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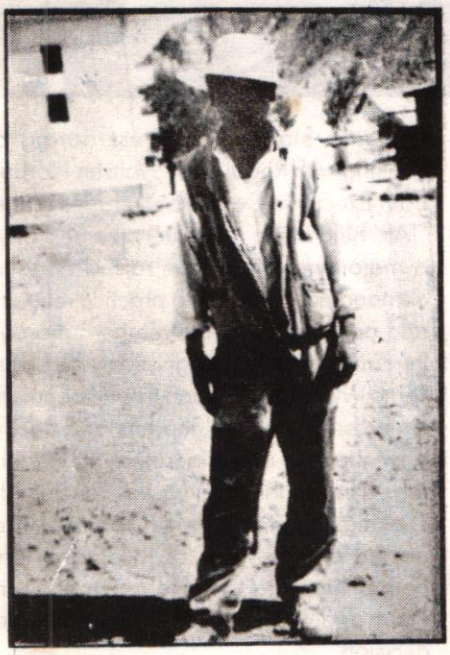
HUMAN RIGHTS update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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POLITICAL PRISONER DIES IN DRAPCHI



Sonam Rinchen, a 29 year-old political prisoner, died away in mid-January 2000 in Drapchi Prison. Although the cause of his death is unknown, unconfirmed reports indicate that he had been sick since 1997 and was undergoing treatment.

Born in 1973 into the Khangsar family in Gyama town, Meldrogungkar County, Rinchen became actively involved in pro-independence activities after the mass demonstration in Lhasa on 27 September 1987. Rinchen started his political activities in Meldro County, distributing and posting political leaflets.

In 1990, during a community meeting in the village, his step father, Thupten Yeshi, protested against Chinese mining operations in Meldro County. He called for an immediate end to the mining.

On 30 June 1992, Sonam Rinchen along with Sonam Dorjee, Kunchok Lodoe and Lhundrup Dorjee disrupted a 'patriotic re-education' meeting. They unfurled a Tibetan flag and shouted pro-independence slogans such as "Free Tibet," "Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" and "Chinese quit Tibet." After the Meldro County Public Security Bureau (PSB) dragged the four away, whilst simultaneously beating them, approximately 100 people joined the protest. This led to several cases of arrests and detention.

A few weeks later on 6 July, Rinchen's stepfather, Thupten Yeshi, was arrested on charges of "cooperating with the demonstrators." Both were detained in Gutsa Detention Centre where Rinchen and Yeshi were subjected to severe beatings. The fact that Rinchen's brother, Tamdin, was also serving a five-year term in Drapchi Prison for his involvement in political activities on 5 March 1988 resulted in especially harsh treatment for Rinchen and Yeshi. They were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre where they were treated in an equally severe manner.

In October 1992, the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court sentenced the five men under article 102 of the Criminal Procedure Law of the People's Republic of China. Rinchen, Yeshi and Lhundrup received 15 years' imprisonment and five years deprivation of political rights. Kunchok Lodoe and Sonam Dorjee received 13 years' imprisonment respectively. All five were transferred to Drapchi Prison where four of them are currently serving their term.

Private Tibetan school closed, teachers arrested



According to reliable information received in Dharamsala of the myriad secret arrests and detentions of Tibetan people occuring in the Lhasa region, it is reported that of those detained some have already been released while others are still being detained and interrogated. The arrests, however, continue unabated.

In Tren Konchu village in Lhasa, not only were the director and the staff of Gyatso Khimlop School arrested, but the school was also closed down. This private school, established in May 1996, is attended by approximately 40 students from all areas of the region. Bangri Tsamtrul Rinpoche was the Director of the school and his wife Nyima Chodon assisted him in the school administration.

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Testimony of a former political prisoner



Lobsang Gyatso was born in Dhong Kar town, Thagdey village, in Shigatse Region in 1976. He attended school from the age of 8 to 10. In 1987, at the age of 12, he joined Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Shigatse.

In February 1993, the Chinese government announced in Tashi Lhunpo that, "no one is to pay homage to the reincarnate Panchen Lama if he is born abroad (outside Tibet) and recognised by the Dalai Lama." On 1 May 1993, Lobsang Gyatso and two other young monks from Tashi Lhunpo, Sitse and Lobsang Tsultrim, pasted posters on the walls of their monastery protesting the announcement. As a result, the Shigatse Public Security Bureau (PSB) detained, interrogated and beat the three monks.

At that time, Chadrel Rinpoche, abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery intervened and requested the police to release the monks. He assured the PSB that the arrested monks would be punished and that they would not repeat such actions.

On 14 May 1995, the Dalai Lama proclaimed Gedhun Choekyi Nyima the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama of Tibet. On hearing this news, the monks of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery celebrated and began preparations for his reception. However, the Chinese government launched a major campaign four days later denouncing the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama, and announced that the decision was illegal. Chadrel Rinpoche, head of the Panchen Lama search committee, was detained on May 17. Since that time, scores of arrests have taken place in connection with the recognition of the Panchen Lama and subsequent protests over the Chinese government appointed Panchen Lama.

On 6 July 1995, all the monks of Tashi Lhumpo were required by Chinese officials to assemble in the monastery. The monks were then surrounded by police. Lobsang Tsultrim, Sonam Chophel and Lobsang Gyatso were arrested. Inside the police vehicle, the three were tortured with electric prods, kicked and slammed against the sides of the vehicle during transport to a detention centre.

They were kept handcuffed for 15 days. They were fed only a small steamed bread with a cup of boiled water for breakfast and food consisting of a small amount of rice and vegetables that were mixed with insects, husks and other non-edible contents. For four months they were required to perform hard labour for 13 hours a day.

The monks from Tashi Lhunpo expressed outrage over the Chinese government's crackdown on the monastery. On 11 July 1995, many activities of the monastery, including business and manufacturing, ceased. Temples were closed, the monks refused to display traditional Thangka paintings, and debating and the regular morning assembly were suspended.

On 12 July 1995, nearly 200 monks went to the local bazaar and demonstrated, raising slogans against the Chinese government. The protesters additionally wanted the Chinese 'work-team' to leave the monastery. Approximately 70 Chinese policemen attempted to stop the demonstration and a scuffle ensued.

After 30 minutes, nearly 900 armed Chinese army personnel arrived at the monastery. They prevented the monks from exiting their rooms or leaving the monastery. Later that evening, they entered the monks' rooms when all the monks were asleep, and 26 monks were taken to prison at around 2 o'clock in the morning. The monks did not have time to dress as they were taken from their beds and all of them were beaten. The next day an additional 10 monks were held in an empty building of the monastery.

Monks staged a protest during a meeting with Ragdi and Gyaltsen Norbu, both Executive Deputy Secretaries of the 'TAR' held at the monastery the next day. A majority of the monks raised slogans demanding their right to practice religion and acceptance of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama. Monks spat at and threw floor mats towards the political leaders and finally boycotted the meeting, returning to their rooms before the meeting was concluded. That night approximately 10 posters were posted on the walls of the monastery denouncing the Chinese occupation in Tibet and the Chinese Panchen Lama decision.

The monks detained in the monastery underwent violent political 're-education' for 12 hours a day, starting from 16 July. The purpose of this 're-education' was to force the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama, Gendun Choekyi Nyima and Chadrel Rinpoche, and "to point out other's fault and to accept one's own crime." There were eight Chinese police and 'work-team' members present during the 'political re-education' sessions. They tortured the monks by pointing guns at them and threatening to shoot, as well as with repeated beatings. Unable to bear this torture, Wangdu, of Tashi Lhunpo, committed suicide on 17 July. He was 25 years old.

During the 'political re-education' that went on for two months in the monastery, the main entrance remained closed and none of the monks were allowed to go

outside. 900 Chinese army personnel stayed inside the monastery to prevent dissent.

On 8 January 1996, some prisoners recited *Dhentsik Monlam*, words of truth ,a Tibetan prayer. Prison officials ordered them to stop the prayer, stating that, "blind faith is strictly prohibited." When Lobsang Gyatso replied that, they were not following blind faith, he was beaten with electric cattle prods. His feet were shackled and he was stripped of his clothes. He was made to stand naked, exposed to the harsh winter night. This took place from 10 PM to 3 AM. By 3 AM, he had nearly frozen to death.

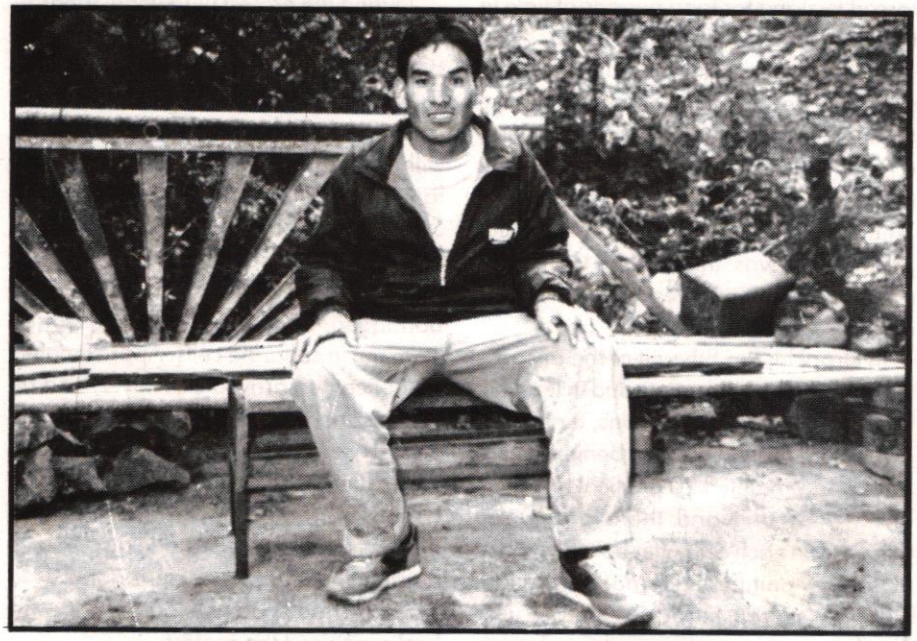
While in prison, Gyatso was subjected to repeated torture. Next to his cell No. 5, Dingang Rinpoche from India was imprisoned in cell No. 4. Because Rinpoche gave a book containing political ideologies to Lobsang Gyatso, he (Gyatso) was handcuffed, beaten and deprived of food for two days, beginning on 15 March 1996.

On 5 October 1996, Lobsang Gyatso was released. He was subsequently expelled from his monastery by Chinese officials, fined 3500 yuan (US $440) and detained in a police station for 15 days without charge. Chinese officials forced him to wear Chinese dress. He was repatriated to the control of Dhongkar township officials.

