barley, 30 gyama of oil.

In the teachers training school, the students are required to pay 380 gyama of barley annually and 500 yuan per semester. In 1994, Sangye studied in Nub-Jhang Nationalities High School for another four years. Sangye completed his high school education on June 11, 1998. In Nub-Jang Nationalities school, the students need to pay 1000 yuan in the first year and 380 yuan in the subsequent year.

A total of 150 Tibetan students, four from Trika County, completed their 'high school' education in 1998. None of the four students from Trika County have obtained jobs in the government sectors and are now working with their parents on their farms. Many other Tibetan students who completed high school were also forced to return to their hometowns due to the authorities refusal to assist them in job placement.

It is these exorbitant tuition fees and no future prospect of obtaining employment after completion of studies that has made many Tibetans reluctant to send their children to school or undertake further studies.

Furthermore, the policy by which the land of an admitted Tibetan student is taken over by the government also interferes with Tibetan children's access to educational facilities. The land taken is

contd on p. 4

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS FATHER

Bhutuk is a 22 year-old from Drampa Township in Gyantse County, Shigatse region. He was once a monk of Drongtso Monastery in Gyantse County, one of the biggest monasteries in Gyantse County before the Cultural Revolution in 1959 in which it was completely destroyed. His father's name is Lobsang Khetsun and he is 64 years old. He was also a former monk of Drongtso Monastery. After the Chinese occupied Tibet, Lobsang was forced to withdraw from the monastery. Moreover, he was subjected to public humiliation (Tibetan: Thamzing) due to his good family background. When Chinese policy loosened in the early 1980's, Bhutuk's father and a few of his friends collected donations from the local Tibetan people and renovated the monastery; he even started teaching scriptures to the smaller monks and took care of the overall administration of the monastery.

In October 1989, Bhutuk's father and a friend pasted leaflets on the gate of the Chinese government office in Drongtso Township. The leaflets read: "Tibet is free", "Tibetan people need rights" and "Chinese quit Tibet". In March 1990, the Gyantse County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials arrested Lobsang and his friend while they were in the midst of a village meeting. They were held in Gyantse PSB Detention Centre for more than five months. On July 24, 1990 Gyantse County People's Court sentenced his father and his friend to three years' imprisonment. They were both charged with 'counter revolutionary propaganda' and transferred to

Drapchi Prison thereafter.

In 1996, Bhutuk's father and his friend were released upon completion of their prison term. However, even after their release, restrictions were imposed on them especially to Lobsang because he was the only person in his village at his age that had political connections.

Bhutuk suffered from the environment in which he grew up and understood the problems of the Tibetan people as based on the lay sector or religious institutions. He saw his father suffer both from his treatment in prison and the harassment he has had to endure since his release. Bhutuk felt he had to do something about it.

While still at the monastery, in May 1996 Bhutuk and his friend, Ngodup (23) initiated a poster campaign modelled after his fathers' seven years earlier. They pasted similar political leaflets all over the town, on lampposts, monasteries and other prominent places. They even distributed cassettes of speeches of the Dalai Lama. At that time, the 'work team' officials were present at the monastery. They matched the handwriting on the posters and the monks' answer sheets to trace the source of the materials. The answer sheet is part of the 'patriotic re-education' campaign carried out by the Chinese 'work team' members.

In May 1996, the two were arrested by Gyantse County PSB

and were detained in Gyantse Detention Centre for three months after which they were transferred to Shigatse Nyari Detention Centre.

In November 1996, Shigatse Intermediate People's Court sentenced them to five years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. They were charged with 'counter revolutionary propaganda'. Their family members were not allowed to visit them in prison until their sentences were confirmed. They were kept in Shigatse Detention Centre for 15 days after which they were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

Bhutuk and his friend are currently incarcerated in Drapchi Prison.

### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT**

Dear Readers,

Please note that as of July 1999, our fortnightly Human Rights Update will be made a monthly publication. This change is to enhance the quality of the content of our publications.

We hope the change does not inconvenience you. We assure you that any urgent information which needs to be immediately relayed shall be done so in the form of press releases.

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handed over to a newborn child, or to those who have not received their share of land.

It has been almost a year since Sangye completed his studies and found himself in the dilemma of unemployment. His land has been confiscated by the government and he is enduring great difficulties in trying to eke out a living.

Sometimes, the authorities are unable to pay salary for a month or two. Presently, teachers as well as other government employees may not receive their wages for several months. However, Tibetan employees are forced to remain in school as they do not have anywhere else to go because their land has been taken. Most students who graduate speaking Tibetan

have limited job opportunities and often end up doing mediocre teaching or translation work.

As Sangye struggled to find work, he was forced to remain at home like most of the young Tibetans in his village who work with their parents as farmers or nomads. Sangye's family consists of seven members, and possesses 12 mu of land on which they mostly grow barley. Farmers cannot sell their yield to enterprises other than the government. The government pays less than the market rate. The authorities only pay 65 yuan, whereas the market price is about 95 yuan per 100 gyama of barley. Furthermore, farmers are subjected to various levies which amount to about 2000 yuan every year.

1 mu is equivalent to 67 sq. mtrs

### Revised Birth control policy

In another report in English by the Official Chinese news agency of June 23, 1999, the Kanze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in China's Sichuan province has given 822 households certificates for one-child couples.

This revised one-child policy regulation is to encourage new birth control procedures. The Chinese government has targetted households, providing families incentives such as school enrolment, medical care and employment. This encourages families to adopt birth control practices without the government having to impose these measures.

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**NEW REPORT**

"Briefing Paper for travellers to Tibet" is the latest addition to our publication. This book provides travellers with background information on the Tibetan situation and some travel guidelines.

This book is free of cost like our other reports but we would appreciate a donation to cover the cost of postage. Thank you.



HUMAN RIGHTS update is a monthly newsletter of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. www@tchrd.org

# HUMAN RIGHTS

# update

JULY 31, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 13

## A NUN'S PRISON SENTENCE EXTENDED TO 21 YEARS



Ngawang in Drapchi Prison uniform

Ngawang Sangdrol, who was serving 17 years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison, had her sentence extended for the third time in October 1998 by the Intermediate Municipal Court of Lhasa, bringing her total sentence to 21 years. She is the longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet.

According to a reliable source from Tibet, Ngawang Sangdrol's sentence was increased by four years due to her participation in the May 1 and 4, 1998 prisoner protests at Drapchi Prison. Earlier reports indicate that since the protests in May last year Ngawang Sangdrol and another nun, Ngawang Choezom from Chubsang Nunnery, were subjected to harsh treatment and were placed in solitary confinement. Sangdrol was suspected as a "ring leader" by Chinese authorities and singled out for ill treatment. Following the Drapchi Prison incidence, 11 prisoners were reported to have died.

Ngawang Sangdrol's prison sentence had previously been prolonged by the Intermediate Municipal Court of Lhasa in October 1993 and July 1996. Born in 1977, Ngawang Sangdrol, now 22 years old, was from Garu Nunnery. She was first arrested when she was only ten years old in 1987 for participating in a demonstration

and was detained for 15 days. On August 28, 1990, at the age of 13, she again joined a demonstration led by nuns from Norbulingkha in Lhasa. She was considered too young to be tried that time and was detained for nine months without charge.

On June 17, 1992, at the age of 15, she had originally been sentenced to three years for attempting to stage a demonstration in Lhasa along with other nuns from Garu Nunnery. She was then charged with "subversive and separatist" activities.

Whilst in Drapchi Prison, Sangdrol's sentence was extended by six years on October 8, 1993 on charges of "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda." Along with thirteen other nuns, she was accused of recording independence songs and poems on a tape recorder and smuggling it outside the prison. In July 1996, her sentence was further extended by eight years for shouting "Free Tibet" while she and other nuns were made to stand in the rain as punishment for failing to clean their prison cells. The latest extension of her prison sentence brought her current sentence to 21 years.

"Article 69 of the Chinese Penal Code clearly stipulates that the maximum sentence of a fixed-term imprisonment cannot exceed 20 years. By extending Sangdrol's prison sentence to 21 years, China has doubtlessly violated its own law," commented Lobsang Nyandak, executive director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

Nyandak urged the Chinese authorities to immediately rectify their illegal action by releasing Ngawang Sangdrol. He further stated that Sangdrol's continued imprisonment will constantly remind the world of the Chinese government's failure to uphold its own law. Nyandak also said

that the Chinese authorities have violated Article 17 of the Chinese Penal Code, which states that minors below the age of 16 will not be held responsible for their infraction. Sangdrol was only 15 years old when she was arrested and sentenced to 3 years on June 17, 1992 on charges of "counter-revolutionary" activities. Her younger brother, Jamphel Tenzin who resides in India, testifies her year of birth as 1977.

Sangdrol's entire family has endured Chinese atrocities. Her father, Namgyal Tashi and brother Tenzin Sherab, were arrested on June 12, 1991 by the Lhasa city PSB after ransacking their house and confiscating pictures of the Dalai Lama and political leaflets. Her father was sentenced to eight years in Drapchi Prison on charges of "counter-revolutionary" activities. His prison term expires this year, and he is expected to be released if his sentence is not prolonged. Sangdrol's mother, Jampa Choezom, died just three days after her father and son were imprisoned. Her brother was detained for 12 months and after his release was forbidden to rejoin his monastery.

Ngawang Sangdrol (lay name: Rigchog) continues to be subjected to harsh treatment. She was placed in solitary confinement on two occasions: in March 1996 (6 months and 10 days) and after the prisoner protests in Drapchi Prison in May 1998. Sangdrol's prison mate, Lobsang Dolma, who spent five years in Drapchi Prison with her, reported that she has had longstanding kidney problems but was only allowed treatment in the prison clinic. She is made to weave wool and is never allowed outside prison to work.

Ngawang Sangdrol is due to be released in the year 2013 at the age of 36. By that time she will have spent 21 years of her prime life in prison. ✪

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday celebration banned



Incense burning ceremony at "Birthday village" in Ngachen Town

Since February this year, security has been intensified in Tibet to prevent any public protest on March 5 and March 10, the 10th anniversary of the 1989 Tibetan demonstration and the 40th anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan National Uprising. It is reported that PSB and PAP officials and local police stations in Lhasa were issued with emergency orders to be alert in all politically sensitive areas in Lhasa on these events. Orders were issued prohibiting residents of Lhasa from assembling two or more people in public places. An official circular was also sent to all educational institutions and government departments. Members of the institutes and departments were ordered to remain inside the office and to refrain from going outside. Any member who wished to travel was required to seek permission from their local offices.

The Chinese authorities are also imposing heavy restrictions on people coming to watch the National Minorities Sports Meet, which is scheduled begin in Lhasa on August 15, 1999. A large number of people from outside Lhasa are expected to visit Lhasa for the event. Strict vigilance is still being observed in Tibet to prevent any disturbances.

A week before the Dalai Lama's 64th birthday, Chinese authorities distributed leaflets prohibiting any celebration. On

July 6th, his birthday, movement of Tibetan people was restricted, and Chinese police patrolled on the way to Ngachen Township near Lhasa City to block every Tibetan from going to the "birthday village" (a place specifically set aside for incense burning ceremony on the birthday of the Dalai Lama).

A monk from Gyutoe Monastery in Lhasa City named Lobsang Choephel attempted the trip but was reportedly arrested on the way and received severe beatings.

Another 60 year-old man was returning to Ngachen when he was stopped and his bags were searched. On finding *Tsampa* (roasted barley flour often used as an offering to dieties) in his bag, he was accused of planning to commemorate the occasion and was beaten severely. The leaflet stated "the celebration of the birthday is against the law of the country as the Dalai Lama fled Tibet since 40 years and not only does he head his clique but also never stopped his splittist activities." The custom of celebrating the birthday is viewed as propagating acts of splittism and instigating masses to oppose the Chinese government. The document also warns that henceforth this event is completely banned and failure to abide shall be seen as ignoring Chinese law and dealt with accordingly. ❀

## Expulsion in Jha Khyung Monastery

Jha Khyung Monastery is the biggest monastery in Lha-Lung County of Malho TAP. An eight-member 'work team' visited this monastery in summer 1998.

At that time there were around 500 monks. They stayed at the monastery conducting 're-education' campaign for about a month. They also distributed books and instructed monks to study them thoroughly.

The second time a 'work team' came to Jha Khyung Monastery in Autumn 1998, there were 80 members. They stayed at the monastery for about 15 days. A total of 200 monks were expelled from the monastery, some of whom disagreed with the 'work team' member's orders and others who were below the age of 18. ❀

## Closure of Gonsar Monastery

In July 1998, a 10-member 'work team' visited Gonsar Monastery in Jhangkar Township, Lhundup County. The members started conducting 'patriotic re-education' campaign to the 20 monks of the monastery.

Most of the monks in the monastery were novice monks. The members forced the monks to oppose His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The monks vehemently refused to comply with the 'work teams' orders saying that they are men of robes and cannot oppose ones own faith. Despite unanimous objection from the monks, the members continued with their campaign. However, they were faced with further aversions from the monks.

Finally, the 'work team' members announced that they were going to close down the monastery and that all monks must return to their respective homes. Around the end of August 1998, all 20 monks were made to return to their villages, and the monastery was closed down. Furthermore, the monks were restricted from rejoining any other monasteries or conduct prayer services in homes.

Gonsar monastery had been completely demolished during the Cultural Revolution. In 1991, the monastery was renovated with the help of the contributions made by Tibetan locals. ❀

## Four Tibetan prisoners await verdict

Ama Lhundup Wangmo, Pa Tashi, Mo Tsephel and Sonam were arrested on August 20, 1998 on grounds of suspicion of indulging in political incitement amongst elderly Tibetans.

The Court did not issue any verdict on them that day and reportedly stated that their cases need further investigation. An informant reported that they were all held in Seitru in May 1999 since their arrest in August.

Since early 1998, elderly Tibetans have been gathering occasionally around Jokhang Temple in Lhasa to offer prayer. Chinese authorities have attached political significance to this gathering and imposed strict surveillance on them since mid-1998. Ama Lhundup Wangmo who is in her sixties, from Tsemonling, in Lhasa City was arrested after officials from the Lhasa Public Security Bureau raided her house on August 20, 1998. She is known to be actively involved in visiting political prisoners. She was arrested on two occasions on suspicion of involvement in political activities in 1987 and 1993. Failing to gather any evidence against her she was released after a brief detention. Pa Tashi, from Lhasa Chingu, Ama Tsepak (Tsephel) from Lhasa Shol and Sonam were also arrested on similar ground.

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

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## Sera monk flees due to 're-education'



Lobsang Tenpa

Lobsang Tenpa (24) from Jhema Township in Phenpo Lhundup County reached India on July 5, 1999. He was a former Sera monk.

His attempt to flee Tibet once in February 1997 failed because he fell sick on the way in Dhingri and had to return to Lhasa where his relatives were staying. He was admitted in the People's Hospital for 15 days after which he went back to his village in Phenpo as some of his friends told him that he was being tracked by Chinese officials. The Chinese authorities had discovered his absence at the monastery when the religious management committee was carrying out a task allocation for the monks.

In April/May 1997, Sera Monastery police and Lhundup County Police visited his house in Phenpo. They started interrogating him about his recent trips to places. They were insinuating about his failed attempt to India. They wanted to find out if any older monks at the monastery had a hand in his escape plans.

After they finished asking him questions, they told him that he was expelled from the monastery and told him to return his 'residential permit' card of the monastery. The authorities reasoned that his expulsion was because of his "refusal to accept the 'work team' member's instructions". He was prohibited from joining any other monastery or going to places other than his village. A family member was asked to guarantee and attest that Lobsang would not indulge himself in any political

activities. However, even after that the County Police did not stop suspecting him of political ties. In December 1998, authorities from the township level who were dispatched by the county authorities came to Phenpo County to check on political suspects. They also called upon Lobsang's house to ask him about his current situation and what he was doing. Such constant restrictions and surveillance prompted him to make immediate plans to flee Tibet at all costs.

Lobsang Tenpa had been detained for over a month in Gutsa Detention Centre and Sangyip Prison for his participation in the March 5, 1988 demonstration during the Great Prayer Festival. He was only 15 then and had endured severe beatings and punishments then. For a young growing child of 15, he witnessed older monks being beaten brutally everywhere on their heads with metal rods at the initial time of arrest without any mercy. However, subsequent to his release he rejoined Sera Monastery and continued with his religious life.

In May 1996 'work team' members visited their monastery to conduct the 'patriotic re-education' campaign. The monks were forced to perform and say things completely against their will. By the end of 1996, Lobsang received the residential permit to stay at the monastery. However, he was not at ease and in March/April 1997, he planned to flee Tibet with another friend from the monastery. That was when he fell sick and had to return home. ❀

## Arrested Monks Sentenced

The two Tibetan monks who were arrested on March 10, 1999 for staging a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa were recently sentenced by the Lhasa City's Intermediate People's Court on charges of "incitement and propaganda." The arrest of the two monks was first reported by Tibet Information Network the same day. However, the details relating to the incident were not known.

Phuntsok Legmon (lay name: Tseten Norbu) and Namdol (lay name: Sonam Choedak) were charged with "incitement and propaganda" activities by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa City on July 9, 1999 and were sentenced to three years and four years respectively.

The monks raised pro-independence slogans in front of Tsuglakhang, the central cathedral of Tibet amid tight security. Within minutes they were arrested by PSB. They were first taken to the local police station in Barkhor and were later detained in Gutsa Detention Centre. Reports received at that time indicated that the monks were severely beaten at the police station. It is believed that they are currently held in Drapchi Prison.

Phuntsok Legmon (17) is from Toelung Dechen County and Namdol (25) is from Phenpo Lhundrup County. They were also deprived of their political rights for two and one year respectively. Both the monks are from Taglungdrag Monastery in Delong County near Lhasa City. ❀

## Sera Monks Arrested

In January and February 1999, in Sera Monastery, the Religious Management Committee and the Sera Monastery Police Station arrested four monks under political suspicions.

All the monks were arrested on different dates. Sonam was arrested on January 8, 1999 and Lhakpa on February 11, 1999. Two days later Pasang was arrested on February 13 followed by Norbu a day later on February 14, 1999. It is not known where they are currently being held. ❀

## Reebok Human Rights Award recipient receives another award



Phuntsok Nyidron

Phuntsok Nyidron was honoured for her courageous sacrifice in the field of human rights by *The June 4th Anniversary Committee* and *The China Peace*.

On June 3, 1999 Phuntsok Nyidron, currently held in Drapchi Prison, received an award for her selfless struggle in advocating and promoting human rights situation in Tibet. This award recognises her continued motivation and determination.

Originally from Phenpo Gyalchoe County, west of Lhasa, Phunstok joined Michungri Nunnery when she was 18 years old. On October 14, 1989, Phunstok led a peaceful demonstration in the Barkhor area. She was later implicated as the 'ringleader' and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment. Whilst in Drapchi, Phunstok and 13 other nuns made a recording on a tape recorder smuggled into the prison which was later secretly circulated in Tibet. Phuntsok's sentence was increased by an additional eight years, bringing her current sentence to 17 years.

Phuntsok is also the recipient of the 1995 Reebok Human Rights Award which honours people from all over the world who have made a significant contribution to the cause of human rights against great odds. ❀

## Expulsions in Lamo Dechen Monastery

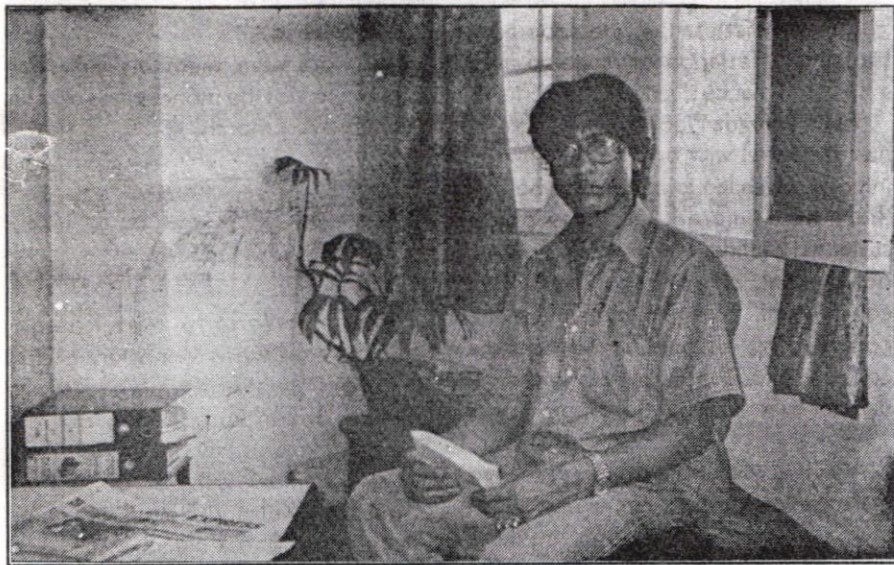
Thupten Monlam left his home on May 29, 1999 for Lhasa to escape into exile. He desires to join a monastery in India. Thupten is a 21 year-old monk of Lamo Dechen Monastery in Chen tsa County, Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tso-ngon Province.

Thupten left this monastery due to the constant harassment by the 'work team' members. In summer (May-July) 1998, when they came for the first time there were around 30 members. During that time they distributed books opposing His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the "splittists" and calling for the unity of the "motherland". About 14 monks who refused to comply with the 'instructions' of the 'work team' members were expelled from the monastery. The members left after staying around 30 days in the monastery.

Then again in August/September 1998, a 25-member 'work team' came to Lamo Dechen Monastery. They distributed the same documents and instructed the monks just as they had done before. All the expenses for their stay at the monastery were borne by the monastery. The monks of Lamo Dechen Monastery tolerated the 'work team' member's callous instructions to a certain extent for they wished to remain at the monastery. However, when the 'work team' members announced a total ban on the possession of pictures of the Dalai Lama, the monks became infuriated. Approximately 90 monks voluntarily left the monastery. Thirty left the monastery to flee into exile, and around 60 monks joined Labrang Tashi Kyil Monastery. Many monks of which the exact figure is not available, also voluntarily left the monastery for their homes. When Thupten left the monastery in the April/May 1999, there were only 75 monks remaining at the monastery out of the 270 when he joined the monastery in 1984.

After the 1999 Tibetan new year (during the 'big-prayer' festival), the 'work team' came again to the monastery. Thupten said that he heard there were around 30 members. He did not acquire any further information but believes that the monks would have definitely been subjected to harsh treatment. ❀

## Testimony of a former political prisoner



Dolkar Kyap in TCHRD office

Dolkar Kyap (28) is from Nyulra Township, Machu County, Ganan TAP in Gansu Province. He reached India in February, 1999 after three years of imprisonment in Gansu Province.

In 1990, when Dolkar was 19 years old, he had visited India and was admitted to Bir School where he studied for two years and seven months. He later worked as a Tibetan teacher at Chauntara School in Bir for one year. Upon hearing that his father's health was critical, he returned to Tibet in April 1994. By June 1994, Dolkar and his two friends, Jigme Jamdruk(36) and Jigme Gyaltsen (36) (both monks of Lhabrang Tashi Kyil) became politically active. They distributed political leaflets and documents and showed at Machu County hospital a videotape smuggled from India.

On August 15 1994, they pasted leaflets on the gates of offices in Machu County, lampposts, walls and notice boards. In September 1994, because he had to attend Nubchang Ethnic School, Dolkar gave documents such as the Future Democratic Constitution of Tibet to Jigme Jamdruk for distribution.

In January and February 1995, Dolkar, Jigme Gyaltsen, and Jigme Jamdruk distributed His Holiness the Dalai Lama's March 10, 1994 statement and his 1993 Human Right's Day Speech. The statements were made available in such towns and counties as Machu County, Nyulra Township, Marimey, and gawang

Tsang. On April 1, 1995, Gansu TAP security police arrested Dolkar from his school. A few weeks later, Sha kha County PSB arrested from the monastery Jigme Jamdruk on May 19 and Jigme Gyaltsen on May 21, 1995.