During his three years in Shigatse after his release from prison, from 1996 to 1999, he tried to clarify misconceptions surrounding the Dorje Shugden issue. He discussed the historical background of the issue and current information regarding the situation to monks in the monasteries, towns and villages in the area. He distributed books and audio-cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama on Dorje Shugden, Tibetan Uprising Day and the future constitution of Tibet. When the Chinese officials became aware of his activities, he was handed over to Dhongkar Township who in turn released him to his family.

Unable to freely exercise his right to political and religious freedom, Lobsang Gyatso left for India on 30 October in 1999. He reached the Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 14 November and arrived in Dharamsala, India on 28 November 1999.

Testimony of a juvenile political prisoner



Born in Chushul County, Lhasa Municipality, Sonam Tsering lived with his family until the age of 16. During that time, he had been to public school for only one month, spending his time primarily farming with his family. In 1991, he became a monk in Nyethang Tashigang Monastery.

On 31 May 1994, along with monks Phuntsok Rigchok, Ngawang Changpa, Phuntsok Soldrak, Pema Thinlay and Migmar, Sonam Tsering held a brief, peaceful demonstration in the Barkor area in front of the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa City. Within five minutes, ten PSB officials arrested the six monks and beat them while in transport to a detention centre. At the time, Sonam Tsering was 14 years old.

Initially detained and interrogated in Rhaorang Prison, they were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre on 24 July. Despite being a juvenile, Sonam Tsering was beaten by prison guards during interrogation. At present, he continues to suffer the effects of this maltreatment.

The quality of food in the detention centre was extremely poor. Uncleaned lentils were boiled with roots and worms. Their daily ration consisted of:a small cup of tea and two small 'tingmos' (steamed bread) for breakfast; boiled, worm-infested lentils with a small amount of half-cooked rice for lunch; and carrot soup with two small tingmos for dinner. Families sent food to their imprisoned monks, but only half reached the prisoners.

The People's Intermediate Court held a 'mock' trial on 11 November 1994. Their 'crimes' were read out by a lawyer, Jampa Ngodup, and their sentence was passed. Three days later, a policewoman came with a charge-sheet written in Chinese. The primary charge was 'endangering state security.' According to the charge-sheet, Phuntsok Rigchok and Dorje Lamtso were sentenced to six years; Pema Thinlay and Migmar Wangdu to two years; and Sonam Tsering to four years. The accused were informed that they could appeal to the People's Intermediate Court three days later. None of the accused filed an appeal, stating that, "appeals in Tibet are futile."

On 22 November1994, claiming they were conducting medical check-ups, prison officials extracted blood from the imprisoned monks. Afterwards, Sonam Tsering was taken back to Gutsa Detention Centre, where he remained for approximately six months. The others were moved to Drapchi Prison. Sonam Tsering's blood was again forcibly extracted on 15 May 1994, and again on 17 July 1994. Twelve days later he was transferred to Drapchi Prison where he was

made to undergo rigorous physical exercise. If he did not adequately perform the exercises, he was punished by being forced to stand for long periods of time in the hot sun.

Once when Sonam Tsering became sick as a result of this punishment, he requested medical treatment. In response, a prison guard hit him three times on the head claiming that his sickness was a lie. Tsering stated that for all the political prisoners it was impossible to receive medical treatment unless bedridden and on the verge of death.

In Drapchi, the 5th unit of the prison is for male political prisoners and in this unit, there are two further divisions, a new unit in the front and an old one behind. There are approximately 120 political prisoners in the new unit and there are twelve prisoners in each cell. After being detained in the new unit for eight months, Sonam Tsering was transferred to the old unit. The following is testimony from Tsering concerning the May 1 and 4 demonstrations of 1998.

Drapchi Protest Testimony

On 1 May 1998 a Chinese flag-raising ceremony was held in the prison ground in Drapchi. All the prisoners of the new unit were required to attend the ceremony. As soon as the flag was raised, two prisoners threw leaflets in the air advocating Tibetan freedom and shouted slogans of "free Tibet." This in turn caused other poltical prisoners of the new unit to shout similar slogans. After sometime, prison guard Tado Yephel informed the prisoners that the commotion which had occurred during the flag-hoisting ceremony would be looked into.

To express solidarity with the new unit prisoners, old unit prisoners did not attend the following ceremony. They were prepared to protest if they were taken to a similar ceremony scheduled to be held the next day. The new unit prisoners who were taken instead protested again. These prisoners shouted, "Leave our people alone," and "they are killing our people," as they were forcibly removed from the courtyard. Then old unit prisoners began shouting "free Tibet" and "leave our people alone." The scene became chaotic, with large numbers of Tibetan prisoners protesting. At one point, the prison gate was blocked by the protesters who attempted to open the gate that divided the new and old units.

During the protest Ngawang Sungrab from Drepung Monastery was shot in the stomach by Chinese prison guard Showo Tuhu. A fellow prisoner who had studied medicine attempted to stop the bleeding with a piece of bedsheet. A few minutes later, prison guards took Ngawang Sungrab to a hospital. Dawa, Ngawang Dorjee and Tsering Phuntsok were taken outside.The next day, badly beaten and bandaged, Dawa and Ngawang Dorjee were put in separate cells. Approximately six policemen arrived on May 4, and all the prisoners who had taken part in the protests were beaten using wires and sticks. When the police came to cell No. 11 which housed Sonam Tsering, the prisoners were made to stand up and face questioning. They were interrogated as to why they had shouted slogans and who had organised the protest.

One Chinese prison official beat and kicked Thupten Kelsang who refused an order to kneel down. By the end of the beating, Thupten Kelsang was unconscious. As a result, prisoners boycotted dinner that evening. Since the demonstration, severe restrictions have been imposed in Drapchi Prison. Personal property, including pens, papers and books were confiscated and burnt. Restrictions on normal activities including use of the toilet were heightened. Monthly visitation rights for families were halted. A book dealing with the necessity of opposing 'splittism' was distributed amongst the prisoners who were required to study its contents.

Sonam Tsering was released on 30 May 1998, and since then he has received no information on further activities in Drapchi. After his release, he learned that the Chinese had expelled him from his monastery and his movements were monitored and restricted. Faced with these difficulties, he fled from Tibet on 16 October 1998.

Religious Repression: 'patriotic re-education' continues

Gonlung Nunnery

Thinley Karmo is a 20 year-old nun of Gonlung Nunnery from Dathang town, Driru County in Nagchu Prefecture. She arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on 13 December 1999.

Karmo's parents are nomads. In 1994, she joined Gonlung Nunnery at the age of 15. At that time there were around 90 nuns at the nunnery.

A three-member 'work team' visited the nunnery in May or June of 1998. They issued red cards (residential permits) to 30 nuns. The other 60 nuns were ordered to leave the nunnery. Currently there are only 30 nuns in Gonlung Nunnery.

The 'work team' members set in place a number of restrictions over the remaining nuns. They banned pictures and prohibited the recitation of any prayers related to the Dalai Lama. The 60 expelled nuns returned to their homes. Thinley Karmo was one of the expelled nuns.

Nyizong and Dolma Lhakhang Monastery

Dakpa Sonam, 22 years old, is a former monk of Nyizong Monastery in Sershul County in Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP). Nyizong Monastery was renovated in 1982 with the help of donations from locals after it was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Dolma Lhakhang Monastery is located close to Nyizong Monastery and the monks of the monasteries live together.

In July or August 1998, eight officials of Sershul County came to the monasteries and ordered their closure. The monks of Nyizong Monastery refused to vacate the monastery claiming that "they had renovated the monastery and no one had the right to close it down." The monks from both of the monasteries resisted and argued with the officials. However, the officials maintained that the monastery "is the property of Chinese government and nobody could own it." On 12 August 1998 six monks were arrested from the

monasteries and identified as the principle 'culprit.' The monks: Rukha Phuntsok, Tsultrim Gyaltsen, Jokpa Choezin, Leypa, Sungdo and Dakpa Sonam were held for one month. Three of them were taken to Sershul County Prison and the other three were sent to a 're-education through labour' centre. They were released on 15 September 1998.

The monks were ordered to stop their renovations and leave the monasteries. All 206 monks were later expelled and ordered to return to their homes. At present, both the monasteries remain closed.

Dakpa Sonam left his home on 17 October 1999, and reached Nepal on 16 December 1999. He wants to join a monastery in India.

Sanglung Monastery

Woeser Phel, 24 years old, is a former monk of Sanglung Monastery. He reached Kathmandu, Nepal on 21 November 1999. Sanglung is the largest monastery in Dzamthang County and there are 305 resident monks. In May 1998 a five-member 'work team' came to the monastery and conducted 're-education' sessions for approximately ten days. The 'work-team' banned pictures and instructed the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama. They also introduced political studies in the monastery. The monks resisted the 'work team' members' instructions by remaining absent during the 're-education' sessions. The 'work-team' threatened the monks with expulsions and with the closure of the monastery if they did not cooperate with the 're-education'. Ten days later the 'work team' members returned to the monastery and expelled sixty monks. All monks below the age of eighteen and those who had opposed the 'work team' members were expelled. A limit of 120 monks was imposed and permits were issued to these monks. The remaining monks were ordered to leave the monastery and return to their homes.

Re-education in the Lay Community

While 'work team' members imposed strict regulations in Sanglung Monastery, the 're-education' programme was also extended to the lay sector in Dzamthang County. A mass meeting was called in Namda village where the Chinese authorities threatened the people with, "dire consequences if they possessed pictures of the Dalai Lama in their homes." Officials from the village searched houses to check for any photos and discovered a picture of the Dalai Lama displayed on the altar in Woeser Phel's house. The picture was confiscated and the matter was reported to the county authorities.

In December 1998, three county officers arrested Woeser Phel from his monastery for possessing a picture of the Dalai Lama and "talking about Tibet's independence" with his friends in Machen County a month before. He was taken to the County Public Security Bureau (PSB) station for interrogation. Phel denied all charges against him, and since the officers had no evidence he was released the same day. However, Phel was expelled from his monastery after his release, and ordered to return to his home.

Woeser Phel left Tibet in September or October 1999 and now wants to join a school in India.

Wara Monastery

Ngawang Ngodup is a 25 year-old monk from Wara Monastery in Trenkar town, Jomda County in Chamdo Prefecture. He arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on 19 November 1999. Ngodup did not attend school and joined Wara Monastery when he was 14 years old.

In November 1997, a five-member 'work team' conducted 're-education' sessions in Wara Monastery. They remained for approximately four months. The 'work-team' conducted frequent meetings in the monastery. They instructed the monks to oppose the Dalai Lama and lectured on, 'how Tibet is a part of China.' If monks did not attend the 're-education' sessions, they were fined five yuan per day. The 'work-team' ordered the monks to sign a pledge denouncing the Dalai Lama and showing 'loyalty' to China. All the monks, including the head of the monastery, refused to sign the pledge. 'Work-team' members threatened to close the monastery and expel the monks if they continued to resist the aforementioned demands.

In February or March 1998, 'work team' members expelled twelve monks, including the abbot of the monastery. Following the expulsions, the 'work team' forcibly collected signed 'pledges' from approximately 70 monks, most of whom were below the age of 18. The rest of the monks were ordered to leave the monastery.

During the 're-education' the 'work team' imposed a ban on pictures of the Dalai Lama. They also announced that, "any monk who returned to Wara Monastery from India would have to pay a penalty of 30,000 yuan per year to Jomda County Administration. Ngawang Ngodup was expelled from his monastery after he refused to acceed to the restrictions imposed by the 'work team.' He fled Tibet and reached Nepal on 19 November 1999.

Sog Tsendhen Monastery

Sog Tsendhen Monastery in Sog County in Nagchu Prefecture, was visited by 'work team' members in the summer of 1997. The monks were summoned for meetings and repeatedly given political instructions by the county officials. At present, there are around 150 monks who have been issued residency permits. The rest of the monks were ordered to leave the monastery.

Since 1992, monks of Sog Tsendhen Monastery had pasted several "free Tibet" posters around the town and county. However, no arrests took place until 'work-team' members visited the monastery. In the summer of 1997 county PSB officials arrested five monks from the monastery. Four were released in 1999. The fifth monk, Lobsang Lhundup (age 25) from Yang-nang town of Sog County, is believed to be presently detained in Nagchu Prison. He was arrested in July 1998.

His parents and relatives were denied permission to visit him in prison in December 1998. Since then, his parents have been unable to see him and they do not know of his current whereabouts.

Chamdo Monastery

Lobsang Tenzin is an 18 year- old monk

of Chamdo Monastery in Guru town, Chamdo County. Tenzin became a monk at the age of 13.

'Work team' members visited Chamdo Monastery in August 1996 and set a limit of 800 monks. At that time, approximately 500 monks were expelled by the forty or forty-five member 'work-team.'

In November 1998 approximately 50 'work team' members re-visited Chamdo Monastery. They stayed for approximately two months, conducting 'patriotic re-education' sessions. During the sessions the 'work team' distributed documents, divided the monks into various units and later questioned them individually. During the 're-education' the 'work team' expelled fifteen monks from the monastery who were blacklisted as 'gamblers' and had been previously fined (200 yuan each) by the monastery.

An additional 25 monks were expelled from the monastery by 'work team' members for exhibiting "bad expression." In total 540 monks were expelled from Chamdo Monastery. Lobsang Tenzin escaped Tibet in October or November of 1999 and reached Nepal on 20 December 1999. He hopes to rejoin a monastery in India.

Driru Monastery

Kelsang Lhundup is a 21year-old former monk of Driru Monastery in Nagchu Prefecture. His parents are nomads. He joined Driru Monastery when he was 14 years old.

Before the arrival of 'work team' members in April or May of 1996, there were 88 monks in Driru Monastery. A four-member 'work team' stayed for one month in the monastery conducting 'patriotic re-education' sessions.

Approximately 40 monks were issued permits and the rest were asked to leave the monastery. Currently, only 12 new monks have been allowed to stay and study religious scriptures in the Driru Monastery, but they cannot attend any religious gatherings and have to wear laymens' clothes in the monastery.

A second 'work team' consisting of ten members visited the monastery in August or September of 1996. They stayed for six days and during that time searched the monastery for pictures and "inciting" literature.

In the Spring of 1998, 'work team' members arrived at the monastery for the third time. 48 monks were expelled. They were not 'registered' and did not have the residency permits required to stay at the monastery. Most of them were below 18 and seven others who were later expelled had been to India for pilgrimage. Currently there are approximately 40 monks remaining in the monastery.

Lhundup left the monastery on 29 October 1999 and reached Nepal on 13 December 1999. He wants to join a monastery in India.

Drongnag Monastery

Jamyang Dorjee is a 23 year-old monk from Drongnag Monastery in Driru County, Nagchu Prefecture.

Drongnag had approximately 80 monks before the arrival of a five member 'work team' in April or May, 1998. They stayed in the monastery for about 50 days. During their stay the 'work team' searched all of the monks' rooms and confiscated all pictures of the Dalai Lama. 'Re-education' sessions were held regularly and the monks were forced to submit letters pledging to obey the instructions of the 'work team.'

On the basis of the 'pledges,' 49 monks were issued permits allowing them to remain at the monastery. The remaining 31 monks were expelled from the monastery and returned to their families' homes.

Jamyang Dorjee fled Tibet In October or November 1999 and reached Nepal on 13 December 1999. He wants to join a monastery in India.

Lodrong Nunnery

Ngawang Wangmo is a 23 year-old nun of Lodrong Nunnery in Nganang town, Phenpo Lhundrup County in Lhasa Prefecture. She joined Lodrong Nunnery in 1996. Currently there are around 45 nuns at Lodrong.

She reports that a 'work-team' consisting of 13 members visited the nunnery in April or May of 1998. The 'work team' was entirely Tibetan and they stayed for around three months to conduct 'patriotic re-education.' They asked every nun individually to choose between the Dalai Lama and the People's Republic of China. A number of 'pledges' were forcibly taken from the nuns and they appointed their own members for the Democratic Management Committee of the nunnery.

There were around 25 nuns who were living outside the nunnery at that time because they were not registered with the 'work team.' Despite repeated requests to the authorities, the nuns were not allowed to stay in the nunnery. Most of these nuns were from Phenpo Lhundrup County.

Ngawang Wangmo also reports that on 15 January 1999, two nuns, Kelsang (24) of Phenpo Lhundrup County and Namdol Dolsang (30) of Lodrong town, Meldrogungkar County, were arrested by Meldrogungkar PSB. They were arrested on the charge of pasting and distributing "free Tibet" posters in Lodrong township along with eight other nuns.

Wangmo states that both the nuns were detained in Meldrogungkar County Prison for one month and were then taken to Gutsa Detention Centre, where they were detained for approximately three months. They were later sentenced to three years imprisonment, and in July or August of 1999, they were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

While in Drapchi, Namdol Dolsang was tortured and the prison authorities 'extracted' blood from her. As a result, after her release she became very weak and was hospitalised for an extended period. Both nuns were released from Drapchi in February or March 1998. At present Dolsang is staying with her parents, but is unable to do any work. She is receiving medical treatment paid for entirely by her family. Despite her weak condition, she has to report regularly to the township authorities, from whom she must receive permission for any of her activities and movements.

Wangmo arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on 13 December 1999.

profile

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

VETERAN INDEPENDENCE ACTIVIST SERVING 17 YEARS

Ngawang Gyaltsen (lay name Ngodup Gyaltsen), a 35 year-old monk from Drepung Monastery, is originally from Lhasa City, Toelung Dechen County. He studied for three years in a primary *Mangtsuk* (public) *School* in Dechen township. When he was 15 years old, he left school to help his parents, who are farmers.

Around 1983 he joined Drepung Monastery situated in the north of Lhasa City. The younger monks had to assist with work in the monastery, and during the daytime Gyaltsen cut stones. He studied religion in the morning and in the evening.

According to a decree issued by monastery authorities at Drepung in 1986, 50 monks were to study religious texts full-time. As Ngawang Gyaltsen was a good student, he was listed among the 50 monks and within a short time he became known for his command of religious and philosophical subjects.

In Lhasa, on 27 October 1987, along with 20 other monks from the monastery, Gyaltsen staged a peaceful demonstration against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. This was the first large and open protest by Tibetans since 1959. Shouting slogans including, "Tibet is for Tibetans," "Chinese quit Tibet," "Long live the Dalai Lama," and "Support our rightful struggle." They walked around the Barkhor and the Jokhang Temple approximately five times. When they stopped at the front gate of the 'TAR' administrative office (the highest Chinese authority in occupied Tibet), Chinese policemen and Public Security Bureau officials arrested the monks and detained them in Gutsa Detention Centre.

They were badly beaten during interrogation sessions in Gutsa, and left without food for some time. Afterwards, they were forced to eat, in the presence of prison guards, a bowl of leftover pig's food. When they refused, the prison guards beat them.

Ngawang Gyaltsen and his companions were released on 22 January 1988 after four months of detention when the 10th Panchen Lama intervened on their behalf. The monks rejoined the monastery.

In 1989, Ngawang Gyaltsen was once again involved in independence activities along with approximately 10 other companions. They distributed independence pamphlets, participated in peaceful demonstrations and established a group, the Tibetan Freedom Organisation. When the Chinese authorities became aware of their activities, they were in imminent danger of arrest. In order to escape arrest, Gyaltsen attempted to flee Tibet. On 13 May 1989, at the Nepal-Tibet border, Chinese officials arrested Gyaltsen and his friend. They were transferred to Lhasa. By the time they reached a detention centre in the 'TAR,' Gyaltsen's head was covered with blood from the beatings he sustained during transportation to Lhasa in the police vehicle.

All of his 10 companions from Drepung who were members of the Tibetan Freedom Organisation were arrested at different times. They were kept in different cells during their frequent interrogation sessions in Sangyip Prison. The prison authorities denied visitation rights to their relatives.

On 28 November1989 the 'TAR' Intermediate People's Court read out the charges and sentences of the 10 monks in front of 1500 people. Ngawang Gyaltsen was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment and five years deprivation of political rights, on charges of 'counter-revolutionary propaganda' and for attempting to illegaly cross the border.

Unhappy with the sentences he had received, Gyaltsen appealed to the 'TAR' People's High Court, but received no response. On 7 January 1990 he retracted his appeal, realising the futility of the exercise.

A week later, Gyaltsen and the other imprisoned monks were transferred to Drapchi Prison where the prison conditions and their treatment were extremely severe. They were forced to undergo exhausting manual work during their first few days. Gyaltsen is still in Drapchi Prison. He will have completed his sentence in year 2007.

continued from p.1

Besides morning and evening prayers, subjects like Tibetan, English, Chinese and Maths were taught in the school. The school was established and run jointly by Tsamtrul Rinpoche, a few kind-hearted Tibetans and some foreign sponsors.

In August 1999, Tsamtrul Rinpoche, Nyima Chodon and three teachers were arrested by PSB officials. Currently, the school remains closed and the building has been confiscated by the Chinese government. Deprived of education, some of the students of the school now resort to begging in the streets in and around the Barkhor. A search of Tsamtrul Rinpoche's house after his arrest by PSB officials revealed documents and items deemed political by the authorities.

While in prison, Tsamtrul Rinpoche received severe beatings which have reportedly resulted in major injuries. All of the people arrested from the school have still not been released.

Ironically two months after the incident, official sources in China announced that Gyatso Khimlop School is still running smoothly under the supervision of Chinese government.

Sucessful South India Workshop

The 3rd Workshop of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, held from January 19th - January 24th 2000 at SOS Bylakuppee School in South India was attended by 130 Tibetan students studying in various colleges in India. Eminent speakers and parliamentarians graced the events with their speeches and talks on the concept of human rights and Democracy.