Upon his arrest, Dolkar was taken to Landrou Denchak office where he was detained in a guesthouse for 17 days. His detention involved long periods of standing, being slammed against the wall and floor, and being suspended for few hours a day in an aerial position for 12 days. He was next transferred to Kanlho Detention Centre, where he was kept for four months. He was thence taken to Machu County Detention Centre, where he was held for three months and thence to Ganan TAP Detention Centre until September 19, 1996, when he received the benefit of a trial. In all the detention centres, he was intensively interrogated and cruelly beaten. During his entire detention, he was never allowed to receive any visitors.

Dolkar was convicted of propagating 'counterrevolutionary' activities namely 'Tibetan independence ideology' and 'threatening the unity' of the Socialist State of People's Republic of China. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights by the Khenlo Intermediate People's Court.

Jigme Jamdruk was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights. Jigme

Shedrup (who fell ill after his arrest) was released on medical parole.

Dolkar served his three years in Kachu Prison, which is in Lingshak Hoyrik Autonomous Prefecture. The prison has eight units and four sub-units and has about 2000 prisoners comprising of Chinese, Tibetan, Uighurs, Mongolians and Chinese Muslims. The forced labour at the prison is mainly metal works, wood works, weaving, mechanical, tailoring and shoe repairing in the prison. Dolkar was kept in the fifth unit, where he worked stitching hand gloves.

Dolkar reports that illness is very common in the prison. The prisoners must—except for lunch and dinner breaks—work six days per week from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Many prisoners suffer severe cough and throat ailments due to dusty working conditions in the mattress 'weaving and thrashing' units of the prison. Cases of prisoners dying due to negligence and inadequate medical treatment are common. For example, in August and September of 1997, eight non-political prisoners died as a combined result of intense forced labour and untimely medical treatment. The prison doctors (absent a bribe, which is sometimes provided) consider diseases like fever and influenza to be minor ailments, which they will not treat until the patient's health becomes critical. Prisoners who suffer from infectious diseases are not isolated from the rest of the medical unit.

During 'Saka Dawa' (a special month for religious practise), when Tibetan prisoners gather together for prayers and food, the Prison authorities criticise and physically assault the inmates for discussing 'splittists' news. Two Tibetans (Tatho and A-Dham) were thus severely beaten and placed in solitary confinement. So too, the Muslim prisoners are forbidden from observing their religious fast.

When Province officials came for inspections, the prison authorities strictly ordered prisoners to clean and refurbish the units. The prisoners were not allowed to use the toilets so that it would remain clean at the time of inspection.

Dolkar, now in exile, aspires to continue his studies. ❁

## A Political Prisoner torture to Death

According to Jamyang Dhondup who arrived in Dharamsala in January 1999, 25 year-old political prisoner named Lhadar died while in detention centre in September 1993.

Lhadar was a thanka painter from Ghemo Monastery in Lithang County, Karze Tibetan Autonomous prefecture. He was arrested on August 20, 1993 for pasting posters calling for independence of Tibet around his monastery. His friends Jamyang and two other men from Lithang were arrested on August 19, 1993, on similar activities. All of them were held in Karze Prefecture Lithang District prison around the same time and were kept in different cells and interrogated separately. All of them have been released except for Ngawang Choephel who continues to be incarcerated in Ngapa Prison serving his ten-year sentence.

Lhadar was reportedly severely tortured by prison officials. He died a month after his arrest in the detention centre. His arms and legs were manacled at the time of his death. Fellow inmates later informed his friends that he drew a picture of Guru Padmasambhava on the prison wall and left a message that read: "I am going to the realm of Padmasambhava. China cannot be trusted. Therefore all Tibetans should be united." These were the last words of Lhadar before his death.

Refugees from Lithang in 1994 had reportedly stated then, "For two whole days, Tibetans refused to take custody of Lhadar's corpse from the prison because the Chinese authorities refused to give satisfactory explanation for his sudden death. According to them, there seem to be little doubt in their minds that Chinese police were "totally responsible" for Lhadar's demise. They would not buy Chinese police story that Lhadar "Committed suicide" while in custody. ❀

## Death of an Innocent Man

Chimey Rinzin was arrested on behalf of his father, who had been absconding since committing a murder of a Chinese man. Prison officials, reportedly with a

promise that his father would show himself to rescue his son, arrested the 23 year-old Chimey. He was brutally tortured when he failed to disclose the whereabouts of his father. He reportedly suffered from mental imbalance due to severe torture.

Whilst in Amdo Ngaba prison, Chimey had a quarrel with one of the Chinese inmates which led to a fight and both of them were injured. Chimey again sustained beatings for the fighting and as punishment, he was kept in solitary confinement. When he came out of the confinement, his health had become completely frail due to internal injuries and an hour later he died in the prison in April 1997.

After his death, his prison mates sent a message to his family members but prison officials refused to hand over the dead body. ❀

## Religious institutions in Lhatse County visited by 'work team'

In April 1998 an 11-member 'work team' visited Lhatse County to conduct the 'patriotic re-education' campaign in all the monasteries and nunneries of Lhatse County. They were Kundhen Nunnery, Shengkhang Lhaka Monastery, Sharchen and Lhatse Chatae Monastery. All the monks and nuns were instructed to assemble in Lhatse Chatae Monastery. The monks and nuns were ordered to denounce the Dalai Lama and call for the unity of the motherland.

Tsering Chokey and a fellow nun of Kundhen Nunnery decided to voluntarily leave the nunnery as they were not prepared to accept the principles of the 'work team' members. There are currently only nine nuns at Kundhen Nunnery. This nunnery was built in August 1980 with the help of donations collected by the nuns as well as contributions from the locals in Lhatse County.

Another two monks were expelled from Lhatse Chatae Monastery as they refused

to comply with the orders of the 'work team' officials. The monks said that they could not bear the idea of opposing His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The 'work team' members reportedly continue to visit the monasteries and the Nunnery every month. ❀

## Arrest Update

Kalsang Wangdu and Kalsang Tsering from Pangsa Monastery, Meldro Gongkar were arrested in June 1997 for pasting pro-independence posters. Kalsang Wangdu (lay name: Kardro), a 21 year-old monk, is the son of Ngawang Nyima and Kalsang Tsering (lay name: Gyagdro), a 20 year-old monk, is the son of Trebhu. They pasted posters around their monastery on June 1, 1997. While Wangdu was arrested on June 12, 1997 Tsering was arrested few days later on June 17. Both of them were sentenced to six years and are currently being held in Drapchi Prison.

Ngawang, 27-year-old and Nyima Tenzin, 23 year-old, both from Meldro Gongkar were arrested in early June 1993 for pasting posters calling for independence of Tibet. Ngawang is the elder brother of Kalsang Tsering and was a monk of Dagpa Monastery. Nyima Tenzin, son of Kunchok Palden, was a monk of Pangsa Monastery. They were both involved in pasting pro-independence posters on the evening of May 31, 1993. Both of them were sentenced to eight years and are currently serving their sentence in Drapchi Prison.

Lobsang Tsundrue, 47 year-old nomad from Meldro Gongkar was arrested sometime in June 1993 and was sentenced to eight years in Drapchi Prison. His father's name is Sherab. He was charged of hoisting the banned Tibetan national flag on the Gaden Wangpo hill in early 1993. Tsundrue was also arrested earlier in December 1989 for pasting posters calling for independence of Tibet around Ruthog township. At that time he was sentenced to three years and was imprisoned at the prison in Meldro Gongkar County. ❀

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## TIBETAN LADY ORACLE SENTENCED TO EIGHT YEARS

Dolma Tsamchoe is a 61 year-old from Hampa Village, Ruthog Township in Meldro Gongkar County. She is serving an eight-year sentence in Drapchi Prison for calling for Tibet's independence in a stage of trance when the medium of a local diety entered her body. Her daughter, Zomkyi, who is in exile, is seriously concerned about her mother's health whom she has not heard of since 1994.

Dolma comes from a nomadic background in Tibet. She has six children: four sons and two daughters. Dolma was a plain housewife and her daily routine revolved around taking care of household chores. She led a comfortable life as most of her children were already independent of her livelihood. As they were nomads, none of the family members had ever been to school.

Dolma's first encounter with the medium started since the introduction of liberalisation policy towards the end of 1979. At that time many monasteries which were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution were renovated and there was reportedly religious freedom.

Her family members initially kept it a secret from the other locals and even prohibited Dolma from stepping out of the house. Dolma had no control over the medium's entrance into her body and was constantly falling into trance.

However, gradually people came to know about the medium and

started to visit Dolma's house. They came to seek her blessings and also ask her to perform divinations for household matters. Nobody knew which particular deity it was but would listen to everything she uttered. She started to make visits to the different villages in Meldro and give them teachings.

Eventually she had many devotees, and most of the people would listen to her. According to Zomkyi, her mother in the state of a trance, would make direct accusations against culprits who committ theft and robbery, slaughter animals and object to stopping such practices.

In 1993, Dolma reportedly toured seven villages around Ruthog where in front of assembled crowds she shouted "Tibet is independent, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the supreme leader leader of Tibet, Independence of Tibet is coming soon, All Tsampa eating Tibetans, unite". She had reportedly raised these slogans while in the stage of a trance.

While the medium was successfully getting support from the people for independence activities, Dolma's health was deteriorating. Everytime the medium entered her body it was draining her. Dolma was constantly complaining of fatigue and was bedridden most of the time. All this while, Dolma was never aware of what happened to her when the medium entered.

In the village of Rinchen ling

during the tour, she made the people shout "Free Tibet" three times. Rinchen ling has a population of little above 200 people.

Within the same month, Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials of Meldro Gongkar arrested Dolma from her house. Her son-in-law and her nephew were also arrested at the same time. They were all detained in Meldro Gongkar PSB Detention Centre. Despite her age and poor health, none of the family members were allowed to visit her while in detention. The police arrested her son-in-law and nephew because they escorted her from Rinchen ling to her home.

After two months of detention, Dolma was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre and the other two were released from prison.

Dolma was detained in Gutsa for two months after which she was sentenced by the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court to eight years for 'counter-revolutionary propaganda'. Thereafter, she was transferred to Drapchi Prison.

While in Drapchi during the Winter of 1994, the medium entered her body again. The prison officials came to know about it, and locked her in solitary confinement for roughly ten days.

In Drapchi, Dolma's responsibility is to water the plants and sweep the prison. Her age and her poor health raise serious concern to all her family members and relatives. ❁

## TCHRD Condemns ban on the Fulan Gong Sect by China

Press Statement: Lobsang Nyandak, the executive director of the TCHRD, condemned the Chinese government's relentless hounding of the followers of Fulan Gong, a mystical sect which claims 70 million followers in China. "This is a reflection of the leadership's nervousness in losing the hearts and minds of the Chinese people to organised religious groups, which these days are mushrooming in China. China's ban on the Fulan Gong sect is a clear deviation from the principles of the Chinese Constitution that guarantee freedom of religious worship. The practices of the members of the Fulan Gong clearly fall within the legal framework of the Chinese Constitution. The harassment of the followers

and the ban on the sect is a case of blatant trampling of the fundamental rights of the Chinese people. This action not only exposes China's insincerity in upholding the international human rights instruments to which it is a state party but also demonstrates that China does not believe in religious freedom," added Nyandak. He said that the ban on the Fulan Gong sect has received unprecedented media coverage. Less covered by the media, though no less harassed, are Tibetan monks and nuns who refuse to denounce their religious leader, the Dalai Lama despite arrest and expulsion.

The state of religious freedom in Tibet is far worse than in China. In 1996 the authorities in Tibet launched a campaign

to strike at monasteries and nunneries to "re-educate" Tibetans who continue to revere His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Since the campaign, around 10,569 monks and nuns have been expelled from their religious institutions and over 500 arrested and jailed for defying Chinese authorities. The campaign continues to be carried out in various religious institutions and was extended to the lay community in Tibet since late 1998.

Nyandak reiterated that the ban on the practice of religion has to do more with the Chinese leadership's perception of losing control rather than the legality of the practice of religion. ❁

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The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is an independent centre which aims to promote and protect human rights and a democratic polity for Tibet. It attempts to educate Tibetans on human rights principles and to work with other human rights and democracy groups as part of a worldwide movement towards these ends. TCHRD is registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act 21 of 1860.

If you would like to subscribe to TCHRD's monthly Human Rights Update or to order one of our publications, please send your name and postal details (including e-mail) to our office.

TCHRD's publications:

1996 Annual Report: *Tibet: One More Year of Political Repression* (English and Tibetan editions) • 1997 Annual Report: *China in Tibet: Striking Hard Against Human Rights* (English and Tibetan editions) • 1998 Annual Report: *Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity* • Behind Bars: *Prison Conditions in Tibet* (1998) • Closing the Doors: *Religious Repression in Tibet* (1998) • *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • *Democracy: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Fearless Voices: *Accounts of Tibetan Former Political Prisoners* (1998) • *Human Rights: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • South East Asia: *Human Rights NGO Seminar on Tibet* (Proceedings) (1998) • *Tales of Terror: Torture in Tibet* (1999) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999).

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#### New publication

"Briefing Paper for travellers to Tibet" is the latest addition to our publication. This book provides travellers with background information on the Tibetan situation and some travel guidelines.

This book is free of cost like our other reports but we would appreciate a donation to cover the cost of postage.

Thank you



# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

HUMAN RIGHTS *update*  
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## TIBETAN TRANSLATOR DETAINED IN QINGHAI

**Tsering Dorjee, 26, was detained in China on August 15 for assisting two foreigners investigating the impact of a World Bank Project.**

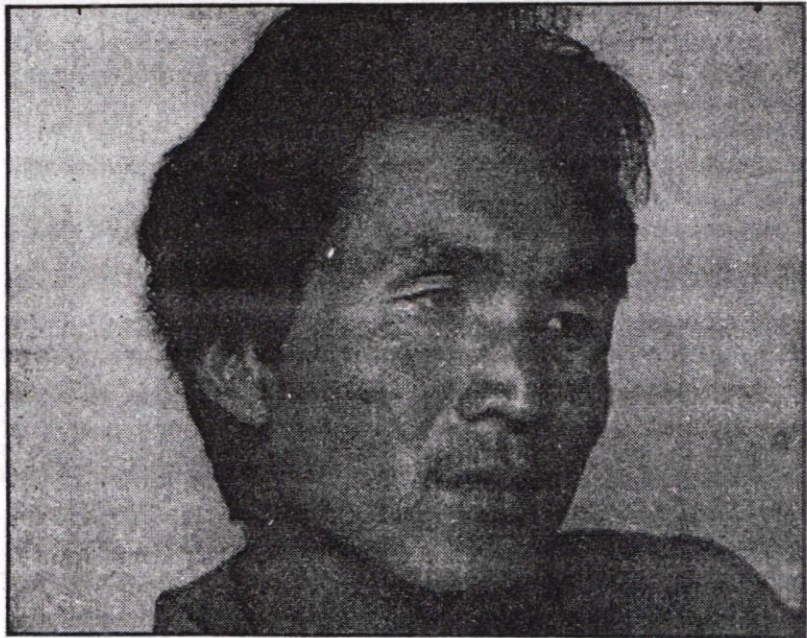
Tsering Dorjee, a Tibetan who was working as a Chinese translator was arrested on August 15, 1999 on the charge of having assisted two foreigners who were investigating a proposed World Bank project. Tsering, from Rebkong County, Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, was arrested along with two western scholars - Gabriel Laffite, an Australian and Daja Meston, an American.

While the two westerners have been released, the whereabouts or physical condition of Tsering is still unknown. There is no information of China having brought formal charges against Tsering, nor has China officially confirmed Tsering's detention.

On Thursday, August 26, 1999, Human Rights Watch expressed concern about the detention of Tsering and stated that he is likely to be "at serious risk of torture." The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, similar organisations and other supporters, also fear that Tsering may be severely punished because of his ethnic Tibetan background.

After his release, Gabriel Lafitte expressed serious concern over the condition of his detained translator Tsering by stating "far worse still is the fate of my translator Tsering Dorje, who has no foreign government to intercede on his behalf. When the secret police yell that they can do anything they want, this is undoubtedly true of their own citizens, especially those of minority ethnicity such as my friend."

According to the International Campaign for Tibet, Tsering, Lafitte and Meston had been detained in Dulan



Tsering Dorjee (Photo: Courtesy Tibet Times)

County, Qinghai Province, the site of the proposed World Bank poverty reduction and resettlement project.

Just a few months ago, China promised the World Bank that it would allow foreign media and researchers to investigate the project site at "any time." However, Chinese authorities broke their vow, accused the researchers of engaging in an "illegal investigation," and wrongfully detained them and Tsering.

Tsering was a junior middle school teacher from Tsekok County who spoke Tibetan, English and Chinese. In 1997, he reportedly worked as an official translator for the Brussels-based non-government organisation, "Medecins Sans Frontieres" in Yushul County and for a project funded by the European Union in Darlag County, Golok Prefecture in Qinghai Province. \*

### URGENT ACTION

Join the TCHRD's campaign in writing to the Chinese President and the President of the World Bank to ask for the immediate and unconditional release of Tsering Dorjee.

Jiang Zemin  
The President of the PRC  
Guojia Zhixi, Beijingshi  
People's Republic of China

James Wolfensohn  
President, World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20433, USA

Mrs. Mary Robinson  
Email- webadmin.hchr@unog.ch

## Two Westerners Arrested in Connection with Relocation Project

On August 15, Chinese officials detained and interrogated two western researchers and their Tibetan tour guide in Dulan County in China's western Qinghai Province. Gabriel Lafitte, 50, an Australian, and Daja Meston, 29, an American, were travelling through the province on tourist visas to conduct independent research aimed to assess the impact of a proposed World Bank Poverty reduction project.

While Beijing told the World Bank that foreigners, including journalists and representatives of non-governmental organisations, would be permitted to investigate the proposed project, Chinese officials claimed that Lafitte and Meston had been "carrying out activities that were not in line" with their duties. They accused the pair of conducting research which was not entrusted by the World Bank and travelling into a restricted area which they were not permitted to visit.

After being held in isolation for nearly a week, the Chinese finally deported Lafitte on August 21. Lafitte, a research Associate at the Melbourne University Institute of Asian Language and Societies, was released after being "cooperative" with Chinese officials during the interrogation process by confessing and repenting for his "illegal activities". By complying with Chinese policy of apology and self-criticism, Lafitte was apparently rewarded with a release.

Meston, who works for a charity affiliated with Harvard University, suffered from serious injuries after falling from a hotel-room window while attempting to escape interrogation. There is no evidence that he was tortured or tossed from the window. He was recently released after the Chinese forced him to confess and apologise for having entered a "restricted area." He arrived safely in Hong Kong for medical treatment on Thursday, August 26. Prior to that, he was receiving medical treatment at a hospital in Xining.

Washington-based Bank Information Centre has been raising money for Meston's enormous medical bills. So far, the information centre, which assists non-governmental organisations, has raised

\$58,000 for Meston, who does not have medical insurance. The group estimates it could take months for Meston to recover, and the cost of his medical flight to Boston alone could be as high as \$ 100,00.

The third person, Tsering Dorjee who acted as a guide and translator, has not been seen since the three were first detained.

The World Bank Project is a US\$160 million plan which was designed to benefit nearly 1.7 million of the poorest people in China. The project is divided into three components, the first of which allocates US \$40 million for the resettlement of about 60,000 poor farmers, mainly Chinese, from eastern Qinghai Province to Dulan County in western Qinghai Province.

The project raised much controversy between China, who claims that the population transfer will alleviate poverty, and Tibetan rights activists, who believe that the influx of Chinese will dilute the traditional Tibetan culture in the province.

The proposal underwent serious international scrutiny and criticism but was finally approved after China assured public inspections in the Qinghai area. According to a World Bank Press Release, the World Bank's Board of Directors stipulated that "no work be done and no funds be disbursed for the US \$40 million Qinghai component of the project until the Bank decides on the results of any review by an inspection panel."

It also notes that the Chinese government notified directors that it would facilitate visits to the project site by diplomats, government officials, members of parliaments and the media and that the visitors would be welcome to have extensive contacts with the local people, unattended by Chinese officials.

The unsubstantiated arrest of the two foreign researchers was a blatant violation of the Chinese government's promise to the World Bank to allow inspections in the area.

Upon release, Lafitte told reporters that although he had not been physically abused during his week-long captivity, he had been denied sleep during which he

was under constant scrutiny. He also described his detention as a time of "calculated and systematic cruelty" at the hands of the Chinese authorities.

Apparently Lafitte and Meston were not held in the same room. Lafitte believes that Meston may have been driven to extreme measures of mental torture that provoked him to attempt escape. \*

## Australian Senator Sneaks into Tibet

Tibetans have had mixed feelings about visits by foreign officials to Tibet over the last few years. Since foreign diplomats are typically escorted by Chinese officials on a strictly regulated tour only to places where the authorities are well prepared, foreign officials receive very limited exposure to the ground reality in Tibet. Such structured government directed tours often lead many of the visiting delegates to come out with appeasing reports in favor of the Chinese government as opposed to reports that clearly depict the real, objective situation in Tibet. A source from Tibet supports this point, reporting that, "prior to any such visits things are kept under control as they are government organised."

On the other hand, foreign officials who visit Tibet independently, not through diplomatic channels, have a better chance to see and understand the reality of Tibet and are more likely to deliver to the world true reports about Chinese oppression. A recent visit by an Australian Senator in the guise of an ordinary traveler illustrates this point. The following account was described by Australian Senator, Bob Brown, a key member of the Green Party, after his nine day unofficial visit to Tibet in July 1999.

"Tibet is more heavily militarized than any other place I have ever been to - it is difficult to walk a block anywhere in Lhasa without coming across militia or police", said the Senator at a press briefing on his return to Beijing. Senator Brown expounded on his impressions, describing

an "underworld of misery" for Tibetans living in "the largest militarized colony on the face of the planet."

"The streets of Lhasa remain under virtual siege by Chinese militia as tensions run high between Tibetans loyal to the exiled Dalai Lama and the communist regime that has ruled the region with an iron fist for 40 years," he added. "When you land at Lhasa there are military barracks at the back of the airport. At a bridge half way into town, you see soldiers armed with semi-automatic weapons at either end as well as in the center."

While such independent visits open a window to the underworld of Tibet, such encounters by foreign officials are rare. Senator Brown was only the second foreign politician to visit Tibet unaccompanied by Chinese officials since 1959. Posing as a holiday maker, he circumvented Chinese visa regulations which bar prominent western figures from visiting Tibet. The first foreign politician was a United States Congressman, Frank Wolf, who had visited Tibet for five days as a tourist in August 1997 and later described China's occupation as a "death grip" on the region's indigenous population and culture.

Like Congressman Wolf, Senator Brown was upset by what he saw during his visit. In fact, he was so appalled that he requested Australia's ambassador to China, Ric Smith, to organise a meeting with Chinese officials and media to make his feelings known. The Senator believes the time has come for Australia and the world to stand up to Chinese oppression, reported the AFP.

Throughout his visit, Senator Brown had been approached by young Tibetans asking for his help and swearing allegiance to the Dalai Lama. He observed, "when you can get away to the religious centres around Lhasa, away from the presence of military personnel and surveillance cameras, in unanimity people will talk about their wish for a free Tibet and their resentment of Chinese rule."