This Workshop was widely appreciated, and the third of its kind since the last two organised in New Delhi in two consecutive years following the inception of TCHRD in 1996.

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

FEBRUARY 2000 VOLUME V NUMBER 2

KARMAPA'S ESCAPE: FEARS SURROUNDING SAFETY OF HIS PARENTS AND RELATIVES

The recent flight of the 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorjee, has sparked an extensive investigation according to reports from Tibet. His parents were brought from their home town in Lhasa to the headquarters of Chamdo 'TAP' Political Consultative Committee. They have been held there under close surveillance, in quarters which are usually occupied by a member of the Committee.

At Tsurphu Monastery, the seat of the Karmapa in Tibet, the Tibetan security officer who is from Nagchu and a monk have been instructed to leave their jobs as security officers at the monastery. Officials and monks at Tsurphu in Toelung Dechen County have been subjected to investigation and interrogation by Chinese authorities.

According to a report from Tibet Information Network, there has been major reshuffling in the monastic management since the escape. Monks are strictly instructed to correct their 'political attitudes' or they face extended 'patriotic re-education' sessions.

The group also stated that Tsurphu Monastery, located approximately 60 kilometres west of Lhasa, is now closed to visitors. There were reports earlier this year from visitors that an unusually large number of uniformed and plain clothes PSB officers were stationed in and around the monastery.

The fact that the Karmapa is recognised both by the Dalai Lama and Beijing has critical political implications. So far the only assertion made by the Chinese government to save losing face regarding the escape is that he would return to Tibet and that he has gone to India only to collect his religious items.

The desire of the Chinese government to use the Karmapa as a puppet, like their attempted use of the Xth Panchen Lama to legitimise their control over Tibetan religion, is evident. His official visit to Beijing in 1994, when he was just 11, coincided with National Day. There was massive media coverage when he was reportedly quoted as saying that he supported the Party and prayed for Mao Zedong.

The Karmapa has made explicit speeches since he arrived in exile on the absence of religious freedoms in Tibet.

There is serious concern for the Karmapa's other family members who are also likely to be kept under strict scrutiny and surveillance. ❁

An Appeal

The 56th session of the Commission on Human Rights is scheduled to be held from 20 March to 28 April 2000 in Geneva. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy strongly appeals to the United Nations member countries to condemn the ongoing Chinese human rights violations in Tibet. Support us and you will help safeguard the human rights of Tibetans facing deprivation of rights in all spheres of life.

New 're-education through reform' facility

Reliable sources from Tibet confirm the opening of a new 'reform through re-education' facility in Chamdo. The new facility (laojiao) began functioning on 15 January 1998 with the first arrivals being six Drayab monks. The names of four of the monks are: Ngawang Singye, Chemi Lobsang, Gonpo and Tashi Nyima. The name of the others are not available. The six of them have now been released from the facility. This 'reform through re-education' facility is in Ze-thang village located 10 km east of Chamdo City. This facility is under the direct administration of the Law Enforcement Department in Chamdo region. The accused, who are given prison terms by the respective provinces (administrative sentences), are then transferred to this new facility.

There are 30 rooms in the facility where each room can accommodate six prisoners. There are 30 prison staff working in the facility. Our sources describe that currently there are 30 prisoners being detained in this facility. However, except for Namgyal (50) from Chamdo Pashoe County and Gedun Gyatso (22) a monk of Chamdo Pondha Monastery, who are serving three year sentences for political reasons, the remaining prisoners are common criminals.

The opening of this new 'reform through re-education' centre in Chamdo region serves two purposes: first to detain common criminals, and second to torture any Tibetans who express political opposition to Chinese rule. The establishment of this new facility clearly indicates that the violation of the human rights of Tibetan people, including the incidence of torture, continues to increase under the Chinese administration. ❁

CHINA'S "WHITEWASH" ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The People's Republic of China (PRC)released its White Paper on Human Rights on 17 February 2000. The 18-page report fails to address the civil, political and religious rights of individuals living within the PRC; instead focusing on economic 'development' and 'stability'. Development is used as an excuse for the failure of the PRC to guarantee basic human rights to its citizens.

Throughout the report the Chinese government has evaded internationally recognised human rights standards. China statistics are cited as evidence in the improvement of the lives of the average Chinese. Statistics even detail the number of hospital beds in 'new China'. It is evident from the White Paper that the Chinese government attaches great importance to statistics and attempts to assess 'development' in terms of such figures. However, there is no mention of the cost of these 'improvements', nor of the devastating effects of the cultural revolution (1966-1978), which left between 20 to 30 million Chinese and approximately one million Tibetans dead.

Even taking the Chinese statistics on their face value, the White Paper fails to break down the China-wide statistics it provides to look at regional inequalities, nor does it deal with substantive issues such as access to the fruits of development, or even to basic subsistence rights.

The White Paper also fails to make the necessary connections between economic and social rights and civil and political rights. The right to development in international law cannot be isolated in such a fashion, otherwise, it is a human right in name only.

The Chinese Government claims that conditions in China make it impossible to promote human rights in the way of the developed western countries, or of other developing countries. This appears to imply that regardless of international commitments and domestic laws upholding the rights of the citizens of China, the Chinese government will continue to curtail the rights of its citizens and suppress all views contrary to those promulgated by the PRC and Communist Party.

The White Paper also claims that Beijing took the lead in prohibiting prostitution and following that "all other large, middle-sized and small cities nation-wide successively prohibited prostitution."

In a TIN report, according to an unofficial survey carried out by a Tibetan in 1998 there are an estimated 658 brothels in 18 main streets of Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet. Supposing the population of Lhasa is 200,000, the ratio is one brothel for every 304 people in Lhasa. On average a small brothel has seven to eight girls and a big brothel has 10 to 14 girls.

According to Agence France Presse on 29 February 2000, Mr Sun Jiazheng, China's culture minister, was appalled by the rampant prostitution and has launched a country-wide crackdown against the inexorable growth of prostitution. The minister also accused government departments for actively participating in the trade.

"A number of local government departments take part in and encourage these illegal activities," said Sun.

The minister's concerns are supported by the testimony of several recent arrivals from Tibet. A 22 year-old recent arrival from Lhasa (anonymous for security reasons) came to Dharamsala on 6 January 2000. He said that prostitution was a major problem in Lhasa, "the majority of prostitutes are Chinese, they are everywhere in the city."

In their review of the Paper, Amnesty International criticised Beijing stating that the, "White Paper in defence of its human rights record is more significant for what it leaves out than what it reveals." ❁

Six arrests and 49 expulsions in Rating Monastery

Tsondue Gyaltsen, a 21 year-old originally from Phenpo Lhundrup County, Thankgo township, was a monk of Rating Monastery. His parents are farmers. According to Tsondue, there are presently 130 monks under the jurisdiction of the Chinese government in Rating Monastery. These monks have been issued with permits. In September 1996, 12 'work team' officials came to the monastery to conduct 'patriotic re-education' programmes.

The 'work team' officials assembled all of the monks every morning and gave them documents which specifically demanded that they oppose any splittist activities and denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The monks were divided into three groups and were instructed to discuss and debate the contents of the papers. They were then required to give an oral test and submit a written pledge denouncing the Dalai Lama.

When the monks vehemently refused to comply with these demands, the 'work team' officials forged letters on the monks' behalf. The forged pledges were submitted to the office and it was confirmed that the 'Tibet Autonomous Region' Party Secretary, Chen Kuiyuan, would visit Rating Monastery on 30 November 1996, to wrap up the 're-education' campaign.

However, the night before the visit the monks of Rating Monastery set fire to a vehicle which belonged to the 'work team' to show their displeasure at the prospect of a visit by the Secretary and the submission of forged pledges. This display of indignation and protest made the visit virtually impossible.

Subsequently, 11 Public Security Bureau officials of Lhasa City and Lhundup County, along with 'work team' officers, searched each monk's quarter resulting in the arrest of six monks. Several other monks, including the caretaker, were beaten and interrogated for the vehicle incident although nobody was found responsible for the act. The 'work team' officials prolonged their stay to six months from the initial two months.

Details of the six arrested monks are as

follows. 21 year-old Lama Kushab Sikpa and 28 year-old Phuntsok Dhargyal are both from Nagchu Lhari County. They were arrested on 27 December 1996. After their detention in Gutsa Detention Centre for six months, they were sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison. Upon their release in December 1998, the two monks left for their homes where their activities are now strictly monitored.

Thinlay Tsondue, a 27 year-old from Thankgo township, Lhundup County, was detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for six months after his arrest. Following his sentencing to eight years, he was transferred to Drapchi Prison. Due to the harsh beatings he sustained at the time of his arrest, he continues to suffer in Drapchi where his chances of receiving adequate treatment are minimal.

23 year-old Lobsang Tsondue and Thinlay from Thankgo township were sentenced to six years' imprisonment after being detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for six months. Lobsang and Thinlay are currently serving their sentences in Drapchi Prison.

Jamyang Sangye, 35 years old, was also detained in the Gutsa Detention Centre for six months and sentenced to one-year imprisonment. Released in 1997, Sangye is currently staying at home.

Like Thinlay Tsondue, four other people were arrested in December 1996 of whom we have nodetails on.

In February 1997, officials of the 'work team' and Public Security Bureau of Lhundup County expelled 17 monks from the monastery. In June 1998, five 'work team' officers stayed in the monastery for 15 days and expelled 32 monks. In total there were 49 expulsions and six arrests from Rating Monastery.

Tsondue Gyaltsen fled Tibet in October 1999 and reached the Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 1 December 1999. ❁

Death from Chinese Torture

Ngawang Sengye, a former political prisoner from Paksho County who reached Dharamsala recently, says that a monk died around January 1997 as a result of severe beatings he sustained from the Prison officials of Chamdo Prison.

The monk was Jamyang Thinlay from Chamdo Monastery. He was born in Dzokhang County, Thenthok township in the Chamdo region. In February 1996, Jamyang was arrested by PSB officials on charges of having pasted Tibetan independence posters and imprisoned in the Chamdo Prison. He was beaten very badly during his interrogation by the officials which resulted in kidney damage and a generally poor state of health.

In January 1997, the Prison officials took Jamyang Thinlay to one public hospital for treatment.

However, he was beyond recovery by that time and died three days later at the young age of 28 years. The monks of the Chamdo Monastery on being handed over the dead body of Jamyang, found that he had suffered internal bleeding when they conducted traditional Tibetan funeral rites.

Although the monks tried to file a case concerning the death of Jamyang Thinlay, it was to no avail. ❁

Arrests during Hong Kong Hand Over

Chime Lobsang from Paksho County in Chamdo Region reached Dharamsala in January 2000. He was imprisoned in Chamdo Prison for three years for having pasted independence posters. According to Chime, during the hand-over of Hong Kong to China on 1 July 1997 seven monks from Sepu Monastery located in Sernon township, Paksho County, staged a peaceful demonstration at around 8 am. The monks shouted various slogans like "Free Tibet," "Chinese Quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama." Approximately 15 minutes after they started the demonstration, Public Security Bureau officials arrested the seven monks and took them to Paksho Detention Centre.