Unlike many foreign diplomats who are guided by Chinese officials, Senator Brown, in his own words, "came away very angry... particularly with those people that go there hosted by the Chinese in five star facilities but not the barbed wire." ❀

## Themchen Refugee Portrays Injustice in Amdo

Kunsang Gyal, a 23-year-old from Themchen County in the Tso-Nub Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai (Amdo) Province, arrived Dharamsala, on August 21, 1999. During his testimony he gave a detailed account of the unfair education and political systems in Themchen County in Amdo.

### The Teacher Training School: Unfair Quotas Placed on Tibetans and other Minorities

After completing lower and middle school, Kunsang attended the Tsonub Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's Nationalities Teacher Training School. In this school there are 380 students, of which 240 are Chinese, 60 are Tibetan and 60 are Mongols. The remaining 20 are from other ethnic communities. While the school was established for minorities, the school admits more Chinese students than all minority groups combined. In fact, the school has established a quota system which limits admission to 60 Tibetan and 60 Mongolian students each year.

With such quotas in place, the vast majority of minorities cannot further their education as the Teacher's Training School is the only higher education schooling available to students of Themchen.

Kunsang expressed his disdain for the quota system, stating that, "receiving more Chinese students is a direct contradiction of the purpose of the school." He further believes that "quotas imposed on the numbers of Tibetans and Mongols in the school is aimed to restrain their numbers."

### Illiteracy in Themchen: A Problem Not Adequately Addressed

According to 1995 population statistics, a total of 17,000 people live in Themchen County, of which the vast majority are Tibetan. The survey reported that approx. 9,000 Tibetans were illiterate.

However, based on the results of a simple exam which was administered in 1998, the Chinese authorities claim that

only 400 people are illiterate. Kunsang reports however, that the Chinese administered exams are misleading. Kunsang reports that the exams are not conducted on a systematic basis, that not all individuals are tested, and that literate individuals often take exams for their illiterate friends. Kunsang believes that the Chinese are attempting to hide the true illiteracy rate of the Tibetan people in order to avoid having to allocate funds to eradicate the problem. Last year the Department allotted only about 5,000 yuan for literacy training.

### Themchen County Political System: Illustrations of Injustice

According to the election laws of China, no person has the authority to dismiss a county leader (such as Themchen) that has been elected by the People's Congress of that county. However, in Themchen, many Tibetans who have been elected by the People's Congress have been sacked by the higher level Prefecture authorities, for no justifiable reason, while the elected Chinese officials are being retained for the full term. Additionally, after Tibetans are either dismissed or transferred, the Prefecture leaders replace them with Chinese leaders. In this way, the rights of the Tibetan people are clearly being violated.

The composition of political leaders in Kunsang's county demonstrates the disproportionate representation of the Tibetan population that occurs with such an unfair election system. Amongst the four deputy governors in Themchen, 2 are Tibetan and 2 are Chinese, although the vast majority of the inhabitants are Tibetan. Kunsang points out, "the election is not conducted democratically, rather it is a one way traffic."

An illustration of the unfairness of the political system is the story of Hren-pe, a 38-year-old who was elected by Themchen County's People's Congress as a deputy governor in August 1998. The higher Prefecture authorities later dismissed him and transferred him to a lower ranking position in a factory in Wulan County for no justifiable reason. Hren-

pe was well known for his contribution to the Tibetan people and was a good person.

Further adding to the injustice, all candidates in a county election are nominated by the higher Prefecture leaders. Therefore, the Tibetans have no choice but to select from the list provided.

### Suppression of Freedom of Expression:

Kunsang believes that every individual has the freedom to learn, to write factual history and to express his opinion. He believes that it is important to respect the right of everyone to practice the religion of their choice. However, Tibetans in Tibet are denied these rights. The following accounts from Amdo are testimonies of such injustice.

Chakdor Tsering, a 30-year-old from Amdo Lhabrang, was under much scrutiny by the district security officials and Chinese teachers while studying at the Tibetan Teacher's Training school in the Tsoe City from 1989 to 1992. His moves were always observed as they suspected him of holding anti-Chinese views and feared he would create some unpleasant stir in the university. After the completion of his studies, he worked as the editor of the "Daser", a quarterly Tibetan journal of the Kan-Lho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in Gansu Province. In June 1997, Chakdor was reportedly detained for political reasons. To date, nothing is known of his whereabouts.

The story of Menlha Kyab, a famous Tibetan comedian and writer from Tsolho (Ch: Hainan), Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai (Amdo) Province, also illustrates the injustice towards Tibetans. Menlha was arrested along with 28 other Tibetans, and detained in June or July 1993, just prior to a visit by Chinese President Jiang Zemin to the province. They were suspected of distributing pro-independence leaflets during the President's visit. Menlha was recently reported to have suffered a serious mental breakdown as a result of his imprisonment.

Another man named Monlam, a singer from Lhabrang in Gansu Province, was arrested sometime in 1997-98 and later released after being detained for three months. He was arrested for having composed a song, which contained political undertones. \*

## 'Work-Team' in Bora Monastery

Sonam Choephel, is a 20-year-old from Bora town in Sangchu County in Gansu Tibetan Autonomous prefecture. He belongs to an agricultural family. From the age of 8-9 he went to the Bora County Primary School for five years. The main subjects taught were Tibetan, Chinese and mathematics. After completing his primary school he joined the middle school at his shang. He studied in this school for a year and a half and later dropped out of that school in 1994. At that time he was only fifteen years old. That same year he became a monk at the Bora Monastery.

The Bora monastery was demolished during the Cultural Revolution 1969-79. Prior to 1979, there were 300 monks in the monastery. The monastery was renovated in 1980 by the funds gathered from the local people. There was not even a single yuan subsidy from the government for the renovation. The renovation finished in 1995, and the monastery has been running as usual with 300 monks, the same number prior to the cultural revolution.

From the period of 1994 to 1997, the County Religious Department sent seven staff members per year to supervise the operation of the monastery and to hold meetings with the heads of the monastery.

In June 1998 a four-member Chinese 'work-team' came from the County Public Security Bureau (PSB) to the monastery for the first time. They took pictures of all the monks and collected 10 Yuan from each monk to make an Identity Card. They called all the monks at the monastery into the main prayer hall and encouraged them to embrace "patriotism". They left after two days.

About a month later, in July 1998, a seven-member Chinese 'work team' arrived at the monastery. At that time there were 350 monks, out of which 310 monks were issued ID cards. The rest of monks who were all between 60-70 years of age, were not issued ID cards. The authorities collected an additional 10 yuan from all those who were issued with the ID card. After a day the 'work team' left the monastery.

Then on July 13, 1998, a 12-member 'work-team' arrived at the monastery from the three levels of Province, Prefecture and

County. The formal 'patriotic re-education' started at that time. All the monks were called for a meeting where 30 novice monks below the age of 13 were expelled from the monastery and instructed to join schools in the place of their origin. Another 36 who were between 13-18 years of age were expelled. In this case they were not allowed to rejoin other monasteries. In total, 66 monks were expelled. There are currently only 285 monks at the monastery.

The remaining monks were divided into four groups, and a leader was appointed for each group. Political leaflets were distributed. The group leader was supposed to collect and distribute the documents regarding the 're-education.' For four days the 'work-teams' continuously came at 8:00 in the morning and stayed till 5:00 in the evening. Within the four days they collected all the pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Gedun Choekyi Nyima, the reincarnate Panchen Lama appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They also set the schedule for the groups to study. Everyday the monks had to study for five hours from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Each monk after a day's study, was expected to give in writing to their group leaders what they studied during the day. This system was to go on for six months.

Every month about eight 'work-team' members came back to the monastery to check on the progress of the 're-education'. The main component of the 're-education' was to oppose His Holiness the Dalai Lama and to make them study the Chinese Constitution and the Chinese Legal System. The 'work-team' finally left on December 7, 1998.

In May 1999, a ten-member 'work-team' came to the monastery for the fourth time. They claimed that the six month 're-education' programme in the previous year was not up to the expectation of the 'work-team' members. They insisted that by the end of the session, each monk have his thumb prints on a document which denounces His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In 1998, not just the Bora Monastery, but all of the 108 monasteries in Sangchu County were visited by a 'work-team' for six months. Upon assessing the

effectiveness of the 're-education', the Chinese authorities found out that some monasteries still displayed pictures of HH in their monasteries. This instigated the 'work-team' members to announce on April 21, 1999 to visit monasteries again. It is not decided for how long the 're-education' will last this time.

Sonam could not bear the thought of another 're-education' in his monastery; therefore, on June 21, he voluntarily left his monastery and reached Lhasa on July 5, 1999. He reached Nepal on July 23, 1999 and finally Dharamsala on August 22, 1999. \*

## Family Flees to Seek Education for Their Children

Tashi Gyaltzen, a 27 year old nomad from Serchen Township of Drongpa County in the Ngari Region of Tibet, arrived in Dharamsala on July 31, 1999 with his wife and two sons ages two and six. The family came to India in hopes of procuring proper education for their children. The harsh living conditions in Tibet have apparently worn on the children as they appear feeble and malnourished. Upon reaching Dharamsala Tashi's older son was able to secure admission to the Tibetan Children's Village School in Dharamsala, India.

Tashi explained that he cannot afford to send his children to school in Tibet. The fees charged are simply too high for his family which lived in very poor conditions. In addition to a monthly fee of 300 yuan, Tashi had to pay the school 2 gyama (1kg) of butter, a part of sheep's leg, 4 gyama (2kg) of roasted barley flour, 3 gyama of rice (1 1/2 kg) and 4 gyama (2 kg) of wheat per year.

In Tibet, Tashi owned 24 livestock including four yaks and 20 goat and sheep, on which the Chinese authorities imposed various taxes. These taxes were not collected in accordance with either the central or the state regulated tax system but rather on an arbitrary basis. During the butter-procuring period from April to

June, Tashi's family like other Tibetan nomads had to pay 150 yuan per month from the butter procured. Every summer during the wool sheering season, the nomads have to pay 5 yuan for every four gyama of wool. Tashi's family was also charged 10 yuan per animals as a grass tax. Tashi's family received about 20 gyama (10 kg) of wool from the animals, and thus had to pay 25 yuan last summer.

As a nomad Tashi's family was completely dependent on their livestock

and lived in a tent which they had to move from one place to another to seek greener pastures every season. The imposition of various taxes on these livestock and their products made it difficult for their family to meet basic necessities like food and clothing. Therefore, Tashi had to work for a wealthier Tibetan family for three years for a meager salary of 30 yuan per month.

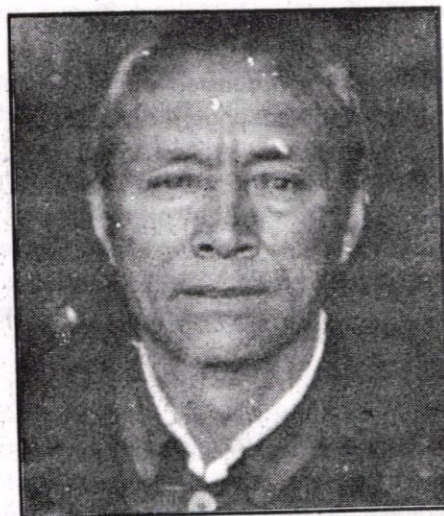
In Tashi's village there are 68 families, out of which about 20 are poor like Tashi's family. \*

## Gyaye Phuntsok Released on Medical Parole

In August 1998, the Qinghai Public Security Bureau (PSB) raided Gyaye Phuntsok's house, in Gyaye village, Chabcha County (Ch:Gonghe) in Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (Ch:Hainan) in Qinghai Province and found documents and speeches of the Dalai Lama. Gyaye (68) was immediately arrested and taken in a truck to Siling (Ch:Xining) Prison, in the capital of Qinghai. From August 1998 to July 1999, his whereabouts were kept a secret. TCHRD treated his case as disappearance and reported the incident on April 7, 1999. In July 1999, he was sentenced to six years by the Tsolho Intermediate People's Court.

Recently received information indicated that Gyaye was interrogated for eight days after his arrest. Throughout this time he was kept standing and was denied food and sleep. After this harsh treatment his feet swelled and he had to use crutches to walk. He was denied any medical treatment.

According to an unofficial source from Tibet, Gyaye was released on medical parole. The exact date of his release is yet to be discerned; however, the source reported on August 20, 1999 that all medical expenses of Gyaye were to be covered by his family. Gyaye was also reported to have been kept under strict surveillance and restricted from leaving Qinghai by the Tsolho PSB. He is



Gyaye Phuntsok

reportedly now admitted in Chabcha People's Hospital.

Gyaye was a well known figure in Chabcha County for his altruistic contribution in giving free education to the young Tibetan children in the village. He sought the funds himself and built a school that had over 60 students to whom he taught Tibetan, English, Chinese and mathematics. He was also a member of Chabcha County Political Consultative of Tsolho TAP.

Gyaye Phuntsok had earlier visited India in March 1992 for a pilgrimage with valid Chinese travel documents. Upon his return from India in June 1992, he was interrogated several times. \*

## Work-team in Ragya Monastery

Lobsang Phunstok, a 25-year-old monk from Machen County in Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Tsongkhong Province, arrived in Dharamsala on August 22, 1999.

When he was 15, Lobsang became a monk at Ragya Monastery. Prior to that, he did not attend school, but rather stayed at home with his nomadic family.

When Lobsang first became a monk at Ragya Monastery in 1989, there were about 300 monks; however, that number has grown and the monastery currently houses 480 monks.

In October 1998, a work team, comprised of 40 people (30 Chinese and 10 Tibetans) visited Ragya Monastery for the first time. Upon their arrival, they requested that the 130 monks who were under 18 years of age leave the monastery; however, they did not pressure them to obey this request. The work team then proceeded to remove all the pictures of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama that is recognized by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The officials then called a meeting during which they gave the monks three books to study: the first discussed the Chinese legal system; the second explained the difference between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama; and the third taught the love of religion and love of the nation. While the officials officially "distributed" the first book, they required each monk to pay 8 yuan for his copy. The officials did not distribute the second book on His Holiness and the Panchen Lama, but rather used it as a teaching manual.

The officials required the monks to take an exam on the aforementioned subjects. However, only 18 monks took the exam. All monks above age 60 were not given the chance to take the exam.

In this exam, the monks were asked to answer five questions. From these five questions, Lobsang could clearly remember only two. The first asked, "What are the contradicting views

between the Chinese and the Dalai Lama?" The second asked, "how long have the Chinese been ruling Tibet?" According to the work team, the correct answer for the second question is that Chinese have ruled Tibet for 751 years. The monks wrote 51 years. Since the monks showed no interest in violating His Holiness, they didn't "do well" in the exam. According to the work team, 95% of the monks did not "do well" in the exam.

The officials told the monks that they were not asking them to oppose the Dalai Lama, but rather to oppose his government. Despite the request, the monks didn't easily give up their ideas. Luckily, the work team was a bit lenient and did not use any force. Some monks even pasted posters advertising "Free Tibet", but the officials did not take much effort to find the wrong-doer. Instead, the officials peacefully explained everything regarding Chinese policies and asked the monks to follow them.

A second work team consisting of 20 officials (15 Tibetans and 5 Chinese) from the county and prefecture levels arrived on April 26, 1999. This time, the officials stayed for only a few days. They administered another exam, but provided a format so that the way of answering would be easier than in the previous exam. This time, the answers were already written on the exam and the monks were supposed to "tick" the written answer. The officials never officially explained the exam system. Instead, they merely called a group of three monks from each datsang, (a separate unit within the monastery) and told each group to "tick" the "correct" written answers.

Again, in May 1999, a work team of 3 or 4 people visited Ragya Monastery and stayed for only one day. That day, a meeting was held during which the work team decided that the re-education program had come to an end. However, another 3 person work team came again in July 1999 during

which they decided to impose a ceiling of 160 monks. As the current number is 480, many of the monks at Ragya Monastery will have to leave.

During the July visit, the officials also concluded that the education program did not seem to produce good results. Before leaving, they announced that they would soon come again to re-educate the monks. After hearing that news, Lobsang decided to start his journey to India. He reached Dharamsala on August 22, 1999.

Lobsang added as an additional note that Tsultrim, 25, an ex-monk of Ragya Monastery, was arrested last year merely for bringing five important books from India which discussed the freedom of Tibet. He was detained for seven days but was later released by paying a fine of 15,000 yuan. \*

## Discrimination of Tibetans in Work Sector

Upon his arrival in Dharamsala on August 23, 1999, Luthar Gyal, age 22, from Chanong Village in Chekok township, Thongren County, Malho (Ch: Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, testified to TCHRD of the discrimination he faced at his work in Gold Refinery.

Luthar went to Lobchung Lower School for five years, from age eight to thirteen. After graduation, he attempted to secure admission in the Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture Middle School; however, he had difficulty passing the entrance exam because it was conducted in Chinese. He therefore returned to his parents' home for six years to help them with their farming work.

At the age of 19, Luthar obtained work at the Thongren County Gold Refinery in Mapa Village (Ch: Thongren County Shungpung Chu Chenkhang). Luthar's

*Continued on page 8*

*profile* This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

**Over the past few years Tibetans have been sentenced for long prison term for exercising their rights. Tibetans who show their allegiance to the Dalai Lama are considered to have disregarded the constitution of the state. Staging peaceful demonstrations and raising freedom slogans are considered as endangering to the state security law. Yeshe Ngawang is an example of one who is facing fourteen years imprisonment and deprivation of political rights.**

Yeshe Ngawang is a 32 year-old from village # 3, Chideshol Kyimshe town in Gongkar County, Lhoka Region. Before his arrest, he was a monk in Sungrabling Monastery in Chideshol.

On March 10, 1989, when Yeshe was 21 years old, Yeshe and five other monks, Yeshe Damdul (23), Yeshe Tsering (22), Paljor Choegyel (22), Chemi Tsering (19) and Tsultrim Jampa (23) planned to put up independent posters to commemorate the March 10th Uprising of 1959.

The six monks wrote freedom slogans such as "Chinese get out of Tibet", "Long Live HH" and "Free Tibet" on eight 2 x 3 sized posters. They then pasted the posters next to the gate and surrounding walls near the office of the People's Government of Kyimshe Township at 11:00 p.m. They also wrote freedom slogans with red paint on the same gate.

On March 15, 1989 while Yeshe Ngawang, Yeshe Damdul and Yeshe Tsering pasted three posters in the market place of Chideshol Township, the rest of the monks kept watch for policemen patrolling in the night. Although they managed to get back to their monastery, a patrolman saw what they did.

On March 17, 1989, Gongkar County Public Security Bureau (PSB) Officials came to the monastery, ransacked the rooms of the six monks, and found all the instruments used to make the posters.

On April 20, 1989, Yeshe Ngawang, Yeshe Tsering, Chemi Tsering and Tsultrim Jampa were arrested at the monastery. They were detained in Lhoka PSB Detention Centre. Each was interrogated 10-15 times within four months of detention. They were formally arrested in May 1989. On August 9, 1989 the six were taken for trial by the Lhoka branch procuratorate.

Subsequently on October 30, 1989, TAR Lhoka Intermediate People's Court held a trial whereby the six were charged with "counter-revolutionary" propaganda. Their court verdict stated that the six had shown disregard to the Constitution of the state by showing allegiance to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and by 'disrupting' peace and harmony by pasting 'counter-revolutionary' posters. They were charged with having violated Article 102 and sections 22, 23, 24, 52 and 60 of the Criminal Law.

Yeshe Ngawang and Yeshe Damdul were sentenced to five years imprisonment and three years deprivation of political rights. Yeshe Tsering was sentenced to four years imprisonment and one-year deprivation of political rights. The others were all sentenced to three years imprisonment and one-year deprivation of political rights. In November 1989, all six were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

While in prison, Yeshe Ngawang was sent to work in the vegetable

garden (greenhouse). In December 1990, when another political prisoner, Lhakpa Tsering (20) died in custody, the political prisoners created an uproar in which Yeshe also participated.

On April 27, 1991 five political prisoners were singled out and transferred as punishment for attempting to hand over a letter to U.S. Ambassador James Lilley. Thinking that the five men had been killed, the prisoners initiated a mass protest which was violently suppressed by prison officials. Because Yeshe Ngawang was one of the main leaders of the protest, he received severe beatings and was solitarily confined for a month along with a fellow inmate. Several other prisoners were confined for a week. While confined, Yeshe received further beatings.

On April 20 1993, at the time of prison visits, Yeshe reportedly handed over an entire list of political prisoners and the prison conditions in Drapchi to his visiting family. This was discovered by the prison officials who subjected Yeshe to another one-month of solitary confinement. He was charged with "leaking state secrets" and his sentence was extended by another nine years, bringing his total sentence to 14 years. Yeshe's health has deteriorated considerably since the time he was arrested. Yeshe is expected to be released in 2003.

job was manual, requiring him to put gold ore into the furnace to be processed and refined. The refinery employed a total of 170 workers, out of which 20 were Tibetan. The Chinese workers were paid around 500-800 yuan per month, and Tibetans were paid from 200-400 yuan per month. Luthar reports that all the Chinese counterparts in the industry are engaged in white collar jobs, whereas Tibetans are entrusted with manual, physically risky jobs.

The actual mining of the ore, which began in 1991, is being carried out in Shungpung Chu, Gertse Shang, Thongren County in the Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. It is estimated that every day, 10-truck loads of mineral ore are transported from Shungpung Chu to

be refined. It is estimated that every four months 50 trucks of gold (9 tons per truck) are transported from the refinery to China via Xining.

Luthar reported that the pollution generated from the mining industry has negatively affected the health of the local nomads. The Chinese authorities have destroyed vast expanses of forest and farming land in order to construct offices, quarters, guest houses and hotels and to build roads to facilitate easier and faster transport of minerals. The Tibetans are not even compensated for their confiscated land. Many of the local Tibetans in the area are also believed to be suffering from lung diseases.

He also reported that the gold in the area is almost exhausted. The authorities

are currently investigating a new spot called Lunche in Thongren County for excavation.

In September 1998 Luthar Gyal went to Lhasa on pilgrimage and stayed for 10 days. When Luthar returned to work, the authorities told him that he had been sacked from work for having tried to escape to India. Luthar's repeated request to reinstate him in the job was unheard. Luthar was therefore compelled to return home and continue to do his farming work.

On June 29, 1999, Luthar left for Lhasa via Xining. Along with 28 other Tibetans, he fled for India after making payment of 500 yuan to a guide. He finally reached Nepal after 18 days, and arrived in Dharamsala on August 23, 1999. ✻

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

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VOLUME IV NUMBER 15

## NALANDA MONK DIES DUE TO PRISON BEATINGS DURING DETENTION

Norbu, a twenty-two year-old monk from Nalanda Monastery died in March 1999, almost three years after his release from Gutsa Detention Centre.

Norbu sustained severe injuries during his detention in Gutsa from February 1995 to February 1996. Norbu was arrested along with 34 other monks after the crackdown at Nalanda Monastery following the monks' resistance to a 're-education' campaign conducted by the 'work team' members.

According to a former Nalanda monk who is now in exile, Norbu was arrested on February 25, 1995, subsequent to the detention of Nyima Kelsang, a fellow monk from Nalanda Monastery. Nyima was arrested when he was caught wearing a badge of the Tibetan national flag on his robe. He was immediately taken to County Public Security Bureau (PSB) detention centre. When news of his arrest reached Nalanda Monastery, Sonam Dondrup, a senior monk and Norbu's teacher from Nalanda Monastery, Penpa and Migmar went to see him at the detention centre. The PSB official detained them but released Penpa and Migmar that night at 10 p.m. Sonam continued to be held on grounds of suspicion of involvement in pro-independence activities.

Two days later, on February 27, Phenpo County PSB officials and 20 People's Armed Police (PAP) personnel arrived at Nalanda Monastery at around 6 p.m. They came to raid Sonam's room. However, fearing such operation, prior to their arrival, Norbu, Penchung, Paljor Wangyal and Choesang removed all documents on Tibet's independence, a

wooden block print and a Tibetan national flag from Sonam's room. Moreover, Norbu refused to let the police enter by keeping the keys to Sonam's locked room.

Meanwhile, Sonam was compelled to admit his involvement in political activities during interrogation. On February 25, 1995, PSB officials arrested Norbu and the three other fellow monks. Norbu was 17 years old at that time. They were taken to the County PSB detention centre. On February 28, 1995, Norbu and the other monks were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre in Lhasa City. Ten days later, the PSB officials discovered all the hidden materials.

In Gutsa during interrogation, PSB officials accused him of hiding the documents and brutally treated him despite his age. Norbu continued to suffer such ill treatment for a long time during his detainment. Yet, he was denied any medical treatment, and his condition deteriorated.

Norbu was released in February 1996 on medical parole.

Norbu's family did everything possible to recuperate his health condition. For a while, he was even admitted to the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) People's Hospital. His treatment expenses were a drain on the family's resources, while his health never improved. Until Norbu's last breath, he did not mention anything about the ill-treatment he endured while in detainment.

Norbu was from Druge Township, Phenpo County, in Lhasa City. He is survived by his father Wangyal, and mother Atog. He has four older sisters,

and was the youngest child of the family.

Nalanda Monastery in Phenpo has spawned resistance to Chinese occupation since 1992. Many monks have faced arrest and long-term detention due to their poster campaigns and their violent resistance to the 'work team' members' arrival in 1995. More than thirty monks were arrested at that time, and many others were expelled. The 'work team' members categorised the monks in terms of their allegiance to His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the monastery. Since then, many of the expelled monks and former prison inmates from Nalanda Monastery have fled into exile where they have shared their experiences of the violent clampdown by the Chinese authorities.

In September 1998, Legshe Loten, from Nalanda Monastery told TCHRD, "I met Norbu on November 7, 1996. Norbu's health had worsened to such an extent that he could not turn his head. He had to twist his whole body every time he needed to look another direction. Moreover, he could not bend his leg; therefore he dragged his leg whenever he walked. He was behaving in a very peculiar manner walking up and down for no reason. He could not speak to me normally. He suffered permanent physical and mental injury since his release from Gutsa Detention Centre".

A relative of Norbu also told Loten that since Norbu was released from the detention centre, he had developed a strange phobia and was mostly depressed. Towards his final days, he was not even capable of walking on his own. Norbu died in March 1999 at his home. He was 22 years old at the time of his death. ❁

## Another death due to torture in prison

Ngawang Jinpa, also known as Lobsang Dawa, a Gaden Monastery monk who was imprisoned in Drapchi, died in Phenpo County, his hometown, on May 20, 1999. He was 31 years old when he died.

Ngawang's health first began to deteriorate after he was arrested for participating in a protest at Gaden Monastery on May 6, 1996. After his arrest, he was detained at Gutsa Detention Centre for eight months where he was severely beaten. According to Legshey Drugdak, a Nalanda monk from Phenpo County who shared a prison cell with Ngawang, "He arrived in Drapchi Prison in a very weak condition. Despite this, the prison officials continued to torture him and force him to work". Legshey was released in January 1998 after spending three years in Drapchi Prison.

In March 1999, Ngawang's health grew so poor that the Chinese authorities took him to 'Tibet Autonomous Region' (TAR) Military Hospital near Sera Monastery, where he was diagnosed with brain damage. The doctors extracted fluid from his spine, a painful procedure that is performed to treat elevated intra-cranial pressure, a condition that can result from repeated blows on the head. Ngawang's condition was so hopeless that the Chinese authorities released him on medical parole on March 14, 1999.

Ngawang, along with some 43 monks, were arrested on May 7, 1996 during a raid conducted by Chinese authorities at Gaden Monastery. The raid took place the day after hundreds of monks threw out a team of Chinese officials who had instructed the monks to take down pictures of the Dalai Lama on display in the monastery. They claimed that possession of the Dalai Lama's photo signified "an irreligious and anti-Buddhist act with a political objective of splitting the motherland and working against patriotism." In the morning of May 7, Chinese soldiers fired warning shots with automatic weapons and reportedly shot five monks, resulting in the death of one monk named Kelsang Nyendrak and severe injuries to the others.

Upon their arrests, the Gaden monks,

including Ngawang Jinpa, were detained at Gutsa Detention Centre where they were reportedly beaten and tortured. The Chinese intermittently released some monks over the next few months and subsequently expelled them from the monastery. In January 1997, 25 Gaden monks were tried by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court and sentenced from 1 to 15 years.

The Court sentenced Ngawang Jinpa to 12 years in Drapchi Prison and deprived him of his political rights for four years on charges of having participated in 'counter-revolutionary' activities. He was released on medical parole after serving almost three years in prison and died only two months after his release.

Gaden monks who are still serving prison sentences include: Bagdro, Po-Lhoe and Jampa Tenkyong, sentenced to 15 years; Passang Tsegyal, Penpa, Yonten Gyalpo, Kunchok Dhondup and Khedrup, sentenced to 12 years; A-Tsak, Lobsang Wangchuk, Tsering Bhagdro and Tasang, sentenced to 10 years; Jampa Thaye and Sonam Tsering, sentenced to five years and Lhaksam Gyaltsen, Penpa and Tsultrim Gyaltsen, sentenced to three years.

Ngawang began his education at the age of seven at the Langdhar Town Public School. He left the school in 1987 to become a monk at Gaden Monastery. When he joined the monastery at the age of 19, his lay name, Lobsang Dawa, was replaced with his religious name, Ngawang Jinpa. At Gaden, he worked as a shopkeeper from 1987 to 1993, and from 1994 to 1996 he was a student of Buddhist dialectics.

He is survived by his father, Dorjee, and his mother, Kalsang Dolma, who are farmers in Phenpo County. ❀

## Kirti monk sentenced to five years' imprisonment

Lobsang Kunchok a 23 year-old also known as Choedar was a former monk in Kirti Monastery in Ngaba County. He was arrested in April 1999 by Ngaba County Public Security Bureau from his monastery. He was arrested on charges of pasting

many independence posters around Ngaba County, which called for 'Free Tibet and Long live of HHDL'. His room was thoroughly searched by the Ngaba County PSB, and he was detained in Ngaba County Detention Centre for three days.

His parents were not allowed to meet him while he was in detention. He was sentenced by the Barkham People's Court to five years' imprisonment. He was then taken to Barkham Prison in Ngapa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. After his sentencing, his parents were finally allowed to visit him in prison. Lobsang was a monk of Kirti Monastery for about 11 years. His parents are farmers, and one of his elder brothers is currently a monk at Kirti Monastery.

## Tsering Dorjee released from Detention

Tsering Dorjee, a 26 year-old Tibetan translator from Rebkong County in Malho was reportedly released from custody. He was earlier detained on charges of assisting two foreign researchers who were investigating a proposed World Bank project. It is unclear whether his release is temporary or final. The US State Department and the Australian government are reportedly seeking confirmation about Tsering's current status from the Chinese authorities following his release from detention.

Tsering was detained on August 15 together with two foreigners in Dulan County, Qinghai. Gabriel Lafitte, a 50-year old Australian scholar was released after a week's detention when he 'confessed' to his 'illegal activities'. Daja Meston, a 29-year old American Tibet specialist was injured when he tried to escape by jumping out of the window. He was sent back to the United States following his injuries.

According to unconfirmed reports from Tibet Information Network, Tsering Dorjee was seen back on campus at Qinghai Teacher Training College in Xining for at least a week, although his status remains unclear. ❀

## Protest during the National Minority Games in Lhasa and waves of arrests

Several incidents of dissent have occurred in Lhasa coinciding with the celebration of the sixth National Minority Games. Despite Chinese authorities' imposition of severe restrictions on Tibetans during the meet, unusual methods of dissident activities have led to waves of arrest in various religious institutions. The celebration took place at the Tibetan capital of Lhasa from August 18 to August 23, 1999.

On August 20, at around 11 a.m. a monk dressed in lay man's clothing shouted "Free Tibet", in front of the Potala Palace. He was subsequently arrested by Lhasa City Public Security Bureau (PSB). He is believed to be a monk from Takdrag Monastery, in Teolung County near Lhasa. His lay name is Ngawang Tsedup, and religious name is Tenzin Wangyal. He is between 16 and 17 years old. His present place of detention is not known.

In another incident on August 26, 1999, Tashi, around 40 years old brought down the Chinese national flag and stamped on it. According to the source, on August 26, at around 10 a.m. during the meeting of all minority people in front of the Potala palace, a man wearing a blue rain jacket emerged from a white government transportation van. He was reportedly carrying a home made bomb and tried to light it before he hoisted the Tibetan national flag on the pole. The bomb did not detonate because it was raining and had therefore become damp. Subsequently, officials of the People's Armed Police (PAP) surrounded him, arrested him, and removed the bomb from his body. Despite receiving beatings, he continued to shout slogans such as "Free Tibet" and "We want freedom". He is presently believed to be admitted to the TAR Police Hospital, near Sera Monastery as he sustained injuries from the beatings he endured at the time of arrest.

According to a confirmed report, Tashi is a resident of Nyangdren Village no. 2 in Lhasa City. PSB officials raided his home and confiscated a mobile phone and a Tibetan flag.

Following his arrest, some of his friends were also arrested and are being interrogated. He lives with his wife and

three children. Tashi was a member of the Chinese youth voluntary association and was on the selection team of the ten best Tibetan youth. Tashi himself was once selected as one of the ten best Tibetan youth. This selection is done on the basis of various qualifications such as educational background and political affiliations.

Since Tashi's arrest, it is reported that the situation has tightened in Lhasa. Severe restrictions are imposed on local Tibetans. Unofficial but reliable sources report that his family members have also been subjected to interrogations since his arrest.

### Arrest of Drepung Monks

On June 16, 1999, three monks from Drepung Monastery were arrested on suspicion of participating in independence activities. They were Jampel Rigzin, Jampel Tsering and an unidentified monk. Reports indicate that Jampel Rigzin endured beatings and is under serious condition although he is currently detained in Gutsa Detention Centre. He is originally from Dongkar village in Teolung Dechen County, Lhasa City. He is 34 years old. Further details on the incident are unknown.

### Arrest of Karze monks

In yet another unconfirmed report received from Tibet, on July 20, 1999, eleven Karze monks were arrested. They had allegedly written "Free Tibet" in bold red letters with paint on the gates and walls of their monastery. Karze monastery situated in Sichuan Province was visited by 'work team' members in June 1998 although no expulsions were reported at that time.

### Sera incident

Following the series of resistance activities, monks from Sera Monastery hoisted the Tibetan national flag and pasted political leaflets around the monastery. Reportedly, thirty monks were subsequently expelled from the monastery. ❀

## Two arrests and two expulsions from Tawu Nyitso Monastery

In June/July 1998, a 13-member 'work team' came to Tawu Nyitso Monastery from Tawu County in Kanze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture to conduct 'patriotic re-education' campaign. Do-Lho, a former monk, voluntarily left this monastery and is now in exile. He reported that two monks were expelled and another two were arrested.

Despite threats of expulsion, the monks vehemently opposed the 'work team's' forced signature campaign. The monks were supposedly asked to sign a document which proclaimed their opposition to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his 'splittists activities'. However, during one of the 're-education' sessions two monks protested against the instructions of the 'work team' members. Nyima Dhargay around 40 years old and another monk named Jampa Tenkyong around 36 refused to accept the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama and to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Later 'work team' members expelled both the monks from the monastery by labeling them as instigators. They further disallowed them from performing any religious activity in and around the Tawu region. Presently, both the monks are staying in their homes.

In August 1998 in Tawu County, a few independence posters were seen around the public places, Tawu County bank and on the walls of the circumambulation and the gate of Tawu Nyitso Monastery. The posters called for the independence of Tibet and the Chinese to quit Tibet.

The Tawu Public Security Bureau investigated into the matter but failed to find anything. The case was left unattended until June 1999 when two arrests took place. Dakpa, a 23 year-old monk, was arrested by Tawu PSB from Nyitso Monastery on suspicion of the poster incidents. Do-Lho reported that around 15 PSB officials arrived at the monastery and ransacked Dakpa's belongings and his room. After investigation, his room was sealed by the PSB, and he was taken to Tawu County

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PSB Detention Centre.

After almost ten days, another monk named Riglo around 22 years old from the same monastery was arrested by Tawu PSB and detained along with Dakpa in Tawu County. Nobody was allowed to meet the monks while in detention. Even their parents and relatives were refused visitation. Do-Lho reported that presently both the monks continue to be detained in Tawu County Detention Centre.

Tawu Nyitso Monastery reportedly had around 1900 monks before the Cultural Revolution when it was completely destroyed. During the 1980's, the local Tibetans in Tawu County started reconstructing the monastery, and at present there are around 570 monks.

DoLho left his monastery in August/September of 1999 and reached Nepal on September 10, 1999. ❀

## Nine year-old boy tells terrifying experiences

Rinzin, a nine year-old boy, is from Derge County, Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. Rinzin succeeded in reaching India after his second attempt. On his first attempted escape he was detained for 26 days in an army camp two days' drive from Nepal. Upon reaching Dharamsala, Rinzin described his personal experiences on his escape journey to India.

At the age of eight he came to Lhasa to stay with his uncle. While in Lhasa, he was admitted to primary school near Bakhor where for a year he studied Chinese, Tibetan and Math.

"My uncle advised me that it is better to go to India where I can obtain proper education and at the same time learn some English and Math, after which I can return to Lhasa", said Rinzin who reached India on September 12, 1999. During his first escape bid to India, Rinzin was sent along with 40 people including three children. The group left Lhasa in January 1999 and travelled for eight days until they reached a place where they

halted for the night.

That night, the group sat down in a cave for dinner. Afterwards when the group began to move, an army vehicle with about 20 armed personnel followed them. Upon seeing the group fleeing, the army fired three shots in the air. "As I tried to run forward, I was pulled down by the weight of my coat and fell down", recalls Rinzin.

Soon the army rounded up the group. Men were forced to surrender and ordered to take out all their possessions. During the shooting, a bullet hit an 18 year old boy. The bullet pierced one side of the ribs and protruded from the other side. Rinzin said that he was terrified to see the body of the injured boy. Four soldiers then took the injured boy in their vehicle. The boy is believed to be from Jondha County in Chamdo region. The boy was so much in pain that he was overheard urging the armed personnel to shoot him to death. Immediately afterwards they heard that the boy was taken away to the hospital.

A little while later, another bullet struck the right leg of a 14 year-old boy who fell down. After three days, they heard the news that the boy died as a result of the wound. From the group, 29 of the 40 were arrested.

The group was later detained in a locked room for 10 days. Rinzin reported that they had to knock on the door to urinate. The guard would then open the door and lead them to urination. Otherwise, they kept a dog which constantly guarded the room. When somebody tried to go out, the dog would bark at them. During the 10 days of their detention, Rinzin reports that they were allowed to prepare food for themselves, with utensils borrowed from the army.

Thereafter, they were taken to Shigatse, where women and children were held in separate cells. A man was kept as an attendant for Rinzin, since he was not well with the swollen cheek.

The rest of the other men were taken to another, unknown detention centre. Rinzin's group was detained for 28 days in Shigatse. Rinzin says that he was released two days ahead of the others due to his swollen cheek. Rinzin thereafter returned to his uncle in Lhasa.

Upon reaching Lhasa, Rinzin re-joined the same school. After five months, Rinzin was again sent along with three men from

Monkham. This time Rinzin was able to reach safely in Nepal on August 20, 1999. He arrived Dharamsala on September 12, 1999. Rinzin is currently studying in Tibetan Homes Foundation in Mussoorie in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. ❀

## Novice monk fled to escape 're-education' session

Tibetan monks continue to be harassed by the Chinese 'work team re-education' campaign in the monastery. So far, the campaign has resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of several monks and nuns, while many more continue to face expulsion. At present, Chinese 'work teams' are permanently stationed in many of the religious institutions, and the activities of the monks are closely monitored. As a result, the work team intervention disturbs the monks' religious practice and the ancient tradition of early religious education to young monks.

One such impacted monk is Samdup Lungtok, 18, from Gyamo town, Sangchu County, Kanna Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in Gansu province. Samdup fled to India to avoid denunciation of the Dalai Lama and potential expulsion.

Samdup lived with his parents and two elder brothers on a farm. There were 500 monks when Samdup joined Gyamo Monastery at the age of 14. In June 1998, the first 'work team' comprising of three members came to the monastery and remained for two days. On the first day a meeting was called, in which the 'work team' denounced the Dalai Lama and instructed the monks to accept the Panchen Lama selected by Chinese government.

On that day, the 'work team' also imposed a ceiling of 300 monks in the monastery and announced that novice monks below 18 years old will not be allowed to remain in the monastery. Samdup thereafter left for Lhasa on July 12, 1998. While Samdup was in Lhasa, he learnt that in August 1998, another work team had visited the monastery and

expelled all the monks below 10 years old. There were approximately 70 novice monks in the monastery at that time.

Samdup's family own 10 mu of land, where they grow wheat, pea, barley and Mustard oilseeds. The farming yield is about 1300 gyama, out of which 300 gyama is paid to the Chinese authorities as tax (these taxes were collected not in accordance with either the central or the state regulated tax system but rather on an arbitrary basis). ❀

## Imprisoned for long-life prayer services

Lhundup Tensang, a 29 year-old, was a former monk of Gaden Choe-khor Monastery in Namling County in Shigatse Prefecture. Lhundup Tensang was appointed the 'chant-master' of Gaden Choe-khor monastery in November/December of 1996 after the arrest of Lhundup Palden. For the three years he was at the monastery, he occasionally offered the long live HHDL prayer services during the gathering of monks. Afraid that he would be arrested like his predecessor, he decided to escape to India. He left his monastery and reached Nepal on September 12, 1999.

'Work team' first came to this monastery in June/July of 1996. Presently, there are around 86 monks in his monastery. There were around 20 officials who came from the County and Prefecture offices.

The 'work team' members divided the monks into groups and took monks aside individually to be 're-educated'. They collected all the pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and imposed a ban on them in the monastery. They also prohibited monks from reciting long-life prayers of His Holiness the Dalai Lama (HHDL) and Panchen Rinpoche inside the monastery. They collected all the prayer scriptures related to it. Then they started to individually question the monks. During this time, they discovered that Lhundup Palden, the chant master had initiated the forbidden prayers during the 1996 Tibetan New Year. Lhundup was

interrogated by 'work team' members for two days who also searched his room. He was handed over to Namling County Public Security Bureau for further interrogation and detained in Namling Detention Centre for 15 days. He was then taken to Nyari Detention Centre by Namling County PSB where he was detained until his trial was conducted by Shigatse Intermediate Court which sentenced him to four years' imprisonment. He was then transferred to Drapchi Prison where he still remains incarcerated. Lhundup Palden is a 32 year-old monk of Gaden Choe-khor Monastery.

Lhundup Tensang reported that since the 'work team' members' arrival, the monks were regularly summoned for sessions. This interrupted the regular monastic lives of the monks. The 'work team' members expelled nine monks from the monastery who were below the age of 18 and gave 'permits' for the rest. They stayed around five months in the monastery.

Lhundup was also disturbed by the suicide of his teacher Lhundup Tendar who was 58 years old. Lhundup Tendar was constantly annoyed by the presence of the 'work team' members at the monastery. In September 1996, he committed suicide by jumping into the river nearby the monastery. His dead body was found after three days on the banks of the river.

The 'work team' members later told Lhundup Tensang that his teacher had a 'small mind' and that he should not be affected by his death. ❀

## 'Work Team' in Damshung County

Tsewang Dorjee belonged to a nomadic family in Meyling village in Nyaldrong town in Damshung County. Twenty-seven year-old Tsewang transported salt to Lhasa where he exchanged it for cereals and other commodities. However, since 1998, he left this business because the Chinese authorities banned nomadic salt which was considered unhygienic. With little or

no means of livelihood available

Tsewang, he decided to come to India where he desires to attend a school. In a recent interview with Tsewang, he told TCHRD about the various changes taking place in his village.

"In Meyling village, the Chinese authorities have allowed women to have three children. However, families who wanted to have more than three would have to pay a penalty of 500 yuan to the authorities. Each year, the Chinese medical team from the County makes a visit to inspect around the villages and perform birth-control operations on women who had given birth to more than three children. As there are no proper medical facilities available in the village, most of the women are taken to the county hospital for major operations. The patient has to bear the medical fees which is normally very high. There are around 36 different families in Meyling Village with a population of around 300 Tibetans. There is, however, only one school in the whole village which consists of roughly 50 students.

In May 1999, five 'work team' members came to Meyling Village from Dhamshung County. They called all the nomads of the Meyling County and held meetings in the village where they instructed nomads to oppose 'splittists' and to accept Tibet as part of China. The officials distributed many political propaganda documents to the nomads to study, and they announced restrictions on performing any customary religious practices in the village. Furthermore, the nomads were barred from inviting any religious lamas, oracles and monks to the villages unless prior permission is sought from concerned officials. A restriction order was also issued on meditation, fortune-telling (performing divinations) and staging of trance as medium for local dieties. The officials also imposed a strict ban on listening to Voice of America (VOA) news on the radio.

The officials stayed around three days in Meyling and left for other villages and towns of Dhamshung County to conduct similar 're-education' sessions. In Damshung County about five towns and two villages have already been visited by these 'work team' officials. An order was also issued to all the visited towns and villages that anyone who desired to join

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religious institutions had to seek permission from the County officials. In order to join any of the three big monasteries in Damshung County, one has to produce a recommendation letter from a senior monk who was willing to take complete responsibility of the monk in the future. Permissions also had to be sought from the same officials if locals had plans to build new stupa or a temple".

Tsering's account indicates a breach of article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states: "...right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion..... to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance". All over Tibet, when religious institutions are visited by Chinese 'work team' members to conduct 're-education' of the monks and nuns, they are blatantly violating international instruments that safeguard the rights of people. ❀

## Lobsang Tenzin's condition worsened



Lobsang Tenzin

Lobsang Tenzin, aged 33 years a former student of the Tibet University, was arrested on March 5, 1988. Lobsang was arrested for throwing stones and fighting with Chinese police for the cause of Tibet. Thereafter he was implicated as the "principal culprit" in the death of a

People's Armed Police officer during the independence demonstrations in Lhasa. On 19 January 1989 the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa sentenced Lobsang Tenzin to death with a suspension of two years. However, due to strong international pressure this was commuted to a life sentence in March 1991.

Lobsang Tenzin was one of the political prisoners who attempted to pass a petition to James Lilley, the then U.S ambassador to China. According to a former prisoner, Lobsang Tenzin's life sentence was reduced to 18 years in 1994 due to his behaviour in prison. Lobsang Tenzin is currently serving his prison term in Powo Tramo in Nyintri Region.

It is reported that the lower half of Lobsang Tenzin's body has become numb which makes it difficult for him to stand. The information about Lobsang was received through a source in Tibet, who has seen Lobsang Tenzin while he visited his relatives in Powo Tramo Prison. ❀

## Work team in Jampaling Monastery

According to Jampa Norgyal, a 28 year-old-monk from Chamdo Jampaling Monastery, in Reshe Shang in Chamdo County, the Chinese 'work team' first arrived at his monastery in July 1996. Around 30 'work team' members conducted 'patriotic re-education', by summoning monks to regular meetings in the monastery. The 'work team' instructed monks to oppose the Dalai Lama and 'splittists' and 'to accept the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama'. The monks were provided with documents and booklets, on which they were forced to study and receive instructions. The 'work team' later examined monks individually and demanded acceptance of their instructions.