The seven monks are 24 year-old Rigzin Chophel, 23 year-old Sherab Tsultrim, 25 year-old Tashi Phuntsok, 25 year-old Lobsang Topchen, 15 year-old Ngawang Chophel, 13 year-old Dawa Dorjee and 28 year-old Lobsang Dechen. They received severe beatings whilst in detention. A lay man named Rigzin, who had once been to India, was also arrested on grounds of suspicion of having cooperated with the monks in their activities. He is 27 years old and was a whitewasher by occupation. After 13 days of detention, Rigzin and the monks were transferred to Chamdo Detention Centre.

In November 1997, the Chamdo Intermediate People's Court passed their sentences. Rigzin was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment; Rigzin Chophel and Sherab Tsultrim to six years; Tashi Phuntsok, Lobsang Topchen, Ngawang Chophel, Dawa Dorje and Lobsang Dechen to four years. They were transferred to Drapchi Prison where they are currently serving their sentences. ❁

Kyomolung monks' imprisonment

Ngawang Tenzin, layname Phurbu Tsering 25, is from Kyomolung town, Toelung Dechen County in Lhasa City. His family members survive by farming. At the age of eight, he went to Kyomolung Mangtsuk (Public) school until the age of 15 years. After completing his primary education, he spent two years at his home helping his parents in the field. In 1991, he joined Kyomolung monastery at the age of 17. There were 30 monks in the monastery at that time. He studied Buddhist scriptures for the first one year and then on 18 December 1992, he left for Lhasa at 10 am along with Dawa (27), ordained name Ngawang Lamchung, of the same monastery.

The following day at about 2 pm, Phurbu and Dawa staged a demonstration in front of the Barkhor shouting slogans like "Tibet is independent", "Long live HH the Dalai Lama" and "Chinese quit Tibet." After ten minutes of the protest, Public Security Bureau officers surrounded them and they were immediately arrested. They were each apprehended by two police personnel and taken to Barkhor local police station. They were formally arrested by the Lhasa City Public Security Bureau Officials.

They were interrogated by the PSB officials as to why they had protested, the identities of all those involved in the protest

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US State Department Condemns Chinese Rule in Tibet

The US State Department released their 1999 Annual Report on Human Rights Conditions in China and Tibet on February 25. The report criticised the Chinese government for increased human rights abuses in the past year. The 10-page Tibet section notes that the, "Chinese government authorities continued to commit serious human right abuses in Tibet, including instances of torture, arbitrary arrest, detention without public trial, and lengthy detention of Tibetan nationalists for peacefully expressing their political or religious views."

The Chinese government reacted angrily to the report accusing the United States of meddling in the internal affairs of other countries, of distorting the human rights situation in China, and of not addressing problems within the US Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr Zhu Bangzao said, "The US Government pays no heed to its own human rights violations but always meddles with other countries' internal affairs by issuing so-called human rights reports."

The report describes in detail the "poor human rights record [which] deteriorated markedly throughout the year." Unlike past years, the US State Department report describes in detail the human rights conditions inside historic Tibet, not just the 'Tibetan Autonomous Region'. According to the report, political protests and detention are increasing, particularly in Tibetan areas outside of the 'TAR'.

"This report documents the continued repression of the Tibetan people by the Chinese government. While silent on the proposed China Western Poverty Reduction Project which will fund population transfer into Tibet, and failing to report on a major violent crackdown in October of 1999 on over 3,000 peaceful protesters in Kandze, 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture', the report is a comprehensive review of the Chinese policies and behavior in Tibet," said Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

According to the report, Buddhism came under increasing attack by the Chinese government. 'Patriotic re-education' continued in the monasteries and nunneries and, as a result, thousands of Tibetans fled into exile. Monks and nuns were forced to sign pledges denouncing the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Panchen Lama, recognising the unity of China and Tibet, promising not to listen to Voice of America and reject Tibetan independence. Monks who refused were expelled and in some cases arrested. According to the US Government, there were, "reports of imprisonment and torture or abuse of monks and nuns accused of political activism, the death of prisoners, and the closure of several monasteries."

The report states that the Chinese government continues to disrupt religious activity in many monasteries, and retains control through democratic management committees and local religious affairs bureaus. Chinese regulations stipulate that the government must approve all members of the committees. In January the authorities launched a three-year atheism campaign, primarily directed at government workers to attempt to increase allegiance to China and "strengthen the struggle against separatism".

The report notes that during 1999, the Chinese government imposed tight controls on the fundamental freedoms, particularly in the days leading up to significant anniversaries in Tibet and China. In Tibet, there were protests on 10 March, the 40th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising, during the National Minority Games in Lhasa in July, and during celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. These protests were harshly suppressed through violent measures.

The report notes the increasing rate at which Tibetans political prisoners are dying as a result of beatings and harsh treatment suffered while in detention. Since 1987, female political prisoners in Drapchi prison have died at a rate of 1 in 22, while male political prisoners have died at a rate of 1 in 37. Overall, the rate of Tibetan political prisoners dying is 1 in 48.

In April, Legshe Tsolglam was beaten for refusing to cooperate with a 'patriotic re-education' programme in Nalanda Monastery. He was held in Gutsa Detention Centre and died days after his release. Monks Ngawang Jinpa and Norbu died shortly after their release from prison in 1999. Sonam Wangdu also died in 1999 as a result of torture he endured while in Drapchi Prison. According to the report, prisoners are tortured and mistreated. Authorities use electric shocks, suspension in painful positions, and other forms of torture or abuse.

In the area of public representation, although Chinese government statistics report that 74 per cent of government employees in Tibet are ethnic Tibetans, most key decisions and positions of power are held by ethnic Chinese and by the Chinese government.

The report notes that in the area of private sector employment, discrimination against Tibetans is widespread. This has been caused by increased Sinocisation of Tibet. Tibetan language is being usurped by Chinese, and many government and commercial dealings and correspondence are conducted in Chinese. Chinese immigrants, especially in urban areas, are competing with and in some cases displacing Tibetan enterprise and labour.

Along with the immigration of vast numbers of non-Tibetans into Tibet has come a dramatic increase in prostitution. The report states that, "much of the prostitution occurs in sites owned by the Party or the Government, under military protection. Most prostitutes in Tibet are ethnic Han women. Up to 10,000 commercial sex workers may be employed in Lhasa alone."

Tibetans are being further marginalised through discriminatory educational practices. Tibetan language is being downgraded in primary, secondary and higher education. Chinese language is being introduced in 1st grade. In high school, most classes are in Chinese. In college, Chinese students gain admission over Tibetans because of a better grasp of Chinese language and superior educational background. The curriculum has been censored. In Tibet University, "Many ancient or religious texts are banned for political reasons," the report said, "Legal safeguards for ethnic Tibetans detained or imprisoned are the same as those in the rest of China and are inadequate in design and implementation," the report said. Trials for Tibetans accused of political crimes are, "brief and closed". The report concludes that, "repressive social and political controls continue to limit the fundamental freedom of ethnic Tibetans and risk undermining Tibet's unique cultural, religious, or linguistic heritage. ❁

Corruption Bars Access to Higher Education for Promising Tibetan Students

The latest Chinese White Paper on human rights was released in February of this year. It explicitly emphasises the rights to subsistence and development, and economic, social and cultural rights generally. Within this emphasis on development lies the promise of a 'better' life of prosperity and jobs for an increasing number of those living under Chinese rule. But despite China's claims to equality of access across nationalities and ethnic groups, there is increasing evidence that in Tibet many young Tibetan students are prevented from pursuing higher education and vocational training. The Chinese government in its White Paper argues that, "a multi-form and multi-layer vocational education and training system has been established, basically meeting the needs of economic construction." However, the following story of Namlang, a 24 year old nomad from Qinghai Province, raises questions about the ability of Tibetan students to access higher vocational training in the first place.

Namlang came into exile on 3 January 2000, leaving Tibet for education, like many other young Tibetans. He is an unusual case in that he was able to study at a middle school, and sit for teacher training exams, but his experience of corruption and discrimination illustrates the complex ways in which the education system in Tibet fails to offer a future or even basic employment, despite the figures of numbers of schools built in recent times. In 1998 the Chinese government stated that from 1991 to 1997, 580, 000 sq m of new schools were built in Tibet. Namlang's story goes beyond bricks and mortar to asking whether anyone is learning in these classrooms.

There was no village school where he grew up and so Namlang went to a primary school in the nearest Township. It is a government-funded school (shungtsug) and there are no school fees. As is often the case, each child has to contribute one sheep per student per year and 10 gyamas of butter in lieu of fees. Namlang joined this boarding school at the age of 12 and stayed for four years. He finished his primary school education during this time. In the school there were also a few Chinese students whose parents held government jobs in the area. There were 200 students in total, and 20 teachers, who were all Tibetan. While on paper, this school seems to support the Chinese government's argument that it is building schools in remote areas and that many students receive free education in modern Tibet, looked at substantively the picture is much greyer.

Namlang is dubious of the standard of education he received and talks of the lack of any structure within this school and the inadequate instruction given. The students used to bunk classes all the time and there was no discipline. The school curriculum focused on Tibetan, Chinese, science, maths and drawing. The medium of instruction is in Tibetan and this is the main subject of study. This is a double-edged sword, though, for while it is imperative that Tibetan remains the main language of instruction in schools within Tibet, the higher levels of study and vocational training are conducted in Chinese, and this can make it difficult for Tibetan students to compete for results and places. In other ways the fact that primary education is conducted in Tibetan, while higher study is in Chinese raises serious questions about institutional expectations for Tibetan students.

Indeed Namlang studied at the county middle school for a further three years after finishing his primary education and the instruction was all in Chinese; despite the Chinese government's claim in 1998 that it had "taken concrete measures to guarantee the freedom of the Tibetan people to use and develop both the spoken and written Tibetan language, which is a main course of study at all schools in Tibet." To get into the middle school students had to sit an entrance exam and receive a score of at least 70%. They did not have to pay for this exam. There were no school fees at the middle school either, but again each student had to contribute one sheep per year. This middle school, called 'Malo Dzong Mirig Lobta', was for Tibetan students only. There was a separate school for Chinese students. While Namlang doesn't know whether the standard of the Chinese middle school was better or worse than the school which he attended, the existence of 2 schools is troubling.

On the one hand, Namlang was able to receive some education beyond the primary level, and this is certainly not the experience of all young Tibetans from remote areas. But listening to his actual experiences disturbs the glowing picture of the state of education in Tibet that the Chinese government puts forward. In its 1998 White Paper, the Chinese government argued that it had:

"adopted many preferential policies to promote education in Tibet. Boarding schools have been introduced in rural and pastoral areas, where Tibetan primary and middle school students enjoy free food, clothing and accommodation. Stipend and scholarship systems have been put in place step by step in primary and middle schools above the town level."