In Jampaling Monastery, there used to be around 1800 monks before the 'work teams' arrival in 1996. These monks came from Lhorong, Drayab, Tengchen, Zogang and Sog Counties in Chamdo Prefecture. Around 700 monks were sent by saying

that they will be 're-educated' in their own counties. Around 800 monks were given 'identity cards' during the 're-education' session in the monastery. 'Work teams' raided all rooms of the monastery and collected pictures of the Dalai Lama. They left Jampaling Monastery in October 1996.

For the second time, a 30-member 'work team' visited Jampaling in November 1998. 'Patriotic re-education' was conducted again, and the 'work team' established an age limit of 18 years as condition for admission to the monastery. The members left the monastery after staying for one month. ❀

## Work Team in Choekhor Monastery

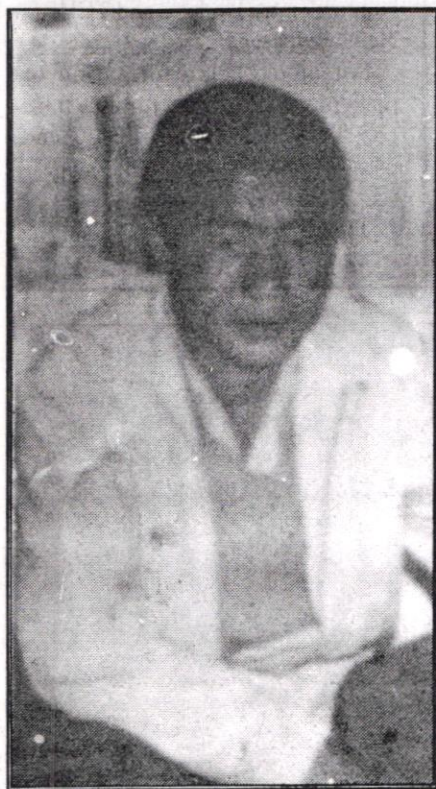
Tenpa Thaye, a 20 year old-monk from Choekhor Monastery, in Sershul County in Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, related the following narrative. A six-membered 'work team' arrived in his monastery in July 1997 from Jondha County. They gave 'political education' and forced the monks to undergo an 'examination' after which their signatures were taken to prove the acceptance of the instructions. The monks who tried to resist the 'work team' members were threatened with expulsion from the monastery. The members also issued 'identity cards' to 100 monks in the monastery. Around 40 monks were later expelled from the monastery since they refused or ignored the instructions of the 'work team.' Some of the monks were below the age of 18.

Choekhor Monastery is located on the bank of Drichu River (Chinese: Yangtse). This is one of the biggest Gelug sect monasteries in the whole of Sichuan Province, and it was reconstructed by the local Tibetans after the Cultural Revolution. Tenpa Thaye arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on September 16, 1999. ❀

profile

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## DREPUNG MONK SERVING TEN YEARS



Ngawang Sungrab

Ngawang Sungrab, a 28 year-old monk of Drepung Monastery from Phenpo County, was shot by the prison officials during the May 4, 1998 demonstration. He is reported to have been taken to the "TAR" military hospital in a critical condition. But it is believed that he was soon brought back to Drapchi Prison where he is presently serving a 10-year prison sentence for his participation in a demonstration in 1991.

On September 27, 1991, Ngawang Sungrab along with three other monks, Ngawang Rabjor, Jampel Phuntsok and Ngawang Jamchen from Drepung monastery initiated a peaceful

demonstration marching from Lhasa Gamchung restaurant to the front of Tsuklakhang (central cathedral) around 11 a.m. They carried the forbidden Tibetan national flag in their hands and started shouting slogans like, "Tibet is a free country, Chinese get out of Tibet and long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama".

No sooner had they reached the garden in front of the Tsuklakhang, when 15 Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials came and arrested them and subjected them to severe beatings. The four were later taken to the PSB Detention Centre in Lhasa where they were interrogated and beaten. Afterwards, they were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre and detained there for more than two months. While they were being held in Gutsa Detention Centre, the monks were again subjected to inhumane beatings and interrogations until Ngawang was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa.

Reports received from within Tibet indicate that Ngawang was involved in a protest that took place in Drapchi on International Labor Day (May 1) and Youth Day (May 4, 1998). Ngawang was also reported to have been involved in a protest on April 3, 1998 during which he sustained critical injuries. Despite having not recovered completely from the previous injuries, Ngawang nevertheless participated in the

May 4 demonstration.

On both these occasions, the Chinese prison guards violently and brutally clamped down on prisoners involved in a peaceful demonstration. The May 4, 1998 shooting claimed a total of 11 prisoners death.

Many political prisoners have been separated and detained in other prisons following the protest. Ngawang Sangdrol, a prominent female political prisoner, had her sentence extended by another four years bringing her total sentence to 21 years. She is currently the longest serving female political prisoner. The prison authorities have denied allegations of shootings and the reported death. They maintained the claim until mid-August 1998 when they told a visiting delegation that there was some sort of 'disturbances', and because the prison authorities felt threatened by the protestors, they fired a few shots in the air. They, however, denied any deaths related to the incident and told the relatives that the prisoners 'committed suicide'.

Ironically, the May Drapchi Protest failed to draw the desired international attention. The complete grasp of the incident is still blurred. However, reports filtering through Tibet have indicated severe restrictions and punishments for those who resisted.

## Kirti monk disappeared

Lobsang Tsering, aka Tsering Lhemar of Ngaba Lhate Ganhma, was a former monk of Kirti Monastery. Twenty-seven years of age, his parents names are Tenpa and Phur Kho.

In June 1998, as a result of pasting posters protesting the 'patriotic re-education' campaign, he was detained for some time. Lobsang was also found hanging a picture of His Holiness. The pictures' border was painted with snow lions and letters that read "Tibet is an independent country". When Ngaba People's Armed Police discovered his activities and came to the monastery, Lobsang was not present in his room at the time. Neither was he at his house in the village when the police went there. So

the officials left after interrogating his family members.

That day as Lobsang Tsering was returning to his house from Ngaba County, he was whisked away by an unknown person, reports a monk from Kirti Monastery who arrived in exile in early 1999. Since then, nobody knows Lobsang's whereabouts and his physical well-being. The monk believed that Lobsang may have been taken away by the state agents since the authorities failed to arrest him on two occasions. According to recent refugees from Kirti Monastery, Lobsang's whereabouts are still unknown since his disappearance in June 1998. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy is concerned about the fate of Lobsang. ❁

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### New publication

"Briefing Paper for travellers to Tibet" is the latest addition to our publication. This book provides travellers with background information on the Tibetan situation and some travel guidelines.

This book is free of cost like our other reports but we would appreciate a donation to cover the cost of postage.

Thank you



# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

HUMAN RIGHTS update is a monthly newsletter of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. [www.tchrd.org](http://www.tchrd.org)

OCTOBER, 1999

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

VOLUME IV NUMBER 16

## TASHI TSERING DIED DUE TO TORTURE

According to confirmed information from Tibet, Tashi Tsering died in the first week of October 1999, while still hospitalised, due to the beatings he sustained at the time of his arrest. During his hospitalisation, he was reported to have severed a broken arm, critical head injury, and his condition deteriorated considerably until he died.

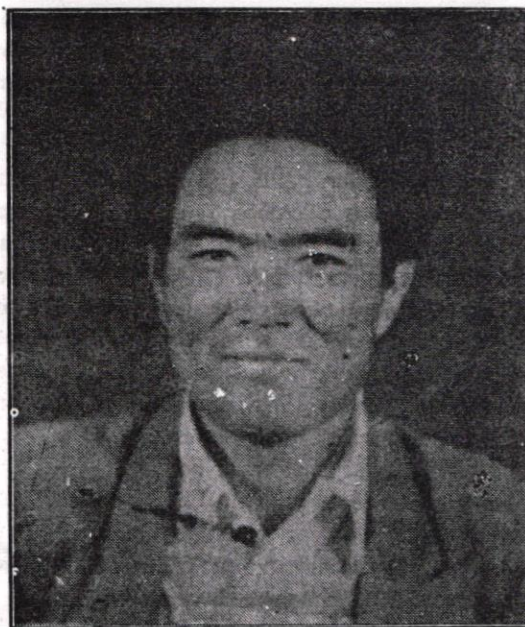
Tashi, a 39 year-old was immediately rushed to "TAR" Police Hospital near Sera Monastery after enduring serious beatings at the hands of the People's Armed Police (PAP). He was arrested soon after he lowered the Chinese flag at Potala Square and attempted to hoist the forbidden Tibetan National flag during the Minority Games held in Lhasa.

On the morning of August 26, 1999, during an 'exhibition trade fair' organised by the "TAR" government in front of the Potala Palace, Tashi, wearing a blue rain jacket emerged from a white government transportation van with a homemade explosive device strapped to his body. Within minutes, he lowered the Chinese flag that was hoisted on the southwest side of the Potala Square, and attempted to replace it with a Tibetan flag. However, his action drew the attention of the security police who came to arrest him. Tashi attempted to detonate the explosive prior to his arrest, but the crude explosive could not explode due to wet weather. It is believed that he attempted to commit suicide after his act of protest.

PAP personnel reportedly confronted Tashi and smashed his head frequently to the ground, causing heavy bleeding. While the PAP was driving Tashi to a detention centre, they wrestled with Tashi, as he struggled for his freedom. His resulting injuries required immediate hospitalisation.

Following Tashi's arrest, his wife

Lhakdron and some of his friends were reportedly detained for interrogation. PSB officials raided his house and confiscated a mobile phone and a Tibetan flag. Born in Lhoka County, Tashi and his 39 year-old wife, live in Nyangdren Village in Lhasa City with their three children, one of whom is handicapped. Tashi had excellent carpentry skills, and between 1995 to 1996 he worked as a carpenter while he oversaw construction work in Nyangdren Village. His active initiation of collecting funds to develop the Nyangdren Mangtsuk (not administered by government) School earned him the selection in one of the ten best Tibetan youth. ●



Tashi Tsering

### China Asked to produce Tashi Tsering

"The Chinese official's denial of fatally torturing political prisoner Tashi Tsering is another lie the Communist regime has made. We demand China to produce Tashi Tsering if he is still alive," said Lobsang Nyandak, executive director of the (exile- based) Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. The Centre had earlier reported the death of Tashi Tsering in Police Hospital near Sera Monastery.

Nyandak's comment was in response to the statement of Xu Mingyang, an executive vice-chairman of the «Tibet Autonomous Region," claiming that the man who was arrested after an abortive attempt to detonate a homemade explosive is not dead.

Xu Mingyang made that remark on

October 21 while talking to a group of Beijing-based foreign reporters. He stated that Tashi Tsering "is still alive and has confessed all his criminal activities, showing willingness to correct himself."

"Distortion of facts by China is not a new instance. Last year, Chinese authorities denied opening fire at prisoners when some 500 of them staged a peaceful demonstrations on May 1 and May 4 in Drapchi Prison. Following which 11 political prisoners have died," stated Mr. Nyandak. "Torturing a political prisoner to death is a violation of the international Convention against Torture to which China is a state party. Ever since China signed the Convention, 70 Tibetans have died due to torture."

The Human Rights Centre had earlier reported the death of Tashi Tsering in the first week of October 1999 due to the beatings he sustained at the time of his arrest. ●

## Kalden Released on Medical Parole

Kalden, a 34-year-old from Dagkar Tral-Zong Monastery, was detained for 6 months and is reportedly released on medical parole with broken ribs. "Kalden presently is undergoing medical treatment in Tsolho Tibetan Hospital", reports Tsultrim—a 22-year-old monk from same monastery who arrived in Dharamsala on October 18, 1999.

Kalden was arrested by 4-5 officials from Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's Intelligence Bureau from the monastery and taken to Xining via Tsolho Prefecture. He was accused of donating a sum of 18,000 yuan to the exile government through a businessman who travelled to India in 1998. The receipt of the amount was accidentally given to Dagkar Rinpoche, the in-charge of the monastery. Dagkar Rinpoche in turn had forwarded the receipt to Chinese authorities. The officials of the Intelligence Bureau of Qinghai province later arrested Kalden in December 1998, and detained him in Xining prison for 6 months.

While in prison he received severe beatings during interrogation. Prior to his arrest, Kalden was healthy and well built; however, after his return from prison he appeared weak and feeble with two broken ribs. He now walk with the aid of a crutches. He was severely tortured and forced to confess the earlier activities of distributing political leaflets in a monastery in 1994.

Tsultrim informed the Centre that during the three months following his arrest his parents were never informed about his whereabouts and his physical condition. His younger brother could not visit him in one of the prison located in the outskirts of Xining city, after his parents spent over 3000 yuan to trace him for three months. However, during the visit he was not allowed to talk to him.

Kalden's close acquaintance, who is currently in India, reported that Kalden was severely beaten with an electric cattle prod and indiscriminately kicked and hit with blows, resulting in two broken ribs. For five days he was deprived of water and sleep. The authorities have released Kalden possibly for the fear of his death while in detention. He is currently being

treated in Tsolho Tibetan Medical Hospital.

According to Tsultrim, a number of restrictions were imposed on Kalden at the time his release. He is barred from attending any public meeting, is restricted from travelling beyond the local areas without obtaining the necessary permit, and was threatened if he ever spoke about his experiences while in detention.

"Kalden now remains quiet and feels insecure" says a fellow monk from the same monastery who escaped to India in August 1999. It is believed that he will be re-arrested if his health improves.

Kalden is from Thathong village, Dre-thang shang, Tsolho Shingai County, in Qinghai province, he joined the monastery in childhood. Earlier Kalden sponsored Gaden Monastery in Lhasa and is known to have donated a thousand Bronze made Buddha statues to the Tragkar Zong monastery. In Dagkar

Monastery there are currently about 370 monks.

On 21 September, 52-member work team came to the monastery. The work team member comprises officials from five different counties and from Chabcha Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The work team stayed for over a month in the monastery. During which, meetings were held thrice a day; morning, noon and in the evening. Each session consumed about 3 hours. The main campaign is to oppose the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama

They came again at the end of May 1998, and stayed for over a month and similar sessions were held and announced the expulsion of monks below 18-year-old. The work team officials declared that 150 monks were legally allowed to stay in the monastery. ❀

## Re-education in Chamdo Jampaling Monastery

The patriotic re-education team first arrived in Chamdo Jampaling Monastery (Chamdo) in July 1996. Upon their arrival the officials called for a meeting. Despite the monks' request to postpone the meeting, it was held in the midst of the prayer, disrupting the normal religious activities of the monastery. The work team comprised 30 members representing both the town and county level. Regular meetings were held from 5 p.m to 7 p.m for a period of over two months, and the officials announced that monks would be issued a registration permit. At the time, there were about 1,800 monks in the monastery.

The 'work-team' officials collected 15 yuan from the daily religious urns. In total, they manage to collect over 20,000 yuan for the cost of printing registration passes. The monks were forced to collect the card even though they did not want.

In October 1996, the work team

officials made a proclamation that except for the monks from Chamdo County, all other monks would be expelled. Pursuant to the announcement, about 700 monks were expelled. Again in November 1998 a second work team came to the monastery. The meetings were held daily from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. for about two months.

The work team members confronted each monk: would he oppose the splittists and denounce the Dalai Lama? No one dared to respond. Then a work team member asked Tenpa Nyima, with his finger pointing on his forehead would he reject the splittists and denounce the Dalai Lama? Tenpa, too, was unable to speak to them at all. Most of the monks replied that they did not understand what "opposing the splittist and the Dalai Lama", means.

Later, on March 31, 1999, during the full moon day and a special religious

prayer, the work team officials call upon a meeting in the midst of the prayer session. The monks pleaded with the officials to let the prayer be completed, but the officials conducted the meeting and disrupted the prayer. Later in April, during a mass prayer meeting, the work team officials announced that those monks who had earlier travelled to India would be expelled.

However, so far the order has not been implemented. Later the officials categorically announced the decision that from 1999, the monks who left for India would be expelled. Out of the current

strength of 1,100 monks, only 800 were issued with a register permit, which legally allows them to stay in the monastery. The official order has been circulated which states that those without the permit are deprived of monastery rights and prohibited from conducting any religious prayer in lay houses.

In the concluding session at the end of April 1999, Chinese work team officials forced the abbot of the monastery to deliver a concluding speech. The abbot was asked to evaluate the success of the patriotic re-education session. In their

concluding remarks the officials stated that Chamdo Monastery is a patriotic monastery and has shown a strong disapproval of the splittist group and the Dalai Lama. The work team still continues to visit the monastery twice a month, once in the beginning of the month and in the end of the month.

Tenpa Nyima is a 22-year-old monk from Chamdo county, Sagang shang of Dobhu village. He became monk at the age of 11. He left the monastery on 12 June 1999 and reached Dharamsala in October. ✪

# MONKS ARRESTED FOR DISTRIBUTING PICTURES OF THE DALAI LAMA

Two monks, named Dakpa Gyaltsen and Sangye Tashi, from Rong-Gonchen Monastery were arrested in April 1999 on charges of distributing pictures of the Dalai Lama. Another monk named Jigme Dawa, from the same monastery, was arrested in June 1999 for allegedly setting on fire the door of a monk believed to be Chinese informer. Dakpa Gyaltsen and Jigme Dawa are still reported to be in detention while Sangye Tashi was released after being detained for a week in Qinghai Public Security Bureau's detention centre.

Dakpa Gyaltsen, aged 24 from Sakyil village in Rebkong County, was arrested on April 7, 1999 from his Medical College after Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials learned that Dakpa had distributed pictures of the Dalai Lama and the XI Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who continues to be held by Chinese authorities since May 1995.

A friend of Dakpa, Sangye Tashi was arrested a few days after Dakpa on the same charge. However, Sangye Tashi was released after a week in detention. While Sangye was in the Detention centre, he reportedly saw Dakpa taken to another prison. Dakpa is currently held in a prison in Xining, but his exact place of detention is not known.

Dakpa was earlier arrested in February 1997, after a raid in his monastery. A

picture of a Tibetan National Flag with the inscription of Tibet is an independent country was discovered from his room. He was then detained for over a month in the Qinghai PSB detention centre. During his detention, he reportedly suffered severe torture. Prison officials stubbed burning cigarettes on his face and deprived him of sleep for 15 days. Upon his release, his face and body had blisters and blue marks.

Dakpa had studied medicine in the Tibetan Medical School in Malho Prefecture for three years from 1992 to 1994, and later studied in Chabcha Medical School for one year. After his studies, he served as medical consultant in his monastery until he joined Xining Medical College in January 1998. In March 1999, while in the College he distributed pictures of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama at his college campus, government office in Xining, and a number of monasteries in his areas.

Although Dakpa's family is aware of his detention, the authorities refuse to reveal his whereabouts and deny access to visit him. According to Yonten Gyatso, a fellow monk from the same monastery, who is now in exile, Dakpa is not yet sentenced.

## Monk arrested on charges of setting fire a monk's room

Jigme Dawa, alias Tsekhog Sonag, from Rong Gonchen Monastery was arrested on June 8, 1999 from his room on charges of setting on fire the door of a monk who was suspected to be a Chinese informer in the monastery.

According to Yonten Gyatso, who arrived in India on October 10, 1999, three officials of the People's Armed Police came in a truck in the evening of June 8 and immediately arrested Jigme Dawa. With his hands manacled, he was taken away to Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture Prison. Jigme, age 33, is from Shipsor Township, Tsekor County.

Jigme allegedly set on fire the door of the monk on February 28, 1999 during a special prayer ceremony in Rong-Gonchen monastery. After three days, a note was found pasted on the main hall of the monastery threatening the informer monk with dire consequences if he did not stop favouring the Chinese. The note reads "whatever happened now is nothing, in future nothing can be ruled out, even your life."

Chinese authorities reportedly took the note for handwriting verification and concluded that it was the writing of Jigme

Dawa. Jigme was arrested despite his repeated pleas of innocence. According to Yonten, who is a close acquaintance of Jigme, Jigme could not have done this work, as his attendance at the prayer ceremony is compulsory. He believes that someone from the lay community, who gathered in large numbers during the prayer ceremony in the monastery, must have carried out this activity as the espionage activities of the monk is known to people around the county.

According to another source, Jigme Dawa's room was searched at the time of his arrest by PSB officials who discovered some 'political documents' including speeches of the Dalai Lama.

Jigme had earlier spent six years in India and had returned to Tibet in 1996. His family was reportedly informed that Jigme would shortly be sentenced. He has now spent four months in detention. Jigme continues to deny the alleged crime and argues that it is ridiculous to convict an innocent person.

### **"Re-education" in Rong Gonchen Monastery**

Yonten Gyatso, age 30, who has spent some ten years in Rong Gonchen Monastery and has recently arrived in exile on October 10, 1999, reported that 44 work team officials conducted "patriotic re-education" sessions in the monastery for seven months since March 1997. The re-education was conducted for 2-3 hours daily. During the re-education sessions, monks were asked to denounce the Dalai Lama as a "splitist" and to accept the Panchen Lama selected by Chinese authorities. The monks were also asked to appreciate the progress in the enjoyment of religious and political rights of the Tibetan people since Communist China's rule, and to recognise that Tibet is a part of China.

At the time, the monastery had over 100 monks. These were divided into 12 different groups with three officials assigned to each group. After each session, the monks were forced to sign a political pledge denouncing the Dalai Lama. 25 monks were expelled from the monastery for defying officials' orders and many left voluntarily. Currently there are 75 monks in the monastery. \*

## **Three Namo monks arrested**

Three Namo monks were reported to have been arrested on May 31, 1999 by Public Security Bureau officials of the Lhundrup County of Tso-toe township, reported a student from Lhundrup County who arrived Nepal on October 8, 1999. The monks were arrested on charges of pasting "Free Tibet" posters on the gate

and walls of the Tso-toe town authorities offices. The three monks were accused as the prime suspects and were later detained in Lhundrup County Detention Centre. It is not known whether the three monks are still detained in Lhundrup County or were transferred to Lhasa. The Centre was able to obtain the name of one monk whose name is Penpa Tsering, 30 years old, from Namo monastery, Tse-tso town in Namo village. The names of other two monks are still not available. \*

## **Three Monks arrested during the 50th Anniversary of China's National Day**

According to a reliable source, three Tibetan monks were arrested after staging a peaceful protest in Lhasa during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the People's Republic of China. The protest was participated by four monks from Taklungdrag Monastery, one of who escaped arrest. It is reported that the three monks were severely beaten at the time of arrest. Those arrested were Ngawang Tenzin (21) from Toelung Tsomey, Gyaltzen Jangchub (21) from Nakar Tse County, and Namdol Choedon (22) from Nyemo County. The whereabouts of the monks are unknown.

Intense security arrangements were made throughout the city of Lhasa prior to the celebrations and Lhasa residents were forced to take part in rehearsals for celebration. Many were even warned of punishments if they failed to fully cooperate. On the eve of the China's National Day, Chinese President vowed to crush any separatist activities. Prior to the celebration suspected individuals were arrested to prevent possible protest and many others who were already implicated in political activities, including former political prisoners were issued stern warnings.

A month before the occasion of the 50th anniversary, leaflets calling Tibetans to lay down their lives for the freedom struggle on China's National Day were pasted on the flagpole of Sera Monastery.

In reprisal, Chinese authorities deployed additional troops into the monastery to prevent "disturbances" on the National day. The authorities have warned 60 monks of expulsion from the monastery and 30 of them have reportedly been expelled.

### **Ngawang Tsedup Arrested during Minority Games**

In a separate incidence, a monk disguised as layman shouted pro-independence slogans on a stage built for cultural performances on the Potala Square in Lhasa on August 20, 1999. The monk, identified as Ngawang Tsedup, was immediately arrested by the security police and taken to Gutsa Detention Centre. The 21-year-old Ngawang is from Taklungdrag Monastery in Toelung Dechen County in the west of Lhasa. An unconfirmed report indicates the arrests of two monks and two nuns. They have reportedly raised slogans in the presence of important Chinese dignitaries at the sports stadium in Lhasa during a cultural performance to celebrate the National Minority Games.

### **Tightened Security in Tibet**

Throughout this year, Chinese authorities have tightened their security

and surveillance in all major towns in Tibet to prevent incidents of nationalist dissent.

The year 1999 contains many anniversaries that are of political significance to the people of Tibet - 40th anniversary of National Uprising, 50th year of China's invasion of Tibet, 10th anniversary of the imposition of Martial Law, and the 50th anniversary of China's National Day. Security was also intensified during the National Minority Games held in August, and the 64th birthday of the Dalai Lama in July.

Emergency orders were issued to PSB, PAP officials, and local police stations in Lhasa to be alert in all politically sensitive areas in Lhasa.

Residents of Lhasa were prohibited from assembling two or more people in public places. Official circulars were sent to all educational institutions and government departments.

However, despite these oppressive measures, China failed to prevent Tibetans from expressing their feelings against the illegal and repressive rule of Communist China. A series of protests took place in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet. At least 8 Tibetans were confirmed arrested since March 10 this year for supporting an independent Tibet.

On March 10, two Tibetan monks, Phuntsok Legmon and Namdol, were arrested for staging a peaceful demonstration to mark the 40th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day - amid tight security in Lhasa. They were sentenced to three and four years imprisonment respectively.

Chinese authorities distributed leaflets banning Tibetan people from celebrating the birthday of the Dalai Lama a week before the occasion. The custom of celebrating the birthday is viewed as propagating acts of splittism and instigating masses to oppose the Chinese government. A monk named Lobsang Choephel from Gyutoe Monastery in Lhasa City was reportedly arrested on his way to Ngachen and received severe beatings.

Three weeks before the 64th birthday of the Dalai Lama, on June 16, 1999, three monks from Drepung Monastery were arrested on the charges of undertaking political activities in their monastery. Two of the three monks were identified as Jamphel Rigzin and Jamphel Woser. Jamphel Rigzin was assaulted

severely at the time of arrest and is reportedly in critical condition. 34-year-old Rigzin is from Toelung Dechen. All three of them are believed to be currently detained in Gutsa Detention Centre. \*

## An Eminent Monk Arrested

A respected and learned monk of Karze Dhargye Monastery, Geshe Sonam Phuntsok, was arrested without any apparent reasons on October 24, 1999 by the officials of Karze County Public Security Bureau (PSB). Sources within Tibet say that the Chinese authorities suspect him of having "clandestine contacts" with the exiled Tibetan Government. His current whereabouts is not known.

Earlier on July 20 1999, PSB officials arrested 11 monks from Karze Dhargye monastery after discovering pro-independence slogans on the walls of the monastery. The monks were charged of inscribing "Tibet is independent" with red paint on the gates and walls of the monastery. The details of their identifications and detention are not yet known.

It is believed that the 48-year-old Geshe Sonam might have been arrested for suspicion of inciting monks of his monastery to rebel against Chinese authorities.

Geshe Sonam Phuntsok is a popular figure and people in the region revere him as a great Buddhist practitioner and scholar. He is well known for tutoring Tibetan literature to young monks. He had taught about 70 monks from 35 different monasteries on Tibetan literature in 1980s and also tutored monks from his monastery on Tibetan grammar, Tibetan history and Buddhism for six years. He has also recorded the historical description of 13 monasteries in Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture; of which two books have already been published.

On several occasions he preached commentary on the "graded path to enlightenment" (Tib: Lamrim) and the "Bodhisatva's way of life" (Tib: Chodjug) to a large numbers of both ordained and

lay people in the region.

Geshe Sonam Phuntsok is even being honoured and respected by Tibetan government employees. Chinese authorities regard him as an element of threat to the stability of the nation because of his growing popularity and belief towards him among the Tibetan people.

Born in 1951 in Karze County, Kham province (Sichuan), Geshe Sonam Phuntsok became monk in his childhood. At the age of 18 he received sacred initiation and other religious teachings from Achung the incumbent abbot of the monastery, and from the great tantric master, Tadring Gonpo. In 1971, he remained in retreat for months. He was able to excel in religious teaching even while Chinese authorities imposed stringent regulations curtailing all religious freedom in Tibet. \*

## Monastery Empty of Monks

Unable to endure the pressures of the 'work-team' officials, 22 of the 25 monks from the Nye-rong Monastery escaped to their homes or in exile.

Jampa Jorden, a 19-year-old monk who escaped to Nepal on October 8, 1999, reported that six-member 'work-team' officials from Pashoe County in Chamdo region visited his monastery in February 1999 to conduct 're-education.'

The work team officials called 'meetings' in the monastery and instructed the monks to oppose 'splittist' and to accept the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama. They also instructed individual monks to be patriotic and loyal to the 'nation' through studies and discussing 'politics' amongst them. The officials later announced that monks who 'agree' and 'answer' properly during the examination would get 'passes' to stay in the monastery and that an examination will be conducted after five months. Unable to withstand the repressive 're-education,' 19 monks fled from the monastery to their hometown before the examination. On the eve of the examination only six monks were present, however, three monks later fled the same night.

Jampa Jorden was one of the three monks. After two days, 'work-team' officials called him back to the monastery, but he escape to Lhasa. The officials later banned all religious activities in the monastery. He testifies that at present there are only three monks left in Nye-rong Monastery and one of them is mentally retarded. The work team officials stayed for six months in the monastery.

## Expulsion of monks in Samo Monastery

Lobsang Yarphel, a 30-year-old monk from Samo Monastery, Shora town, Pelgon County, Nagchu region, reported that seven Chinese 'work-team' officials came to his monastery on August 18, 1999 to conduct 're-education' sessions.

Lobsang joined Samo Monastery at the age 26. He recalls that there were 15 monks at the time of his admission in the monastery. While in the monastery, Lobsang worked as a caretaker and chant master for a year. Of the 15 monks, six were elderly monks who usually go out for prayer in the villages, and the remaining nine were novice monks.

The work team officials banned the pictures of the Dalai Lama in the monastery and later searched the rooms of monks. Four monks were expelled following pictures of the Dalai Lama was discovered from their rooms, including Lobsang himself. They were, however, expelled on the pretext that they didn't possess valid passes to stay in the monastery. Initially the officials demanded 1000 yuan each from the monks however, when the four monks agreed to pay the amount, the officials reverse their position and refused them entry. The monks were expelled on the fifth day of the work team's arrival on August 22, 1999. At present there are 11 monks in Samo Monastery.

Samo Monastery was razed to the ground during the invasion of Tibet, it was later reconstructed with the help of local Tibetans after 1989. ❀

## Ten Monks expelled from Sa-Ngag Dechen Monastery

Ten monks from Sa-Ngag Dechen Monastery were expelled for refusing to comply with the work team orders, said 20-year-old Jamyang Lodo, a former monk of the monastery, upon his arrival in Nepal. Jamyang, who joined the monastery at the age of 14, reported that the monastery was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and was renovated with the help of local Tibetans in 1988. Prior to the visit of 'work-team' officials the monastery has 60 monks.

Chinese 'work-team' officials from Trika County visited the monastery twice in May and September 1998. On their first visit, three officials stayed in the monastery for five days. They distributed 're-education' books and documents to the monks and meetings were called twice a day during which monks were instructed: to oppose 'splittist', to accept the Chinese selected Panchen Lama, and to be patriotic. They also banned the possession of pictures of the Dalai Lama.

Five member 'work-team' officials visited the monastery again in September 1998, and continued with their re-education. This time they stayed for a month's time. The monks were individually examined and ordered to write their opinions on the 're-education.'

The monks were threatened with dire consequences if any one tried to avoid the examination. Despite the threat, a monk named Rabgyal aged 23 along with nine other monks refused to comply with the work team orders. The ten monks were subsequently expelled from the monastery. Currently there are around 50 monks who were issued with the register pass to stay in the monastery. ❀



Phuntsok

## A former political prisoner dies

Phuntsok, a former political prisoner, who had spent two years in Drapchi Prison, died two years after his release at his residence on September 2, 1999.

The cause of his death is known to be of liver failure, which he reportedly got inflicted while in prison due to ill treatment. Phuntsok, age 60, was arrested on September 9, 1995, when security officials found pro-independence documents from his house during a raid. The raid was conducted to avoid any 'disturbances' during the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the "Tibet Autonomous Region." He was later charged as 'counter-revolutionary' and sentenced to two years imprisonment by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa. He was first detained in Seitru and later transferred to Drapchi Prison in December 1995.

Phuntsok was released after completion of his prison term in September 1997. At the time of his release he reportedly suffer from liver infection. During the last two years he reportedly sought medical treatment but failed to recuperate from the infection. He finally died at his home in Lhasa Tsomonling on September 2, 1999.

Phuntsok was born in Lhasa Mai-ru and was a former monk of North Tak-lung Monastery. At the age of 15 he received mechanical training, and later worked in Lhasa City motor workshop. At the time of his death Phuntsok was leading a retired life at his hometown. ❀

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## YEARS OF SUFFERING UNDER CHINESE RULE

Dawa, a 66-year-old, was born in Lhasa and was working as a watchman in one of the factories in Lhasa City before he was re-arrested in May 1997. He is a former monk of Sera Mey Monastery before 1959. He used to live with his elder brother Gyaltzen. After Gyaltzen escaped into exile in 1959 Chinese authorities confiscated all their properties. During that time Chinese branded their family as 'reactionaries' and were denied all political rights. Dawa had to work without any payment. He had suffer many hardship under Chinese brutal policies towards the 'reactionaries'. He worked in Nyachen Power Station from 1960-64. From 1965 to 1966, he was sent to do construction work at Samye-Chik Power Station with other members of the branded reactionaries.

Upon his return to Lhasa, he worked as a construction labourer and other petty jobs to earn his living. After the demise of his parents he had to take care of his family members. In July 1980, during the Tibetan Delegation's visit in Lhasa, Dawa raised the slogans calling "Tibet is independent" and "May His Holiness the Dalai Lama live for a million year" amidst the rushing crowd near stone pillar in Lhasa. Chinese security officials tried to arrest him, but failed because of the presence of large crowd.

In 1985, during the 20th anniversary of founding of the "Tibet Autonomous Region", Dawa was arrested to prevent any possible political activity, and was



Dawa at the time of arrest

detained in Gutsa Detention centre for four months.

In 1987, he visited India for a pilgrimage. The following year, during "Human Rights Day", he raised pro-Tibetan slogans in Lhasa City. He shouted from the middle of the crowd that "I am not afraid or worried even if I get killed by the Chinese, since I am old. If you young people die then that will be of great loss." He was subsequently arrested by the People's Armed Police who were present in the vicinity.

Dawa was then taken to Gutsa Detention Centre, where he was sentenced to three years imprisonment by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa in February 1989. In the course of serving his first year sentence he suffered severe gastric problems, for which an immediate operation was required. Dawa asked his friend Kalsang Tsewang to seek medical leave which was later granted and

was released on medical parole in the end of 1989. While in prison he always raised the plight of prisoners and suffered severe repercussion at the hands of Chinese officials. He received severe lashing of sticks from the Chinese prison guards.

Dawa is known to be a helpful, altruistic and patriotic Tibetan. He often goes to prisons around Lhasa to offer food to the prisoners which is allowed only once in a month.

After his release from prison he worked as a construction labourer until he was re-arrested in May 1997 by Public Security Bureau. He was then detained in Gutsa and interrogated. He was finally sentenced to three years re-education through labour in April 1998. He was transferred to Trisam re-education labour camp. At present he is believed to be the oldest serving political prisoners in Trisam Labour Camp.

## Prison expansion: for economic activity, accommodate more prisoners

Two major prison complexes in Lhasa – the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) prison number one known as Drapchi, and Sangyip – have been expanded, indicating a growth in prisoner capacity in Lhasa area, and increasing economic activity in Lhasa prisons. Photographs obtained by TIN of the new facility indicate that a new cement factory consisting of two production units has been opened

at Drapchi. The use of prison labour in the economic development of Tibet is a stated policy in the "TAR."

TIN has further reported that a new cell-block at Utridu Prison was built in the Sangyip security complex in the northeastern suburbs of Lhasa. If all cell-blocks are being used to house prisoners this suggests an approximate doubling of the prison population at Utridu, since

1997. A new prison unit this year adjacent to the high security detention and interrogation centre in Sangyip, was nearing completion in summer 1997. A new paramilitary training complex at Sangyip, including barracks and parade ground built on fields previously used for agriculture. At Drapchi prison a new three-story cell-block fronted by a large concrete assembly area. ✻

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

# update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY —

VOLUME IV NUMBER 17

## CHINESE POLICE OPEN FIRE AT 3,000 PEACEFUL PROTESTORS

On October 31, 1999, officers of the Karze County Public Security Bureau (PSB) opened fire at approximately 3,000 Tibetan protestors in Karze County in Sichuan Province, Karze 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' (TAP). The protestors were demanding the immediate release of three Tibetans from Karze County who were detained on grounds of suspicion for their involvement in political activities in October of 1999. The protest lasted for 30 minutes in front of the Karze County People's Government and Karze Detention Centre. The protest was held six days after the arrest of the three Tibetans.

Information from Tibet has indicated that the police opened fire at the demonstrators and threw tear gas shells to disperse the crowd. PSB officers arrested approximately 30 protestors on the day of the protest. Local hospitals were instructed not to attend to any of the injured people. Furthermore, PAP forces were stationed at various hospitals to ensure compliance. All of the major religious institutions in Karze County were under tight surveillance.

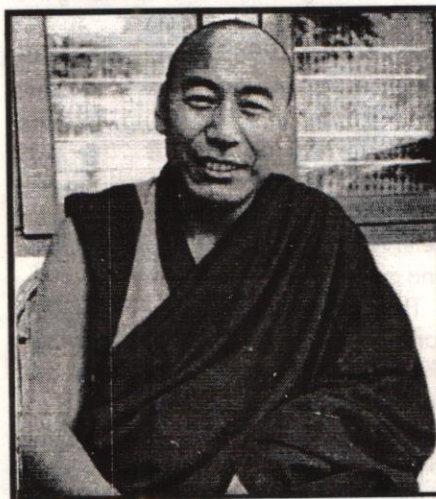
At least 80 Tibetans were reported to have been arrested in connection with the protest, of which names of only five are available. Sonam Yeshi, Pema Phuntsok, Loga, Wangdak and Wangdue are all detained in Karze Detention Centre. The inmates were reportedly held in incommunicado detention. Although the exact figure is not available at this time, recent reports indicate that some of the protestors were released and others will be released after paying a fine.

Several incidents of political unrest were reported in Karze this year. Chinese

authorities have reportedly deployed large number of troops in Karze County following incidents of resistance to Chinese policies.

On July 20, 1999, PSB officials arrested 11 monks from Karze Dhargye Monastery after discovering pro-independence slogans on the walls of the monastery. The monks were charged with inscribing "Tibet is independent" with red paint on the gates and walls of the monastery. Their identities and whereabouts are unknown.

### Arrests of the three monks



Sonam Phuntsok

A respected and learned monk of Karze Dhargye Monastery, Sonam Phuntsok, along with two other monks, Sonam Choephel and Agya Tsering were arrested on October 24, 1999 by officials of the Karze County PSB. Sources within Tibet report that Chinese authorities have detained Sonam Phuntsok in Datsedo County in Karze 'TAP'. Sonam was suspected of having 'clandestine contacts'

with the Tibetan government-in-exile. Agya and Sonam Choephel are currently held in Karze Detention Centre.

Sources indicate that Sonam Phuntsok's popularity was an apparent threat to the Chinese authority. They were reportedly aware that his arrest would create resentment among the Tibetan people. The authorities had stationed approximately 20,000 PSB and People's Armed Police (PAP) officers in the area prior to the arrest of the three monks.

Sonam Phuntsok is well-known figure and Tibetans in the region regard him as a great Buddhist practitioner and scholar. He is well known for teaching Tibetan literature to young monks. He had also recorded the historical description of 13 monasteries in Karze 'TAP' and two of his books have been published.

Prior to his arrest, Sonam Phuntsok had initiated a long-life prayer offering for the Dalai Lama. In an address he made around that time, he praised the Dalai Lama and advised the people to follow his preaching. Aware of the consequences for such an action, he informed the public that he, "did not regret anything".

Sonam Phuntsok was born in 1951 in Karze County, Kham Province (Sichuan).

Agya Tsering alias 'Agyong', 47 years-old was first arrested in February 1990 for allegedly printing and distributing leaflets calling for Tibetan independence.



Agya Tsering

In 1990, he put up posters on the gates of various government buildings in Karze as well as in prominent locations in Odoling City in Qinghai Province. He was detained in Yushu 'TAP', Amdo (Chinese: Qinghai Province). He was remanded to 18 months of 're-education through labour' without trial.

Born in Jurenno Village in Diwo Township, Karze County, he studied in *Magtsuk School* (People's School) in Karze for five years and later joined Dargye Monastery.

Sonam Choephel is reportedly the assistant to Sonam Phuntsok. No other details of Sonam are available.



Sonam Choephel

Due to the increased security in Karze, efforts to obtain precise details concerning the identities and place of detention of those arrested has been limited. ❀

## Sinocisation of School Syllabus

Nyima is a 15 year-old student from Sichuan Province in Karze 'TAP', Bathang County. His parents are farmers and there are five members in his family. He attended a *mang-tsuk school* called 'mi mang lob chung' in his county where there were approximately five hundred students. There were three other primary schools in the district. Nyima went to the school from the age of seven and completed his education in 1998.

There were both Chinese and Tibetan students in his school. The head of the school was Chinese and there were eighty teachers of whom fifty were Chinese while thirty were Tibetan.

All the Chinese teachers taught in Chinese and the text books were also in Chinese which Nyima found hard to follow. One of the rules stated that Tibetan students were not allowed to speak Tibetan during a Chinese class and he was once

beaten up for having spoken in Tibetan in a Chinese class. There was a marked contrast in the kind of teaching for Tibetan and Chinese students. In the Tibetan class the students were only taught to read and write, while in the Chinese class there were lessons on history of the Chinese state. There were never any lessons about the culture, religion or history of Tibet.

Most of the manual work like cleaning was done by Tibetan students while the Chinese students were exempted from such duties.

Nyima finally fled Tibet on October 15, 1999 and 3, 1999. ❀

## Returning Tibetan faces detention

Yonten Tharchin, 27 years old, was detained for six months in Tsolho Prison after he was found to have brought some cassettes from India to Tibet. Tharchin was returning to Tibet after spending five years in India.

In January 1996, the Chinese army caught Tharchin at Dram near the Tibetan border, when he was found entering without valid documents. He was detained in Dram for 17 days along with seven members of his group. During his detention he was forced to wash clothes and cut firewood for the army.

Tharchin was detained successively in various places: Nyelam for three days, Shigatse for 50 days, Golmud for a day, and finally transferred to Tsolho Prison.

While in Tsolho Prison, he was found to possess audio cassettes with speeches of the Dalai Lama. As a consequence he was tortured and forced to stand facing the wall with his hand stretched upwards, while his arm pit hair was removed. He was interrogated on the administrations of the exiled Tibetan government.

In April of 1996, Tharchin was issued an indictment paper that said he would be sentenced to three years imprisonment. However, one of his relatives helped to get him released after bribing 6000 yuan

(US \$ 700) to officials. Even after his release, he was constantly kept under surveillance.

In June 1999, a relative who worked in the government informed him that he needed to remove any thing in his home which might cause for further trouble, since Chinese officials would raid his house soon. Unable to bear the situation, he again fled his hometown in Tibet for India, and reached Dharamsala on October 10, 1999.

Tharchin is from Baku Town in Thurde County, Qinghai province. He joined a village school at the age of seven and studied there until he joined a monastery at the age of 13. Tharchin had earlier visited India at the age of 19, and stayed for five years. ❀

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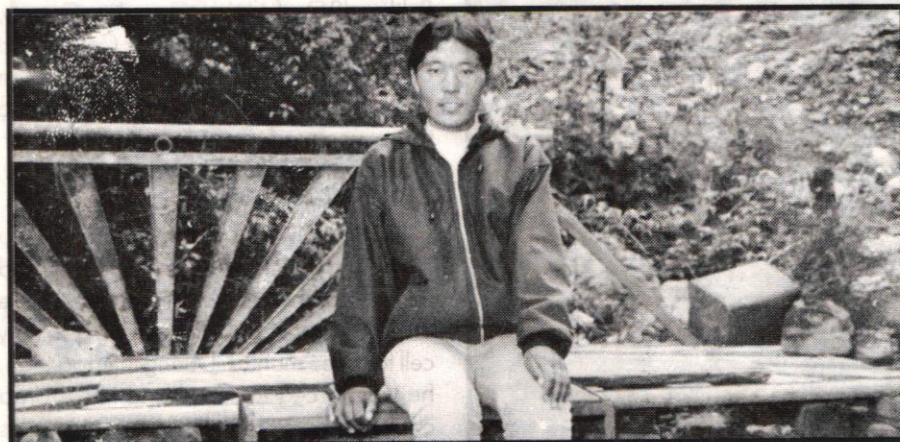
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Thank You.

## Testimony of a former juvenile political prisoner



Norzin Wangmo, 22 years old is a former Shugseb nun who spent five years in Drapchi Prison when she was 16 years old. Originally from Ju Village in Gentsey Township in Gongkar County, Lhoka Region, Norzin reached Dharamsala, India on November 27, 1999. Norzin's parents are farmers and she has 10 siblings. She joined Shugseb Nunnery in 1989 at the age of 12.

In the morning of December 9, 1993, Norzin and seven other nuns of Shugseb Nunnery demonstrated in front of the Central Cathedral in Lhasa Barkhor. The nuns demonstrated for approximately 15 minutes after which they were arrested by Barkhor Security Personnel and policemen patrolling on the 'shasār sur' lane of the Barkhor. The nuns continued to shout independence slogans even as they were being arrested. Many people witnessed the arrest of the nuns. The police put them in a van and beat all the nuns severely with cords made of rubber. Norzin was hit hard on her right eye, resulting in severe impairment of her vision which still effects her. The nuns were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre where they were kept separately and interrogated individually. They were detained in Gutsa for around 11 months where they were interrogated at least 20 times. During this detention, none of the nuns were allowed to receive visitors. Their parents and the relatives who came to see them were unable to do so. The nuns did not receive the food and clothes which their parents or relatives had brought. They were kept by the prison guards who issued fake receipt to the senders or visitors. At the time of

interrogation, the nuns were asked various questions regarding the demonstration: how they organised it and with whose assistance. The nuns answered that "they came on their own to demonstrate" and that "there was no outside force responsible". These answers did not seem to satisfy the officers because the nuns were severely beaten again. Norzin was 16 at that time but she suffered nonetheless. She was beaten with a wooden plank and given shock treatments with an electric baton.

After eight months of detention and interrogation, the nuns were tried in the 'Tibet Autonomous Region' (TAR) Intermediate People's Court on September 10, 1994. Norzin and the eight nuns were charged with propagating 'counter-revolutionary' activities under article 102 of the Criminal Procedure Law of the People's Republic of China. Rinzin Tsondue and Jampa Choekyi were charged as the primary leaders responsible for 'spearheading' the demonstration. The nuns' plea of innocence was ignored and they were sentenced to six years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights on September 13, 1994. On September 17, 1994, they were finally transferred to Drapchi Prison. Norzin Wangmo (16), Lodoe Pema (24), Namgyal Choedon (22), Sherab Dolma (19), Choenyi Dolma (17) and Norbu Yangchen (17) were sentenced to five years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. All six were released on December 8, 1998.