And yet according to Namlang, "there was no chance of study beyond this level for the great majority of Tibetan students." After all this study, Namlang did not get any jobs, though he would have liked to have been a teacher. To do this normally he would have had to finish high school and then received teacher training. None of his fellow Tibetan students at the middle school were able to go to high school or beyond. As he remarked, "the main impediment to their further education was the test which Tibetans would not be able to qualify for. The way the system worked in practice was that if a Chinese student and a Tibetan student both sat for such an entrance test, and the Tibetan student got better results, in any case the place would be reserved for the Chinese student and the Tibetan student would fail to qualify." Again while on paper, it might appear that such young students were in an equal position to compete for jobs and vocational training, in practice, however, discrimination and corruption prevented Namlang's Tibetan classmates from taking up their places in higher education.

Still hopeful, Namlang sat for the teacher training exam, as this was still allowed even though he was not able to attend high school. There were 25

Chinese students who sat for this test and 36 Tibetans. Of this number 12 Chinese were allowed into the course and only three Tibetans. According to Namlang, "the Tibetans who passed this exam for higher study all had parents who worked in the Chinese government and administration." As a general practice Chinese students would pay bribes and buy the certificate needed for passing this entrance test. Also the Chinese students took the examining teachers to a restaurant to treat them to a free meal before the results were published. There seems to be no open or transparent process in place and Namlang states that, "these kind of bribes and inducements were necessary to pass. Chinese and Tibetan students were also expected to buy expensive gifts for the examining teachers such as mattresses, whisky and cigarettes. They had to pay cash bribes on top of this." The picture put forward by the Chinese government in 1998 is that: "The principle of "giving priority to people of local ethnic groups" has been adopted by all schools while recruiting students in Tibet..." Such statements mask spreading corruption and lack of process and transparency in the Tibetan education system.

Basically in Namlang's experience, "you need to have money before you can get such a job." For example at 'Mirig Gethun Labtha', the County teacher training college in question, just the bribes involved to become a teacher would amount to 10 000 yuan and this is just for the entrance test. Per year the fees for this college are 1200 yuan and the course takes four years to complete. Instruction at the teacher training college is again in Chinese, and there are separate classes for Tibetan students and Chinese students. Few Tibetans are able to be admitted in the first place. Such cases illustrate the ways in which even those young Tibetans who have access to some level of education, are unable to share in the progress which China claims to have made in the areas of development and higher education and vocational training. Namlang hopes to be able to continue his studies in exile. ❁

Sonam Phuntsok released, new information on the demonstration

Unofficial information eminating from Tibet indicates that Sonam Phuntsok was released. There are no details as to when this happened. He is reportedly in Karze County but no further details are available.

TCHRD has been given further information by a recent arrival (anonymous for security reasons) from Karze 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' (Sichuan Province). He arrived in Dharamsala on 2 February 2000. He was one of the participants during the Karze demonstration (refer to Human Rights Update, November 1999).

In a complete account of the incident, the informant reported that there were two demonstrations that took place as a result of the arrest of Sonam Phuntsok, Agyal Tsering and Sonam Choephel.

On 31 October 1999 when Sonam Phuntsok was in a religious retreat Karze County Public Security Bureau officers came in two vehicles and arrested him. There were approximately ten officers. While he was being arrested, people confronted the officers and demanded reasons for his arrest. The officers tried to reason with the people saying that he (Sonam Phuntsok) was indulging in 'political activities'. The people responded that he was merely performing his monastic duties and that if that was illegal, then there is no freedom of religion. There were approximately 1,000 people at the time. The PSB officers transported Phuntsok in their vehicle. However, the people obstructed a second police vehicle in which there were six officers and locked them in a nearby barn. They demanded the immediate release of Phuntsok or else the officers would remain detained in the barn. The officers had no choice but to comply. The next morning before dawn, Phunstok was quietly arrested. When the people learnt about it, another larger protest began where there were approximately 3,000 Tibetans participating. Many people were immediately arrested. The whole incident was filmed and reviewed, which resulted in subsequent arrests and fines. The arrested protestors were beaten, some were imprisoned and some were fined and released. The demonstration took place in front of the police office. Although they did not specifically call for Tibetan freedom, Sonam Phuntsok was associated with the cause of independence and by calling for his release their demand was placed within the broader context of the Tibetan freedom movement.

From the informant's village 19 people faced severe penalties for their involvement in the Karze demonstration. Four people were imprisoned following the incident. The informant could identify only two of them. They are Pema Phuntsok and Tserug Orug. Pema Phuntsok is in his mid 30's and has a wife and two small children aged five and three. Pema is the head of village #3 in Golok town. His imprisonment has gravely affected the livelihood of the family. He was imprisoned for three years. Tserug Orug received two years and nine months' imprisonment. He is around 44 years old and has a wife and children.

In addition, five people were fined 3,000 yuan each, four people were fined 2,000 yuan, and some others were fined 1,500 yuan. There were consequences for the families of those punished or imprisoned. The families would have the burden of paying the fine. Shongpa Khedrup escaped detention, but was required to pay a fine of 3,000 yuan and since he did not have the money he had to sell his animals. The variation in the fines was based on the degree of participation during the demonstration.

Sonam Phuntsok was a prominent figure in the county and he has many followers. His followers were told they could not follow his teachings and were ordered to sign a statement against him. The interviewee was unable to sign such a statement and fled to India.

The informant is gravely concerned for the well-being of Sonam Choephel and Agya Tsering whose whereabouts continue to remain unknown. ❁

profile

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

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND INCREASED SENTENCE DUE TO DRAPCHI INCIDENT

Kelsang Phuntsok (religious name Ngawang Ngonkhen) is a 25 year-old from Lhasa City village # 1, Chushul County. He was a former monk of Tashigang Monastery. There are eight members in his family and he is the second oldest amongst his siblings. His sister is a former nun from Ani Tsangkhung Nunnery and the youngest son of the family is currently a monk of Tashigang Monastery. Phuntsok's family are farmers by occupation, and apart from a brief period of schooling for two years, Phuntsok mainly helped his parents in the field. In 1990, when he joined Tashigang Monastery, there were approximately 18 monks.

The local Tibetans renovated Tashigang Monastery during the liberalisation period after the monastery was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Kelsang was one of the first monks to join the monastery after its renovation by the local Tibetan Community. In the initial period of his time at the monastery, he was a cook and then became a caretaker, before permanently studying scriptures.

On 15 February 1994, Kelsang and Nyima Tsering, his 25 year-old friend from the same monastery, left for Lhasa. Upon reaching Lhasa around 10 am that same day, the two monks staged a peaceful demonstration in front of the Jokhang Temple (Central Cathedral). They produced the forbidden Tibetan national flag, held it from both sides and started shouting slogans like, "Free Tibet", "Chinese Quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama."

Approximately 10 minutes into their demonstration, officers of the Public Security Bureau arrested them. The officers handcuffed the monks, threw them in a vehicle and took them to Gutsa Detention Centre. Upon reaching Gutsa, they were placed in different cells where they were interrogated. The monks were repeatedly beaten and interrogated because of their refusal to divulge details of their monastic background. This also earned them additonal harsh treatment and prolonged their period of detention.

A month after their detention in Gutsa, six PSB officers visited their monastery to investigate and search their rooms. The monks were detained in Gutsa for over a year and for the initial ten months of their detention, they were not allowed any visitors. They were subjected to constant harassment and to unusually lengthy interrogation.

In October 1995, the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court passed their sentences. Kelsang Phuntsok was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights. Nyima Tsering was sentenced to four years and two years' deprivation of political rights. After their sentencing, the monks were transferred to Drapchi Prison. Three years into his prison term, in May 1998, Phuntsok participated in a peaceful demonstration at Drapchi Prison. This protest, started by a non-political prisoner, coincided with a visit by European Union delegations at Drapchi Prison. The protest was vehemently repressed resulting in the death of ten political prisoners and in severe injuries to many others. Those who were injured were denied medical treatment. There were reports of prisoners confined to incommunicado detention and of others being transferred to different units. Some prisoners had their sentences extended as a result.

Phuntsok was held in solitary confinement for two months after which his sentence was extended by an additional four years in October 1998, bringing his total sentence to ten years. After the extension of his prison term, he was transferred to the fourth unit which is a separate unit for non-political prisoners. His friend Nyima was released in 1998. ❁

continued from p.3

and where they were from. During the two-hour interrogation period, they were severely kicked and punched. They were later driven for 20 minutes to an unknown place and the interrogation continued there also. They were forced to fix their thump prints on a register book. On 12 May 1993, the PSB office of Lhasa City issued a formal arrest warrant to Phurbu and Dawa. Later, they were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre, and kept standing there until they were incarcerated in different cells at 7 pm. Phurbu was detained in unit #1 and his friend Dawa in cell # 3. While in Gutsa, they were again interrogated six times, given severe beatings, and their visitation rights were denied. Each interrogation period lasted for about half an hour.

On 27 June 1993, the Lhasa City People's Procuratorate office lodged a case against the two monks before the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa, charging them of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement". Finally on 12 July 1993, the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa convicted Phurbu of violating articles 102 (2), 22, 23, 24, 14 (3) and 52 of the Penal Code of the People's Republic of China. Phurbu was detained for a total period of eight months before he was finally sentenced to two years' imprisonment on 12 July 1993 and denied his political rights for one year. Dawa was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and deprived of his political rights for two years.

Seven days after the pronouncement of the sentence, he was transferred to Drapchi Prison unit 5. While in Drapchi, he was assigned to do petty jobs like cleaning and transporting things and also had to do regular military exercises. Phurbu was released from Drapchi on 18 December 1994 after spending one year and four months in Drapchi prison.

Since his release, he lives at his home town working with his parents on the farm. In January 1996, he secured a job at the Lhasa printing press and worked till October 1999 for 300 yuan per month.

Phurbu describes that after their release from prison, the political prisoners often face various problems with regard to accommodation and continued harassment by PSB officials. Unable to bear such a situation, he had to leave Tibet for India on 6 December 1999 and reached Dharamsala on 27 December 1999. ❁

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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FORMER DETAINEE SHEDS LIGHT ON ARRESTS

Gyaltsen Losel (32),reached Dharamsala, India after spending seven months in Gutsa Detention Centre. Upon his arrival, he reported that four Tibetans were arrested in May 1999. They were Jampel Rinzin (30) and Jigme (30) from Drepung Monastery and two nuns, Ngawang Samdrol (17) and Jampa Dhedron (14) from Michungri Nunnery. The two monks were taken from their monastery and it is not known if they have been sentenced. There are no further details available on the two monks.