In Drapchi, Norzin was confined in the

3rd Unit along with the rest of the nuns. Everyday, the nuns were assigned to clean, prune and make yarn out of four sang (about 200 grams) of wool. This was a quota fixed by prison authorities, which the nuns had to accomplish within a day. After March 1996, the eight nuns were separated from the older prisoners. The 3rd Unit was divided into two sections as the Old and the New 3rd Unit. Norzin and the eight nuns were kept in the old 3rd unit. Norzin reported that the separation made it almost impossible for them to even see let alone establish any contact with the senior political prisoners.

When the eight nuns first arrived in Drapchi Prison, the prison authorities issued them cotton quilts which were immediately taken away by their unit leader. During the winter of 1996, trouble arose when prison authorities ordered the nuns to clean their unit. The nuns refused and instead demanded that their new quilts be returned to them. They were reprimanded and serious punishments were imposed. Norzin in particular was confined in a solitary cell for 45 days and was given only one meal a day.

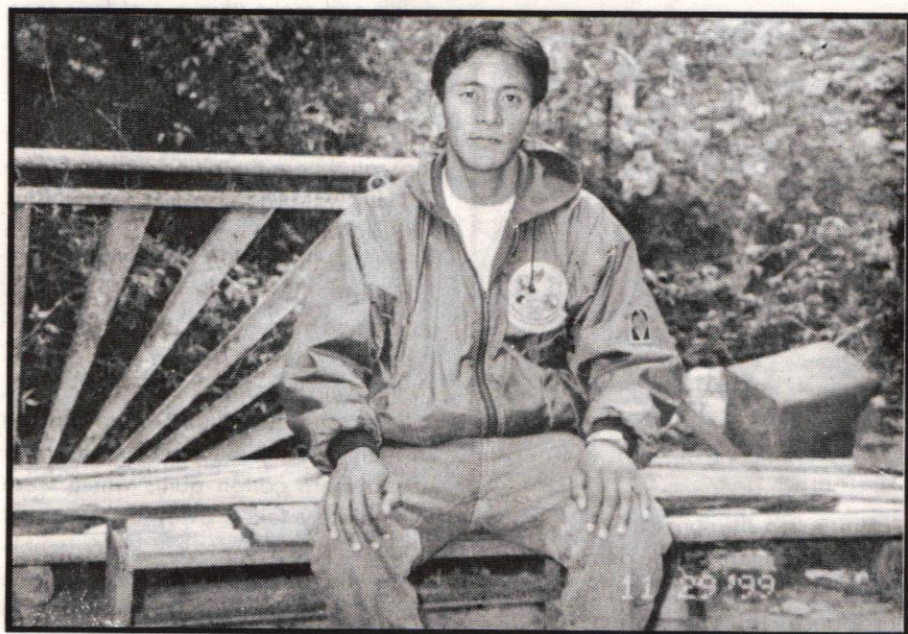
On May 4, 1998, non-political prisoners and political prisoners of the New 5th and the 3rd Unit were assembled and ordered to participate in official celebrations which included hoisting of the Chinese Flag and singing the Chinese national anthem. These prisoners started protesting whereupon they were beaten by the prison authorities and the PAP. On seeing this from their prison windows, the female prisoners of 3rd Unit (old) started shouting at the authorities pleading with them not to beat the other prisoners. In the process the prison windows were broken.

As a result PAP and Prison authorities stormed into their prison cell, made them stand up facing the wall and started beating them. They hit them with their belt buckles. Eventually all the prisoners had head injuries and were bleeding heavily. Ngawang Sangdrol who is serving 21 years was bedridden for two days. The beatings continued despite repeated pleas from the women, and it resulted in cases of broken limbs.

Since the protest, the prisoners have been confined to their cells for the entire day and have not been allowed out for

continued on p.8

## The cost of resistance



Lobsang Samten (lay name : Phurbu) 23, a former monk of Sera Monastery in Lhasa, arrived in Dharamsala, India on November 15, 1999.

His parents have a small business and work in Lhasa. He has two brothers who are monks, also of Sera Monastery and two sisters. Lobsang attended primary school for three years from the age of seven. He joined the monastery in 1985 and stayed there until 1996. He studied dialectics and English while staying in the monastery.

While he was in Sera Monastery, a 160 member 'work team' first came in May-June of 1996. They distributed four documents for the monks to study and conducted 're-education' sessions. They collected all the pictures of the Dalai Lama in the monastery and banned its display. They forbade the monks from engaging in any religious activities in the monastery. On June 12, 1996 a monk named Gyaltzen Thokmey (27) pasted a poster inside the monastery hall calling on the monks to boycott and protest against any type of gatherings organised by 'work team' members. He was arrested on September 15, 1996 for this incident and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison. He is from Nyemo County.

The monks discontinued the activities of the monastery until June 15, 1996.

On June 16, 1996 the 'work team' members attempted to force a few young monks and their teachers to perform the normal monastery rituals. This was resisted by the monks who continued to boycott the gatherings. The 're-education' then became even more organised when the 'work team' assigned 10 officials for every hostel of the monastery and started giving instructions. The 'work teams' then required monks to denounce the Dalai Lama and oppose 'splittists'. The monks were divided into small groups of 15 and asked to express their opinions on 'splittisms'. The 'work team' members were mostly high officials of the 'TAR' government.

Lobsang vehemently resisted the instructions of the 'work team' members. He refused to denounce the Dalai Lama and oppose 'splittism'. He assertively expressed that Tibet was a free nation as it has its own history, culture and money. He was later accused of 'disrespecting the law of the nation' and 'siding with splittists'. That same night on September 27, 1996, five PSB officers came to his room arrested him and searched his room. He was handcuffed and taken to Sangyip

Detention Centre where he was interrogated regarding his background and family. At the time of his arrest, other monks were also arrested. They were Tashi Pelthar (25) of Meldo Gongkar County, Norbu (29) of Lhoka Yamdrok County and Bhu-chung (34) of Chamdo Teng-chen County. They were all later remanded to three years of 're-education through labour' and released on September 24, 1999.

Lobsang was later taken to Seitru Detention Centre where he was detained for five months. He was interrogated there at least 15 times and confined to a solitary cell for three months. During interrogation, he was forced to stand and kneel on a chair for approximately two hours. He was given shock treatments with an electric prod at the time of interrogation when he refused or disobeyed the interrogators. Many times he fell unconscious while being tortured.

On February 22, 1997 he was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre where he was held for another two months. He was not allowed to meet any of his relatives or his parents. When he was in Gutsa, he was informed of his remand to three years 're-education through labor' without any trial or court proceedings. On April 22, 1997, he was transferred to Toelung Trisam Prison. While in Trisam Prison, he was made to do strenuous work on a vegetable farm for six hours every day. There were approximately 40 political prisoners in Trisam when he arrived and all of them were assigned separate duties. Lobsang was once beaten severely by a prison guard for violating a prison rule while working. In addition, he was confined to a solitary cell for seven days provided with only water.

Lobsang was released on September 24, 1999 after the completion of his three years in prison. When he was released, there were approximately 11 political prisoners remaining in the prison. The oldest political prisoner in Trisam is Kushab Dawa (65) of Lhasa Tse-mon Ling who is serving a three year sentence. He will be released in July-August of 2001.

Lobsang stayed for two months in Lhasa and reached Nepal on November 15, 1999. ❁

## Assault on Religion: Patriotic Re-education in Monasteries

Between July and August of 1996, a four member work-team from Lhoka Prefecture conducted a "patriotic re-education" campaign in Kharchu Monastery in Lhoka Region, Lhodrag County, 'TAR'. The 'work-team' remained at the monastery for three months. During this period, religious activity at the monastery was severely curtailed. All 17 monks at the monastery were given "re-education" materials and required to study them for three hours every morning, and hold discussions on the materials in the afternoons.

The "re-education" consisted of four primary subjects: How Tibet is a part of China, Opposing 'splittist' activities, The history of Tibet and Legal studies. After the monks had studied the materials for one and a half months, they were given an exam. Monks who did not answer the questions according to the authorities wishes were required to re-take the exam after an additional month and a half of study. The monks were instructed to oppose the Dalai Lama and "splittist" activities. All photos of the Dalai Lama were removed. The work-team appointed a new Democratic Management Committee (DMC) and new regulations were established overseeing management of the monastery.

Approximately one month after the work-team left Kharchu Monastery, Lama Namkhai Nyingpo, a monk from Bhutan came to the monastery to perform teachings. During his stay at the monastery, his photo was displayed. After his departure, his photos were removed and banned by Lhodrag County officials. Religious scriptures he had distributed were confiscated. ❀

### Photrang Monastery

Soepa Senge is a 38 year-old monk from Photrang Monastery in Chambdo Pelbar County, Ring Township, 'TAR'. He attended school for two years, and subsequently assisted his parents who are

farmers. At the age of 18, he joined Photrang Monastery. He reports that in 1997, a three member 'work-team' came to the monastery to conduct a "patriotic re-education campaign". At that time there were 50 monks at the monastery. The work team ordered the monks to pledge allegiance to the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama, and monks who refused were accused or being "splittists". All photos of the Dalai Lama were banned. New rules allowing only 20 monks to remain at the monastery were imposed. All monks below the age of 18 were expelled. ❀

### Dechen Monastery

Lobsang Tashi is a former monk from Dechen Monastery who was expelled from his monastery by "patriotic re-education" 'work-team' members in November of 1998. He is originally from Taglung Village, Lhaxhang Thang Township in Trika County, Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Amdo (Chinese: Qinghai Province). He arrived in exile in India in November of 1999.

Lobsang reports that in September of 1998, a three-member work-team from Trika County came to Dechen Monastery to conduct a "patriotic re-education" campaign. Approximately 60 monks from the monastery attended the sessions, with the other monks excusing themselves, either complaining of illness or going on religious pilgrimage. The monks were forced to study political documents related to the history of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. The monks were made to denounce the Dalai Lama, oppose "splittism", and accept the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama. The monks were given a questionnaire to fill out regarding the aforementioned items.

Many monks resisted, particularly regarding questions related to the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. The work-team left the monastery after five days.

In November of 1998, the work-team returned to the monastery, this time with members of the Public Security Bureau. All monks were required to attend the "re-education" sessions. The same questionnaire was distributed to the monks. Initially, many of the monks refused to comply with the demands of the 'work-team' members. After some time, except for ten monks, the rest succeeded to the demands of the work-team. The ten monks (including Lobsang Tashi) were immediately expelled and were forbidden from joining any other religious institution. All photos of the Dalai Lama were banned and removed. The 'work-team' then set age parameters for the monastery. All monks over 50 or under 18 years of age were expelled. After four days, the 'work-team' left the monastery.

Lobsang Tashi returned to his village, though he continued to study religious text and wear his monastic robes. The work-team returned to the monastery a third time in May of 1999 to conduct further "re-education". The 'work-team' sent a message to Lobsang Tashi's home that he must discontinue his studies and remove his robes. He was additionally summoned to a meeting with the 'work-team'. Fearing reprisals or further trouble, he escaped to India. ❀

### Awam Monastery

Samten Tsering was a 19 year-old monk of Awam Monastery, which is located in Thang-gya Shang of Meldo Gongkar County. His parents were farmers, and he had enrolled in

'mangtsuk' school from the age of 9 to 10 where he studied Tibetan. At the age of 11, he joined Awam Monastery. Presently, this monastery has around 12 monks. Before 1959, there were around 500 monks in this monastery.

The monastery was one of those which had been completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Since 1982, with monetary assistance and manual help of the local Tibetans there had been renovation work carried out in Awam monastery by a monk named Namgyal la.

In May-June of 1997 a 'work team' of approximately ten members came to the monastery. They stayed for about four months and conducted 're-education' sessions. The monks were ordered to denounce the Dalai Lama but refused to do so. As a result the duration of the 're-education' was raised from three months to four in an attempt to persuade the monks to accede to the demands of the 'work team'.

In the beginning of June, the 'work team' announced that they would return in January-February of 1997. This announcement was also coupled with threats stating that monks who attempted to evade the 're-education' would be dealt with personally and 're-educated' forcibly. They also threatened to prosecute such 'rebels' with the charge of 'protesting against the nation', which could earn them three to four years in labour prisons.

In July-August of 1999, the Bhar Monastery invited Geshe Lobsang Sherab for the second time to Taktse County to give religious discourses to the monks of three different monasteries. At that time, around 60 monks gathered in Bhar Monastery to receive religious discourses from Geshe Lobsang Sherab.

On the third day of religious discourse in Bhar Monastery, the Taktse County PSB came to the monastery and ordered the monks to stop giving or receiving religious teachings. The PSB then accused Geshe Lobsang Sherab of misleading the masses through his teachings. They threatened to arrest people if the teachings was not stopped immediately.

On August 6, 1999, the religious

sermon in Bhar Monastery was forcibly interrupted by approximately 20 PSB officials of the Taktse County. The monks of Awam Monastery and Phak-mo Monastery were sent back to their respective monasteries. Geshe Lobsang Sherab was interrogated about his 'aim' and 'reasons' for giving religious discourses. He was immediately ordered to return to Lhasa the following day.

At that time, approximately 400 people, including monks present for the religious sermon protested against the PSB officers' interference. Geshe Lobsang Sherab advised them to calm down, in order to avoid tension with the PSB. The PSB officers later individually interrogated the people about the contents of the preaching.

Since then, the three monasteries have been regularly inspected by the County Authorities. An order was issued on August 23, 1999 that, 'no monks from any monasteries were allowed to practice religion outside of their monastery' and 'no monk is allowed to receive religious discourses from any lama in any villages of Taktse County'.

The County authorities issued an order which prohibited the monks from attending or performing any prayer services in private homes in villages. They announced that 'the sermon from August 5-6, 1999 was organised against the law and security of the nation and whoever attended it had violated the law'.

Samten escaped from his monastery and reached Lhasa on September 30, 1999. He left Lhasa and reached Nepal on November 14, 1999. ❀

### **Dongthok Monastery**

Lobsang Namkha is a 25 year-old monk of Dong-thok Monastery in Kandze 'TAP', Karze County, Karok Shang. His Parents are farmers. Lobsang went to school from the age of seven to ten after which he started looking after his family's livestock. At the age of 15, he became a monk of Dong-thok Monastery.

Dong-thok Monastery was one of the monasteries which had been completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. After 1983, this monastery was reconstructed with the help of local Tibetans. When Lobsang joined this monastery, there was around 10 monks but at present there are around 50 monks in the monastery.

In 1997 the 'work team' came to the monastery for the first time after which they visited the monastery twice a month. The 'work team' organised meetings in the monastery and instructed the monks to oppose 'splittists' and to denounce the Dalai Lama. There were usually five to seven official members of the 'work team'. All pictures of the Dalai Lama were banned in the monastery. The monks were also forced to study books given to them by the 'work team' during the meetings. In May-June of 1998, a mass meeting was organised in Karok Township and around 300 monks and nuns from five different monasteries and nunneries of the Kandze County were called.

During the mass 'meeting', the monks and nuns were instructed to write 'opposition letters' and sign 'pledges' against the Dalai Lama.

The 'work team' warned them that any disobedience or protest would be met with punishment as well as expulsion. They would also be labelled as being a 'political suspect' which implied that they would be constantly harassed even after their expulsion. It was also announced that no new monks would be admitted in any monastery or nunnery of the Karze 'TAP' above the limitation set by the 'work team' members.

As a result of the interferences in the religious workings of the monastery, Lobsang Namkha decided to leave the monastery in October-November of 1999 and went to Lhasa. He then escaped to Nepal through the Nepal border after paying 900 yuan to a guide. He reached Nepal on November 30, 1999. ❀

profile

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## NGAWANG DHIPSEL IN CRITICAL HEALTH

Ngawang Dhipsel (lay name: Penpa) is 30 years old from Phenpo Lhundrup County, Lhasa City. Ngawang studied for four years in a *Mangtsuk* School (school established by local people) after which he stayed home to help his parents on the farm.

In 1986 he joined Drepung Monastery. On May 13, 1992, Ngawang along with ten other monks from Drepung staged a peaceful demonstration demanding "Freedom for Tibet" in the Barkhor area in Lhasa City. All of the monks were immediately arrested by Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers.

According to confirmed reports, at the time of arrest the monks were severely beaten. They were initially detained in Gutsa Detention Centre and were beaten during interrogation. In September of 1992, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Ngawang Dhipsel to four years' imprisonment with two years deprivation of political rights. The other monks were given sentences ranging from two to ten years. All the monks were transferred at the end of the year to Drapchi Prison in Lhasa.

1992 was a labourious year in Drapchi. The inmates had to engage in difficult tasks such as construction, growing vegetable (green house) and accumulating manure. Around May of 1993, Ngawang and his cellmates were required to construct a canal. The

inmates were given a specific period of time to complete the project. Prisoners were required to work late in the evenings and early in the mornings to complete the project. Ngawang Dhipsel was required to dig a foundation for a wall. Due to the harsh conditions, Ngawang Dhipsel fell

unconscious. He was taken to the his room but was denied medical treatment. Compounding his condition, Dhipsel suffered from hypertension and epilepsy but continued to serve his prison term.

On May 12, 1996 Ngawang Dhipsel was released after four years' imprisonment. He was not allowed to re-join his or any other monastery.

After his release he was subjected to constant surveillance and his activities were closely monitored by the PSB. Unable to withstand this harassment, he attempted to escape to India in November of 1997.

When he reached near the Tibet - Nepal border (Gyala Pass), he encountered heavy snow. Without adequate food and clothing, he was forced to return to Lhasa.

On December 22, 1997, after one month in Lhasa, he was arrested by the PSB under suspicion of 'political activities' from *Zehoe* Restaurant (a well-known restaurant in Lhasa). He was taken to Lhoka Bureau in Lhasa and interrogated for several hours. Later that evening he was taken to Sietru Detention Centre in

Lhasa. The following day he was taken to Tsethang Detention Centre and interrogated repeatedly. In both the detention centres, he suffered brutal beatings at the hands of the Lhoka PSB officers. He was denied visits from his parents throughout his time of detainment.

In January 1998, the Lhoka PSB remanded him to three years of 're-education through labour'. He was charged with 'attempting to flee Tibet' and 'suspicion of engaging in political activities'. In May of 1998 he was transferred to Trisam 're-education through labour camp'. Ngawang Dhipsel is currently in Trisam and his health is reportedly extremely poor.

In Trisam Prison, prisoners are forced to work in construction of buildings and in the winter, prisoners have to do military drills. In November of 1998, Dhipsel was injured while performing prison exercises but was denied medical treatment.

In April of 1999, he had a severe epileptic attack and was taken to Trisam Prison Hospital. However, he is reported to have not received adequate treatment and his health further deteriorated.

There are grave concerns for his health and safety. ❁

continued from p. 3

any prison activities. They even have to urinate in a container provided to them in their cell which is cleaned only once a day.

Even the extent of injuries suffered by a prisoner is unknown to anyone other than her cellmate since they are not allowed to go out and no one is allowed to see them.

Norzin was released on December 8, 1998. She didn't know how many prisoners were in her 'unit' as she was confined all day in her cell until her release. She reported that since May, 1998 she felt terrible suffocation in her cell and after the protest there were far more severe restrictions than before.

Norzin escaped from Lhasa on October 25, 1999. ❀

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# HUMAN RIGHTS

29  
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## TIBET: TIGHTENING OF CONTROL

*The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy has released its 1999 Annual Report on human rights situation in Tibet, "Tibet: Tightening of Control." In this issue of Human Rights Update, we reproduce the Executive Summary and our recommendations for the convenience of our readers and supporters.*

### Executive Summary

The year 1999 marked the official celebration of fifty years of the founding of the People's Republic of China as well as forty years of the 'liberation' of Tibet. The symbolic importance of both these events was characterised by various attempts by the Chinese government to display its authority and legitimacy.

Within China and in Tibet there was a tightening of the state's control over every sphere to consolidate its power. Therefore any attempt at questioning the legitimacy of the state was ruthlessly crushed. And yet as the state tightened its iron grip over its citizens and subjects there were also various protests undermining the state authority, ranging from the protests within China by members of the Falun Gong sect, and the continuing resistance in Tibet and the international community over China's illegitimate occupation of Tibet and the abuse of Tibetan human rights for the past 49 years.

Preparations for the twin anniversary celebrations took the form of an increase in surveillance and repressive measures. The anniversaries were thus a celebration of state control rather than an expression of people's exercise of their freedom. The harsh suppression of a peaceful demonstration in Kandze in October resulted in the arrest of at least 80 Tibetans. This is an illustration of the extent of freedom of speech and expression

granted to Tibetan people. Information received this year about the May 1998 Drapchi protests is equally disturbing. Eight prisoners have had their sentences extended for up to four years. Ten Tibetans are confirmed dead as a result of gun fire and torture following the protests.

The Chinese government claims that there has been 'earth-shaking' progress in social development and in the human rights situation in the last four decades under the communist rule. However the Chinese authorities refuse to acknowledge the fact that thousands of Tibetans continue to flee Tibet every year to escape from China's oppressive policies. This year 2,474 Tibetans fled Tibet including 1,115 children below the age of 18.

China continues to violate the human rights of the Tibetan people. Fundamental aspects of Tibetan society, including language and religion are viewed with suspicion by the government and are officially discouraged. The exercise of their right to speech results in their arbitrary arrests and detention. The disparities between the standard of living of Tibetans and the Chinese settlers are glaring. China's population transfer policy is greatly threatening Tibetan identity and access to resources.

Ever since the peaceful demonstrations in Lhasa in the late 1980's, the Chinese government increased its dominance of Tibet. The 'Strike Hard' campaign, initiated in 1996 is resulting in widespread

violations in Tibet. Over 11,000 monks and nuns have been expelled from their monasteries, as 'work teams' imposed restrictive measure on religious activities. In 1999, this campaign was extended to lay communities as well. More than 2,000 Tibetans escape over the Himalayas every year to avoid these repressive and discriminatory measures.

International governments, lured by China's economic prospects, continue to capitulate to the Beijing government. The European Union decided not to co-sponsor a U.S. human rights resolution during the 55 UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, assuring its defeat. During state visits by Jiang Zemin to England and France, extraordinary efforts were made to prevent the Chinese leader from encountering peaceful protesters. These visits ended as victories of commerce and large contracts for British and French corporations, but defeat of human rights.

The World Bank sponsored Western China Poverty Reduction Plan marks the involvement, for the first time of an international organization in a project entailing massive population transfers into Tibet. Two foreign researchers and one Tibetan were arrested in 1999 for attempting to research this project.

The positive developments in international politics in 1999 included the increasing recognition of self-determination movements. The

intervention of the international community in Kosovo and East Timor along with the worldwide condemnation of Russia's aggression in Chechnya is an encouraging sign for Tibet. There is an urgent need for increased pressure from foreign governments if Tibetans hope to gain their fundamental freedoms and human rights.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The existence of a right to freedom of speech and expression is rendered redundant by the harsh crackdown on people exercising this right. The expression of any view that contradict Chinese government policies are deemed anti national and the consequences include arrests and detention. In 1999, 115 Tibetans were arrested for peacefully expressing their beliefs.

The 'Strike Hard' campaign launched in 1996 aims at eliminating allegiance to the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Panchen Lama and Tibetan nationalism. Initially limited to the monastic institutions, the campaign was broadened in 1999 to include all of Tibetan society. In January of 1999, China launched an 'atheism' campaign thereby infringing on the right of Tibetans to freely practice their religion.

In Kandze 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture,' Sichuan Province, the People's Armed Police opened fire at approximately 3,000 Tibetans who were holding a peaceful demonstration. As a result, 80 Tibetans were arrested, and an unknown number were injured.

## Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

All forms of expression contrary to the policies of the Chinese Communist Party are grounds for detention in Tibet. In 1999, 130 Tibetans were arbitrarily arrested and detained by the Chinese government. The arbitrary nature of these arrests are reflected both by the reason for the arrests as well as the disregard of procedural safeguards. Once detained, their rights in the areas of pre-trial detention, fair trial guidelines and appellate procedure are violated.

In 1997, China revised their Criminal Procedure Law. These changes fall short of international standards and have not had any impact on the legal protections afforded to Tibetans accused of 'endangering national security.'

## POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

There are currently 615 known political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Tibet. Of these, 156 are women, and 62 are serving sentences of ten years or more. 79 per cent of the known political prisoners are monks or nuns. The Chinese authorities monitor information about Tibet very strictly and it is possible that these numbers are higher.

The Chinese government continues to detain ten year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the XI Panchen Lama of Tibet, along with his family. His current condition and whereabouts are unknown. The Chinese authorities have consistently refused requests by concerned governments and organisations seeking access to the child, including one by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. He is the youngest prisoner of conscience in the world.

Reports received in 1999, indicate that the prisoners involved in the May 1998 Drapchi Prison protests were beaten severely, placed into solitary confinement, and have had their sentences extended for up to four years. At least ten Tibetans were killed in the days and weeks following the protests. Eight political prisoners including Ngawang Sangdrol, the longest serving female political prisoner (currently serving a total of 21 years) in Tibet, have had their sentences extended.

Prominent political prisoners like Tanak Jigme Sangpo, Ngawang Choephel, Phuntsok Nyidron, Ngawang Phulchung, Jamphel Jangchub, Lobsang Tenzin, Phuntso Wangdu, Gyaltsen Dolkar and Jigme Gyatso are still imprisoned.

## TORTURE IN DETENTION CENTERS AND PRISONS

The prevalence of torture as a means

of crushing the resistance of individuals is alarming. There have been reports of the use of torture in almost every institution of the state, starting from incarceration, during initial detention, in transit to detention facilities, during interrogation, and in prisons and detention centers.

The widespread use of torture by agents of the state reduce the Chinese national laws prohibiting torture into hypocritical etchings on paper, with no corresponding realities.

The various methods of torture include: beatings, electric shocks, attacks by dogs, painful shackling, forced labour and exercise, prolonged periods of solitary confinement, deprivation of food and sleep, and denial of adequate medical care.

The Chinese government is a State Party to the Convention Against Torture. Since signing the convention in 1986, 69 Tibetans have died as a direct result of torture by officials of the Chinese government. Six Tibetans died due to torture in 1999. An additional four Tibetans died from torture in previous years, but information on these cases reached TCHRD in 1999.

## RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

Since the expression of Tibetan nationalism is intrinsically linked to its religious practices, the Chinese government looks at religious persecution as one of the means to crush Tibetan nationalism.

In January 1999, a three-year 'atheism' campaign alleging that Buddhism is 'alien' to Tibet was launched. Allegiance to Tibet's religious leaders the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama are banned, and the Chinese government attempts to control all aspects of religious activity. These policies are reminiscent of the policies imposed during the Cultural Revolution.

In 1999, 1,432 monks and nuns were expelled from their monasteries and nunneries, including 49 arrested for resisting 're-education.' 244 monks and nuns below the age of 18 were expelled from their religious institutions in 1999. Since the beginning of the 'Strike Hard' campaign in April of 1996, TCHRD has recorded 11,409 expulsions, and 541

arrests of monks and nuns. According to Chinese statistics, the number of expulsions represents one third of all monks and nuns in Tibet.

Since 1996, 261 monasteries and nunneries have been subject to the 're-education' programme. The other bodies that infringe religious freedom include the Democratic Management Committees and local Religious Affairs Bureaus. These bodies have the authority to supervise the activities of the monasteries. Under the pretext of supervision there are a number of restrictions placed on the age of the monks and nuns, in an attempt to reduce the monastic population.

## WOMEN AND FORCED BIRTH CONTROL

Despite the existence within national and international laws of protections afforded to the rights of Tibetan women, the Chinese government continues to violate these rights. Disregarding legislation guaranteeing concessions for minority groups, coercive family planning measures continue unabated in Tibet. Tibetan women are subjected to forced abortions, contraception and sterilisations by the Chinese authorities. 'Unauthorised' pregnancies have resulted in fines, intimidation and denial of privileges, including the right to education and employment for children. There are confirmed cases in 1999 of pregnant Tibetan women dying from forced sterilisation. The Chinese government's birth control policies results in the reduction of the Tibetan population.

## RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

In contravention of its treaty obligations, the Chinese government consistently violates the rights of Tibetan children. As a consequence of transfer of Chinese into Tibet, Tibetan language and customs are becoming redundant. Thus Tibetan children are being deprived of their cultural rights and the long term effect of this is the dilution of the distinctive character of Tibetan identity. The long term

effects of a denial of the rights of children is also to ensure that the Chinese authorities cultivate a more 'disciplined' and assimilated set of citizens for the future ensuring that the Tibetan resistance will not have a future.

The choice left to Tibetan parents is either to assimilate their children into the new Chinese society, or send them to India for a Tibetan education. Parents are increasingly compelled to send their children on the perilous journey into exile. In 1999, 1,115 children below the age of 18 arrived in India for education in Tibetan schools.

Tibetan children are denied their right to freedom of expression. There are currently 2 political prisoners below the age of 18 in prisons in Tibet and 21 others who were imprisoned as children but are now adults. Tibetan children are also denied their guaranteed right to freedom of religion. In 1999, 244 monks and nuns were expelled from their religious institutions as age restrictions were implemented throughout Tibet.

## POPULATION TRANSFER

The transfer of Chinese into Tibet is the most serious threat to the survival of the Tibetan people and culture. Population statistics estimate that there are now more Chinese than Tibetans in Tibet. Tibetans are getting marginalised in all sectors of the economy. Combined with repressive birth control measures, it is clear that the effect of the Chinese policy is reducing the Tibetans to an insignificant minority in their own land.

The Western China Poverty Reduction Plan funded partially by the World Bank, if implemented will reduce the percentage of Tibetans in Dulan County from 22 to 14 per cent of the total population.

## VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO SUBSISTENCE

Despite claims made by the Chinese authorities of economic development and growth in Tibet, the reports received indicate that these 'developments' have

benefited mainly the Chinese settlers. According to recent United Nations Development Program data, Tibet places somewhere between 131 and 153 out of the 160 countries on their Human Development Index.

Repressive and unequal rural taxation measures are further exacerbating the conditions of poverty for Tibetan nomads and farmers. The unchecked power given to local authorities results in the further violation of the Tibetan peoples rights, and there have been many cases reported of forced labour being extracted in lieu of taxes. Most of the basic rights associated with a 'welfare state' like the right to housing and health remain unfulfilled.

## ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

In 1999, TCHRD received information on 16 new cases of enforced disappearance in Tibet. Of the 12 cases reported in 1998, the conditions and whereabouts of three remain unknown. The Chinese government continues to detain Tibetans in unknown locations for prolonged periods of time. The families of these victims are not provided with any information about their whereabouts.

The condition and whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the XI Panchen Lama of Tibet and his family remain unknown.

## RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Despite being a State Party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Tibetans continue to be discriminated against by the Chinese government. The crucial factor is the lack of genuine political representation as this curtails the Tibetan people's ability to resist discriminatory measures in education, employment, health-care and housing.

Chinese population transfer and economic incentives favouring Chinese in Tibet exacerbate these discriminatory conditions. The Tibetan people are hence becoming the new social underclass in Tibet.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The evidence that TCHRD has gathered in the past year suggests that in 1999, China has been tightening its control over Tibet. This has resulted in the further violation of the rights of the Tibetan people in every aspect and sector of society as evidenced by this report. We request the International Community, the Chinese Government and the United Nations to urgently consider the following recommendations:

\* Ensure that China ratifies the ICCPR and the ICESCR and takes immediate steps to incorporate the norms laid down in the two covenants within their national legislation.

\* In light of the frequent cases of involuntary and enforced disappearances, we urge the UN Commission for Human Rights to set up a working group to investigate the cases of disappearances in Tibet.

\* We urge the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to demand a report from the Chinese government with respect to various components of the right to subsistence, to compare these with both the real situation as determined by NGO's and with the normative standards established by the ICESCR committee.

\* We support the proposed Optional Protocol to the CEDAW as it would allow an individual right to petition, ensuring that women victims still have a final recourse under an International Human Rights instrument.

\* We urge the Special Rapporteur on Torture who is due to visit China in the year 2000 to pay special attention to the material conditions in Tibet. We also strongly urge the Chinese authorities to co-operate with the Special Rapporteur to allow him unfettered access to the necessary information.

\* We urge the World Bank not to pass the \$40 million component of the loan which is a part of the Western Poverty Reduction Project as it would entail a massive transfer of Chinese into Dulan

affecting Tibetan identity. We further urge the World Bank and all other International Organisations to ensure that they should not fund any project that involves a policy of population transfer.

\* Based on the suggestions made by the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance on the importance of follow ups to in situ visits, it is our request that the Special Rapporteur who had last made his visit to China and Tibet in 1994, make a follow up visit to determine the extent of the violations of religious rights in Tibet.

\* We urge the Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial discrimination and Xenophobia to visit Tibet and examine the Chinese Government's policies on education, employment, public representation, health and education, which discriminates against Tibetan people.

\* We demand that the Chinese government clarify the scope and extent of the term 'endangering state security' in it's Criminal Procedural Law which in its present ambiguous form is used to suppress a number of rights, including the right to freedom of speech and expression.

\* We strongly demand the release of all political prisoners by the Chinese government, including those arrested for the exercise of their right to freedom of speech and expression.

\* Contravening all international norms pertaining to the rights of the child, the Chinese government has detained Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the youngest prisoner of conscience in the world (the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet since May 1995). We demand his immediate release.

\* We urge the Chinese government to ensure that prostitution in Tibet is curbed by strictly implementing the laws which deems prostitution illegal.

\* We urge the Chinese government to lay down a transparent taxation policy, especially in rural Tibet, to ensure that there is no misuse of power by the local authorities. ❀

**Fear for Phuntsok Nyidron's health**

A 30year-old nun Phuntsok Nyidron is reportedly suffering from high blood pressure accompanied by acute heart disease and sudden loss of consciousness.

Her cousin, Pasang, who reached Dharamsala in December, 1999 reports that, "her health is precarious and she requires immediate medical treatment outside the prison." Nyidron, of Michungri Nunnery was serving a 17-year imprisonment.

Originally from Yardrong village of Gyachoe town in Phenpo Lhundrup County, Phuntsok Nyidron is the recipient of the 1995 Reebok Human Rights Award.

Born in 1968, she joined Michungri Nunnery when she was 11 years old.

On October 14, 1989 Nyidron led a peaceful demonstration in the Barkhor area calling for an end to Chinese occupation of Tibet. She received a nine-year prison term and was transferred to Drapchi Prison. Her younger sister, Yeshi Dawa, who was also a nun at Michungri Nunnery was expelled subsequent to Nyidrons' arrest.

In her fourth year of serving term, she was one of the 14 nuns who recorded messages and songs on a smuggled tape recorder to friends and relatives outside the prison. Her sentence was extended by an additional eight years. In 1994 when her brother passed away, she was allowed leave for an hour by the prison authorities to attend the funeral ceremony.

The protest in Drapchi Prison in May resulted in a brutal crackdown by the prison authorities. The inmates were beaten, detained in their cells without any freedom of movement, those who had been injured were denied medical treatment and there was a deterioration in their diet. For nine months, following the May incident, Nyidron was not allowed any visitors. Her mother had to be hospitalised for a long time due to anxiety over her daughter's condition. ❀

## INCREASE IN THE SENTENCE OF EIGHT POLITICAL PRISONERS

Information emanating from sources within Tibet establishes that the sentence of eight Tibetan political prisoners has been extended as a result of the protests by prisoners in Drapchi Prison on May 1 and May 4, 1998 and that two prisoners are missing since the protests.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy has received confirmed information that Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa has increased the sentences of eight Drapchi political prisoners: Ngawang Sangdrol, Phuntsok Rigchog, Ngawang Ngonkyen, Lhasang, Passang, Norbu Phuntsok, Wangdu and Choekyi Wangmo in October 1998.

Information from Tibet also indicates that two political prisoners Lobsang Lungtok and Phuntsok Wangchuk are missing since July 1998 from their prison cell in Drapchi Unit 5. Chinese authorities held both of them incommunicado for more than 14 months after they participated in the protests in Drapchi Prison in 1998. Phuntsok Wangdu is a 23 year-old former middle school student from Tsethang village in Nedong County. Originally from Chongyas village in Lhokha Prefecture, he was arrested in June 1994 for pasting posters around the village and was sentenced to five years prison term. Lungtok, a 26 year-old monk from Gaden Monastery is a resident of Nyangdren town. He was arrested on March 20, 1992 and was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Their current whereabouts are not known.

In a shocking display of power in May 1998, Chinese authorities opened fire at prisoners during a peaceful demonstration in Drapchi Prison. On May 1, all the prisoners were taken to a flag hoisting ceremony to commemorate the International Labour Day. A total of 900 prisoners were assembled. The prisoners were made to sing the Chinese national anthem and songs praising Socialism. While the Chinese flag was being hoisted, a non-political prisoner threw a bunch of political leaflets in the air. This was followed by raising of slogans by political prisoners, leading to a disruption of the ceremony.

On May 4, 1998 a similar function was

organised to commemorate 'Youth Day.' The flag hoisting was disrupted by a monk named Lobsang Geleg who started shouting independence slogans. The People's Armed Police (PAP) then pushed everyone back to their cells. Some of the other prisoners who heard the commotion, started shouting and kicking the gates. A prison guard opened fire and Ngawang Sungrab, a Drapchi inmate from Drepung Monastery serving a ten-year prison term was shot.

Five months after the incident, Chinese authorities admitted that a shooting had occurred but the prison guards "fired guns into the air." Ten deaths were reported as a result of the protests in Drapchi Prison. Two of them were shot dead and eight others were tortured to death for taking part in the demonstrations. At least 60 prisoners had sustained severe injuries and many were severely tortured following the demonstrations. A former Drapchi prisoner, who was present at the time of the incident reported, "In the evening of that same day, 12 prison guards entered each cell and mercilessly beat the prisoners. Ngawang Dorjee (22) and Dawa (23) were taken out of their cells and tortured for two hours. Later the 12 prison guards pounced on Thupten Kalsang (25), a monk of Phenpo Gonsar Monastery, and beat him for half an hour. The next morning, he was again taken out of his cell and tortured severely. When he returned he was leaning against the wall while walking. Prisoners were not allowed to assist him. He was later released on medical parole and at present he is in critical condition at his residence."

The following political prisoners' sentences were extended by Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court in October 1998 for taking part in the two demonstrations:

Ngawang Sangdrol, who was serving 17 years' imprisonment, had her sentence extended for the third time, bringing her total sentence to 21 years. She is the longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet. Her sentence was increased by four years. Sangdrol's prison sentence had previously been prolonged by the

Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa in October 1993 and July 1996. Born in 1977, Ngawang Sangdrol, now 22 years old was from Garu Nunnery. She was first arrested when she was only ten years old in 1987 for participating in a demonstration and was detained for 15 days. On August 28, 1990, at the age of 13, she again joined a demonstration and was detained for nine months without being charged. Her current sentence began from June 17, 1992 when she was sentenced to three years for attempting to stage a demonstration in Lhasa along with other nuns from Garu Nunnery.

Phuntsok Rigchog, layname Migmar, is a 37 year-old monk of Tashi Gang Monastery in Nyethang Town, Chushul County in Lhasa Municipality. On May 31, 1994, Rigchog and six other monks from the same monastery were arrested for participating in a peaceful pro-independence demonstration in the Barkhor area of Lhasa City. The monks were detained in Gutsa Detention Centre until their sentences were passed. On November 12, 1994, the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa sentenced Rigchog to six years' imprisonment. After the sentence, he was transferred to Drapchi Prison. His sentence has been increased by an additional four years after his participation in the May 1998 Drapchi protests. He is serving a total sentence of 10 years and is expected to be released in 2004.

Ngawang Ngonkyen, lay name Kalsang Phuntsok, is a 24 year-old monk of Tashi Gang Monastery. Ngonkyen was arrested in February 1994, after taking part in a peaceful demonstration in Barkhor, Lhasa City. He was detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for a year and ten months before being sentenced to six years' imprisonment in January 1996 by the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa. After his sentence he was transferred to Drapchi Prison. In May 1998, he participated in the Drapchi Prison protests and had his sentence increased by an additional four years. Ngonkyen's sentence totals ten years.

Lhasang, a 23 year-old monk from

Phenpo Gonsar Monastery, received an extra sentence of four years. He was originally sentenced to five years for political reasons in 1995. He is presently in Drapchi Prison serving a total sentence of nine years.

Passang, a 22 year-old monk of Taglung Monastery in Phenpo Lhundrup County, was originally sentenced to five years' imprisonment on political grounds in 1995. Passang had his sentence extended by an additional three years following the Drapchi Prison protests bringing his total sentence to eight years.

Norbu Phuntsok, 22 years old, from Taglung Monastery in Phenpo Lhundrup County, had his sentence increased by an additional three years for his involvement in the Drapchi Prison protests. He was first arrested on political grounds and sentenced to five years imprisonment in 1995. Phuntsok is currently serving a total sentence of eight years.

Wangdu, a 24 year-old monk of Dechen Sa-ngak Monastery in Taktse County, was originally arrested in December 1994 on political suspicions. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. Wangdu's sentence was prolonged by an additional four years for his involvement in the Drapchi Prison protests. He is currently serving an eight-year sentence in Drapchi Prison.

Choekyi Wangmo, a 23 year-old nun of Sharbumba Nunnery in Phenpo Lhundrup County had her prison sentence increased by an additional one and a half years. She was originally sentenced for five years in 1993 for taking part in a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa City. She is now serving a sentence of six and a half years in Drapchi Prison.

It has been erroneously reported to us earlier this year that Choekyi Wangmo had died. As per the latest reports, she is alive but in critical condition. She had not completely recovered from the injuries she sustained during her interrogation in Gutsa Detention Centre when she was initially arrested. Her condition was aggravated by the Drapchi incident.

According to a former inmate of Drapchi Prison, "there is very little hope of Wangmo recovering as the prison is not included in the doctors visiting rounds. When the prisoners do get a chance to visit the doctors they are not given any treatment except in the rarest cases." ❀

## Ngawang Choephel's detention arbitrary says UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the UN Commission on Human Rights has declared that Ngawang Choephel's detention by the Chinese authorities to be arbitrary and in contravention of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Ngawang Choephel, a Tibetan musicologist and Fulbright scholar born in India, traveled to Tibet in July 1995 to do research on traditional Tibetan music. He disappeared following his arrival and the Chinese authorities confirmed in May 1998 that he was tried on September 6, 1995 and sentenced on November 13, 1996 to 15 years' imprisonment on espionage charges and three years for 'counterrevolutionary' activities. The case had been tried in closed hearing as it related to state secrets. On appeal this sentence was confirmed by the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's court.

Ngawang Choephel's detention raised a lot of international protest from various human rights groups and his case was submitted to the UN. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention regards deprivation of liberty as being arbitrary in the following cases:

- a) if it cannot be justified on any legal basis.
- b) when the deprivation is the result of a judgement for the exercise of various rights in the UDHR as well as the ICCPR such as the right to freedom of speech and expression etc.
- c) where the procedural rights related to a fair trial have been dispensed with.

In Ngawang Choephel's case, the Working Group has held that the Chinese government while making their charges against him have not made any specific reference to any of the articles of their Criminal Code concerning breaches of state security. In an earlier report on its visit to China the group had also stated that "unless the application of these crimes is restricted to clearly defined areas and in clearly defined circumstances, there is a serious risk of misuse". The group held that in the case of Ngawang Choephel, it seemed clear that there was such a

misuse. The government did not specify the nature of activities for which he was accused apart from the fact that he was collecting ethnic songs and they did not have any proof to corroborate their charge of espionage.

In light of the vagueness of the charge, the absence of any evidence and the denial of his right to a fair trial the Working Group held that "[t]he deprivation of the liberty of Ngawang Choephel is arbitrary, as being in contravention of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, according to which freedom of opinion includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and as in the instant case to receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of any frontiers, and falls within category II of the categories applicable to the consideration of the cases submitted to the Working group."

The Working Group has asked the Chinese government to take the necessary steps to remedy the situation. ❀

*Dear friends,*

*The dawn of the new millennium has not been ushered in by silent prayers of peace but through loud cries of civil strife and oppression throughout the world.*

*We at TCHRD, would like to take this opportunity to share with our supporters a silent prayer in the hope that the new millennium signals a new ray of hope for the Tibetan people as well as all other people struggling for their rights.*

*profile*

This is a regular section profiling political prisoners who are currently imprisoned in Tibet

## INCREASE IN A MONKS' SENTENCE FOLLOWING DRAPCHI PROTEST

Phuntsok Rigchog, layname Migmar is a 37 year-old monk from Nyethang town in Chushul County. At the age of eight he joined 'Mangtsuk School' (People's School) in Nyethang town for four years. Rigchog lived with his parents and five brothers.

In 1988 he became a monk of Nyethang Tashi Gang Monastery in Nyethang town. While at the monastery, he studied religious texts and at the same time worked as a treasurer of the monastery until 1992. He was the storekeeper of the monastery and had to look after the requirement of the monks. Tashi Gang Monastery was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. In 1985, the monastery was renovated by some old monks and by the local people, along with donations from a tourist. Phuntsok Rigchog was one of the first monks to be admitted in the monastery and there were only 10 monks in the monastery.

On May 30, during the morning prayer session, two monks; Sonam Tsering and Tsering Dorjee planned a demonstration in Lhasa. They were later joined by Phuntsok and three other monks. However they were not able to arrange posters and flags. The six of them left for Lhasa the monastery that same morning at about 11 a.m. By the time they reached Lhasa in the afternoon, they found many police personnel patrolling the city. This

disrupted the monks' plan to stage a demonstration that day. They stayed the night in a friends' house.

The next day, Phuntsok and the five monks started their protest in front of the *Jokhang Temple* (central cathedral) where they raised slogans like "Free Tibet, Tibet is Free, Long Live H.H. the Dalai Lama, China quit Tibet." Five minutes later, the Lhasa City's Public Security Bureau (PSB) arrested the monks and put them in an armoured vehicle. The PSB started beating them in the vehicle. They were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre where they were interrogated individually. During their four months detention in Gutsa, their family members were not allowed to visit them.

On November 11, 1994, the Lhasa Intermediate Peoples Court passed a sentence on the five monks. The sixth monk, Migmar Jr. was only fourteen years old, therefore, he was not taken to the court. Phuntsok Rigchog was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. Ngawang Tsangpa, (31) for six years and political deprivation for three years; Phuntsok Soeldrag (18) and Thupten Choekyi Gyurme (17) were both sentenced to two years' imprisonment and denied political rights for one year; Phuntsok Trimden (19) to four years and one year deprivation of political rights. Ten days later, they

were moved to Drapchi Prison. When the youngest monk, Migmar Jr. turned 15 years of age, he was sentenced to three years reform-through-re-education in Trisam.

In 1996, while working as a cook in Drapchi, Phuntsok gave food to a new prisoner out of the prison mealtime schedule. This incident was noticed by the prison guard who severely beat Phuntsok and he was subsequently dismissed as a cook.

Phuntsok was amongst the protestors who participated in the May protest in Drapchi in 1998. He was kept in solitary confinement as punishment for his involvement. Phuntsok and many other prisoners were severely beaten with iron rods, sticks, bayonets and shocked with electric cattle prods. For the next six months Phuntsok was denied access to any visitors.

Finally, in October 1998 Phuntsok's sentence was increased by an additional four years bringing his total sentence to ten years. Phuntsok is expected to be released in 2004, if his sentence is not extended yet again.

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