The two nuns had earlier served five year sentences in 1993 for participating in a pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa. Although the details of their initial arrest is not known, it is reported that the nuns' second arrest was for pasting pro-independence posters. The nuns were later sentenced to two years in May 1999. They are currently serving their prison term in Toelung Prison (Trisam Detention Centre). Losel testified that Ngawang Dedron's condition is reportedly critical, and that she needs immediate medical attention.



Jampa Dhedron on the left and Ngawang Samdrol on the right

Losel from Drepung Monastery was detained in Gutsa for his participation in a demonstration in Lhasa on 10 December 1988.

On the eve of the demonstration, at approximately 2 am, Losel left the monastery for Lhasa. There were 12 other monks from the same monastery. After arriving in Lhasa the next day, the monks started shouting pro-independence slogans from Tsepaklhakhang at approximately 10 am.

Within minutes, many other monks from Sera Monastery and some nuns joined their demonstration. By the time the demonstrators reached the Barkhor (Central Market), the group had increased to approximately 30 people. The group carried the forbidden Tibetan national flag, and distributed leaflets, while simultaneously shouting slogans such as "Tibet is independent", "Long Live H.H the Dalai Lama" and "Chinese quit Tibet". As the demonstrators reached the Barkhor, around 100 armed personnel surrounded up the demonstrators and immediately started firing. In the ensuing firing, a monk named Gyalpo (30) died instantly. Another monk, Anu (32) from Phenpo was also shot in the abdomen. There were many others who were injured.

Later, seven monks from Drepung Monastery including Gyaltsen Losel were arrested. The names of the other six are: Ngawang Shenphen (32), Ngawang Lhapchen (27), Yeshi Zoepa (32), Gen Dawa (55), Gen Tsering (50) and Lobsang Tenzin (27). Following their arrest, they were taken to the Barkhor local police station. At the police station, the monks were severely beaten by the People's Armed Police for over half an hour. From the police station, the monks were transferred in a truck to Gutsa Detention Centre where they were interrogated five times. They were asked, "Who invited you to go to the protest?", "Who else were your companions?". They were simultaneously beaten with rifle butts and leather straps. During the seven months of detention Gen Tsering suffered the most. Except for Gen Tsering and Yeshi Zoepa, who were sentenced for five and three years respectively, the rest were released after seven months of detention.

Awaiting their sentence in Gutsa, they were interrogated by two Public Security Bureau officers of Lhasa City for one and a half hours. They were simultaneously beaten with rifle butts, struck with electric cattle prods on their tongues and punched in the stomach. They were then made to wear helmets, and to kneel down for approximately 30 minutes when they were hit on their heads with rifles. After his release in June 1989, Losel rejoined the monastery, but his friends Ngawang Shenphen and Ngawang Lapchen were refused recently in the monastery. It is uncertain why they were not re-admitted.

Losel remained in Drepung Monastery until 10 January 1999, after which time he left for India and reached Dharamsala on 17 January 2000.

Losel stated that at present there are about 600 monks at Drepung Monastery. In 1997, a PSB office was constructed in the monastery and police personnel were permanently stationed within the monastery. The monastery management is completely controlled by the eight-member Monastery Management Committee. These members are directly appointed by the Chinese authorities. Freedom of Expression is now explicitly prohibited in the monastery and the right

to listen to international news is also strictly forbidden. Losel said that his inability to live under such control made him flee to India.

When he was eight years old, Losel attended primary school and finished when he turned 14. Then he stayed at home to help his parents in the fields. He joined Drepung Monastery when he turned 18, where he remained until his participation in the demonstration. He is from Khesum village, Trangtru township, Nyethong County in Lhoka region. His family are farmers. He has two elder sisters and a younger brother. ❁



Chemi Lobsang

Drayab monk arrested for posters and documents

Chemi Lobsang (22), is from Bondha village, Chetang township in Drayab County. His family are farmers. He helped his parents till the age of 14 when he joined Chamdo Monastery, which has about 1,200 monks. While in Chamdo Monastery, on 10 February 1994, Lobsang pasted pro-independence posters on the gate of the Chamdo County Radio Office. On the posters it was written, "Tibet is independent", "Long Live H.H the Dalai Lama", "Tibetans should rise against the Chinese" and "Chinese quit Tibet". Lobsang pasted them at midnight. The following day, PSB officials of Chamdo County came to the monastery and took several pictures of the posters although they did not know who was responsible for the act.

Lobsang later joined the Drayab Magon Monastery on 6 July 1995, along with 70 other monks from Drayab locality. He left behind a hand-drawn Tibetan national flag, posters, and speeches of the Dalai Lama beneath his mattress in Chamdo Monastery. After Lobsang's departure, his room was occupied by an old lady from Chamdo County. The lady discovered these documents and unaware of their nature, she left them on the hilltop. The documents which had Lobsang's name later came to the attention of the PSB officials.

While in Drayab, Lobsang was again involved in pasting posters on the night of 7 October 1999. The following day, his hand writing was checked and he was subsequently arrested along with his brother Chakdor. Lobsang was initially kept in the Drayab PSB office. The next day, he was taken to Chamdo Detention Centre.

During his four months of detention in Chamdo Detention Centre, Lobsang and a friend twice had blood extracted and they were fed very little food during the entire period of their detention. ❁

Arrest of Pomda monks

Tinley Tenzin arrived in Dharamsala, India in March 2000. Tenzin 17 years old, from Pomda township, Pashoe County in Chamdo Prefecture was expelled from Pomda Monastery in August 1997 just months after he joined. Tenzin comes from a farming background and had only one year of formal education. In his village, educational opportunities are inadequate and therefore children help their parents in the fields instead of attending school.

When Tenzin joined Pomda Monastery in 1997, there were 120 monks. In August 1997, a ten-member 'work team' visited the monastery and initiated a 'patriotic re-education' campaign. The members distributed documents opposing the Dalai Lama and instructed the monks to study the material. After 15 days, the 'work team' members forced the monks individually to read out loud the documents. At that time, Lobsang Nyima (lay name Gyeche), in his thirties, resisted the 'work team's' orders and pretended he could not read the particular Tibetan script. Upon producing another document written in another script that monks are usually more familiar with, Nyima stated that reading such documents was against his religious and spiritual belief, that he did not enter the monastery so that he could later defy his faith. The 'work team' members immediately took Nyima to the nearest Pomda township office. There the officers questioned him and asked when the others could read, why couldn't he? The officers threatened and beat him and ordered him to read the document. Nyima shouted pro-independence slogans in front of the officers. The officers quickly gagged his mouth and took him away in a vehicle to Pashoe County PSB Detention Centre. After a month in Pashoe, where the officals severely punished Nyima, he was transferred to Chamdo Detention Centre. The Chamdo Intermediate People's Court sentenced Nyima to five years' imprisonment. He was later transferred to Drapchi Prison where he is currently held.

Since Nyima was arrested, there has been strict surveillance imposed at the monastery. Five days after Nyima was sentenced, 'work team' members conducted a search in the monk's quarters. They discovered the forbidden Tibetan national flag in Gedun Gyatso and Lobsang Tsering's room. They were immediately taken from the monastery, and after detaining them in Pashoe Detention Centre for a month, the monks were transferred to Chamdo PSB Detention Centre. Lobsang Tsering was released within a year. Gyatso was detained for three years. Tenzin believes that Gyatso has since been released.

The 'work team' members expelled all monks below the age of 18. There were

continued on p.8

Tibetans rights stifled due to taxation, birthcontrol, discriminatory education and forced labour policies

Getsen Gyatso is a 26 year-old former monk of Lhabrang Tashi Kyil Monastery. Originally from Arig village, Nyethang township in Malho County, Tsongon Province, Gyatso arrived in Dharamsala on 29 November 1999.

Gyatso's parents are nomads. He became a monk of Tsang Monastery in 1986 and stayed there until 1993. He joined Lhabrang Tashi-kyil Monastery in 1993, but left the monastery in 1997 to work as a teacher in a primary school in Arig village of Malho County until 1999.

Gyatso was arrested on 11 September 1997 by Khenlo 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' security police for writing a four page essay on pre-1958 Tibetan culture and the conditions of Tibetan students. He had given this essay for publication in a Khenlo periodical called Datse. A day before his arrest, Gyatso also pasted freedom posters in Lhabrang Tashi-Kyil Monastery. This coincided with a religious festival. He destroyed the materials which he had used to write the essay and to make the posters, for fear of arrest. Gyatso pleaded innocence to the charges and because no evidence was found, he was released after being detained for approximately 20 days. He was held in Lhabrang Shahor County Prison.

Resettlement

Gyatso reported massive resettlement in Gaosub of Tsojang township, Tsongon Province. Migrant workers were settled to mine limestone, iron and gold in the area. The mining started in 1997 and according to plans, the mining will continue for 30 years. Gyatso reported that approximately 200 Chinese workers have been resettled in the Tsojang township of Tsongon Province by the Tsolho 'TAP' authorities. The mining operations and the resettlement of these labourers are under the jurisdiction of Tsongon Province Eighth Geological Unit.

At present, roads have been constructed to transport machines and workers to the excavation site.

In Arig village, there are three primary schools. There are approximately 1,700 Tibetan families residing in Nyethang township. In Nyethang township there is only one village, and most of the Tibetan families are nomads. The Chinese authorities set in place a two-child policy in Arig village several years ago.

In the three primary schools in Arig village, 400 yuan per student is collected as fees during the months of winter and 700 yuan for summer. In the Nyethang township primary school, there are approximately 350 Tibetan students. They are taught only Chinese history, politics, and law. The medium of instruction is Tibetan. The local government officers of Nyethang township regularly scrutinise the curriculum and make suggestions of any changes that they consider necessary.

In another primary school in Arig village, there are only 60 Tibetan students. This school was constructed by the Tibetan families. The funds needed to run the school were collected by Tibetans, but the school is not independent of government control. There are three Tibetan teachers in the school and their salaries are voluntarily raised by Tibetan families. The teachers are paid 700 yuan per month.

In Arig village, the local Chinese authorities collect regular taxes from the Tibetan nomads. The nomads have to pay 15 gyama of meat as tax per sheep and around 25 gyama of meat as tax for each yak or dri. Some prosperous nomads had around 450 sheep and around 150 yaks or dri, and, they have to pay meat tax for each of these animals. The nomads also collect yartsa-gunbu, a medicinal plant from the nearby mountains but again they had to give five sang of yartsa-gunbu as tax each time they go to collect the plants.

Gyatso escaped from his village on13 November 1999, and reached Nepal through the Solukhumbhu border on 29 November 1999. ❁

Compulsory Labour

Norbu Choephel is a 36 year-old farmer from Pasong township, Dhingri County in Shigatse Prefecture. He reached Kathmandu, Nepal on 19 December 1999.

There are six members in Choephel's family including four children. He has 11 rukhel of land in Tsoten village, Dhingri County. His family annually produces around 600 gyama of cereals. However, they use all the cereal for family consumption, which lasts for only three months of every year. For the remaining nine months, they borrow cereals from other farmers to feed the family.

Choephel's family, every year since 1989 has faced a shortage of food. He lived mainly by the generosity of other farmers. At present, Choephel has a debt of 700 gyama of cereals and around 1,000 yuan owed to his fellow farmers. Choephel also worked as labourer, but the work lasted only one month and his employer paid him just four gyama of cereal as a daily wage.

Choephel reported that in his township and county, the Chinese authorities forcefully employ local Tibetans above the age of 18 in building Chinese government houses and in road construction for approximately 30 days a year without pay. All the local people are forced to do this work. The Tibetan workers are not given food by the authorities during work time. They have to arrange to bring food from their homes. The people who abstain from this duty are fined five yuan per day by the authorities and face reprisals. In addition, the authorities collect a regular tax from the Tibetan farmers. There are around 18 Tibetan families in Tsoten village of Pasong township, however, only four of them are well to do families and the rest live with the yearly problem of cereal shortages.

Choephel was given some clothes by the authorities during the winter of 1998 as relief. He was never given any cereals or food assistance. He also faced a 500 yuan fine for exceeding the limit set under the three-child policy set by the County authorities in 1997.

Choephel's family annually delivers around 100 gyama of cereal to the local authorities, but they pay them only eight

motse for one gyama of cereal. In other the rate is one yuan per gyama of cereal. This form of compulsory cereal collection is imposed on all the farmers in Dhingri County.

Choephel escaped to Nepal with his eldest child, who he wants to send to school in India. Choephel reached Nepal on 19 December 1999. He will return to Tibet. ❁

Rural taxations

Samdup (30) is a nomad from Trago township in Saga County, Shigatse Prefecture. There are 16 townships in the Saga County; 10 are inhabited by nomads and six by farmers. Saga County is the poorest County in Shigatse Prefecture and is mostly inhabited by nomads.

In Trago township of Saga County, there are six villages with a population of around 1500 peoples and all are nomads. In Trago there are no markets, hospital, clinic or electricity. However, there is a large Chinese army barracks, which was constructed to patrol the border and arrest people who were escaping to Nepal through Saga County. In 1999, approximately 198 Tibetans escapees were arrested from Saga County, detained in the army barrack and later handed over to the Shigatse authorities. There is no information on what happened to them afterwards.

The Saga County and township authorities regularly call meetings in the villages to instruct nomads and farmers not to escape or send their children to schools in India. They are threatened with the confiscation of their land, animals and ration cards.

In Trago township, the Chinese authorities collect tax per the number of animals a nomadic family owns. There are three members in Samdup's family, who have around 100 sheep, 10 goats, and 1 horse. Although they own no land, the authorities still collect an annual tax of 60 to 70 yuan for the animals, grass, and skin.

Furthermore, seven sheep are forcibly taken from his family as an annual meat tax. The authorities pay only 100 yuan for each sheep while in the county market each sheep sells for 250 yuan. The authorities also collect one gyama of butter from those nomads who own dri (female yak). There are 60 nomadic families in Samdup's village with a population of around 350 people. According to Samdup, 95 per cent of the children between the age of 7 to 15 can not attend school in Trago township villages. There are 75 children from 7 to 15 years old in Samdup village, but only four of them study in the primary school in the township.

Samdup reports that the people in Trago township villages, who are between the ages of 16 to 58 are required to work on road construction without pay. The men are expected to work for 25 days and the women for 15 days. People who fail to come to work are fined by the authorities.

Samdup left his home on 15 December 1999. He reached Nepal on 11 January 2000. ❁

Confiscation of excess animals and restrictions of religious practices

Nortso (29) is a farmer from Rongnup village in Daphuy township, Ngamring County in Shigatse Prefecture. He has never been to school. There are three members in his family and they own approximately six mu of land - two mu for each member. Nortso's family has only 45 goats and sheep, as they were not allowed to own more than that amount.

In Rongnup village, the farmers are not allowed to keep more than 15 goats or sheep per member of a family. The Chinese authorities inspect the villages in autumn and order the slaughter of excess animals, or the farmers face confiscation of the animals. This policy was introduced in 1994 by the Ngamring County authorities, and those who fail to comply with the policy are publicly humiliated and their animals are confiscated.

In 1995, the township authorities publicly criticised a farmer named Kelsang during a village meeting for keeping excess animals. His animals were confiscated and slaughtered. The authorities collect different animal tax from the farmers each year. These taxes include: Skin tax, Goat's wool tax (5 yuan), Grass tax (5 yuan) and a goat/sheep tax (1 yuan per goat/sheep). A tax of three yuan annualy was collected for irrigation. The authorities collect five gyama of cereal per year from the farmers. The farmers are also forced to buy two sacks of different fertilizers every year, whether they are needed or not. The fertilizers weigh 100 gyama each and the farmers are charged 140 and 180 yuan. From their annual yield, they have to deliver 40 gyama of cereal (per mu of land) to the local authorities and they are paid only eight motse and two phing per gyama of cereal. If a farmer uses good quality seed usually brought from China, he has to pay only five yuan (per mu of land) as annual tax to the local authorities.

Nortso reported that the township and county authorities forcibly engage the people of his village for 25 days a year in unpaid construction work. In Nortso's family, there are three members and they have to work for a total of 75 days annually. Failure to work incurs a fine of seven yuan per day per member, which is collected from the family. The people are 15 to 60 are required to go for compulsory work.

In the whole of Ngamring County, the Tibetan people are forbidden to build any new temples or stupas. Since 1994, the people have been banned from approaching any Lama or monk to ask that they perform any religious activities, divinations, or fortune telling. The people are allowed to invite only one or two monks into their homes for prayer services. The people are banned from attending any large religious ceremonies performed by the Lamas and monks in the villages or township.

Nortso reached Nepal on 20 December 1999. ❁

One Gyama	=	500 Grams
Ten Sang	=	One Gyama
One Rukhel	=	28 Gyama
Ten Motse	=	One Rupee
One Yuan	=	Five Rupees
One Mu	=	67 Square Metres

Restrictions in Gonlung Nunnery

Tsondu Wangmo and Tenzin Sangmo, 18 years of age, are nuns from Gonlung Nunnery in Datho township, Driru County, Nagchu Prefecture.

The nuns are related and their parents are nomads in Datho township. Wangmo's parents died when she was about 16 years old, and afterwards she lived with Sangmo and her family. They joined Gonlung Nunnery when they were 10 years old. At that time, there were approximately 70 nuns. There are currently 40 nuns. Both the nuns stayed at the nunnery for one year. They joined a hermitage in Datho township where they stayed for two years. Later they went to Samye Monastery to help built a stupa for a year.

Nun Tenzin Sangmo and Tsondu Wangmo fled Tibet along with 24 other Tibetans. They paid 830 yuan each to the guide and reached Nepal through Rongpo Pass on 2 March 2000. They now want to join a nunnery in India. The two nuns reported that since the 'work team' members visited Gonlung Nunnery, many nuns have undergone harassment.

Gonlung Nunnery was destroyed completely during the Cultural Revolution; however, it was renovated in the 1980's by Lama Rinchen Dhondup and some nuns of Driru County. In the spring of 1998 (April/May), a five-member 'work team' from Driru County and Datho township visited Gonlung Nunnery. The 'work team' set a limit of 40 nuns in Gonlung Nunnery, and the rest were told to leave. At that time, there were approximately 70 nuns. Some nuns voluntarily left the nunnery after the arrival of the 'work team'. The 'work team' instructed the nuns to oppose 'splittists' and banned pictures of the Dalai Lama in the nunnery. The officials regularly visited the nunnery and 're-educated' the nuns. Since 1998, the 'work team' officers have visited the nunnery twice a month.

Jangchup Dolma and Samten Choekyi, both in their mid-twenties are former nuns of Gonlung Nunnery. They returned to Driru County around August or September after travelling to India. They were arrested and detained for approximately two months in Shigatse Nyari Detention Centre. Both the nuns were fined 500 yuan each for 'escaping to India' by Driru County and township authorities. They were restricted from joining any nunnery in Nagchu Region and prohibited from performing or attending any religious services in Nagchu. The nuns were forbidden from travelling to places other than Nagchu without acquiring permission from the local authorities. They were constantly harassed and accused of being a bad influence for other nuns.

Choeyang Dolkar and Karma Ngawang, both in their mid-twenties are also nuns from Gonlung Nunnery. They returned to Tibet in December after visiting India. They had previously left Gonlung Nunnery voluntarily. The Driru township authorities detained them for around 15 days and then released them. Both the nuns were restricted from performing any religious services and have been constantly harassed by the authorities since their return. Sangmo's family background

Tenzin Sangmo's parents are nomads. Her father, Sonam (64) was imprisoned for six years in Driru County Prison. He was arrested for shouting pro-independence slogans in Tsora County, which is now incorporated under Driru County, and for siding with 'splittists' along with his cousin named Drablha (70) who was also imprisoned for six years. Drablha died soon after his release from prison.

Both Sonam and Drablha were imprisoned in 1991/92 when nun Tenzin Sangmo was 10 years old and were released in 1997/98. The informant is not sure about the dates.

Sangmo's paternal grandfather was shot dead by Chinese police when she was four years old, in 1986/87. Her grandfather was killed when he shouted 'free-Tibet' slogans in front of Chinese police in Tsora County. Nun Tenzin Sangmo's family was greatly harassed by Chinese police after the death of her grandfather and labelled as supporters of 'splittists'. Her family left all their properties in Tsora County village and re-settled in Driru County because the Chinese police constantly harassed her family. ❁

Musician faces coercion for patriotic songs

Gonpo Dhondup (24) is a musician from Achok township, Huyen County in Ngapa 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture', Sichuan Province.

Dhondup had been to an ethnic school of Huyen County when he was eight years old, and attended for two years. Afterwards, he joined the Cultural Institute of Huyen County for nine years, where he learned to play Tibetan musical instruments. He escaped from Tibet in 1996 to join a cultural school in India and stayed for two years working at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in Dharamsala, India. He returned to Tibet in November 1997, as he could not adapt to the climate in India, and had become ill.

When Dhondup returned to Huyen County, he was arrested and detained for 12 days by County Public Security Bureau (PSB) on charges of 'escaping to India' and on 'suspicion'. He was fined approximately 6,000 yuan by the PSB, which he paid with assistance from his relatives.

Thereafter, Dhondup went to Lhabrang County in Khenlo Prefecture and obtained work as an artist in the Song and Dance Institute of the Lhabrang County. He travelled to many places in Sichuan Province and Gannan 'TAP' with the tour group performing. While on tour, Dhondup performed various cultural programmes along with other artists. The songs he sang and the lyrics composed were the ones he had learned in India. The heads of the troupe, Dakpa and Dorjee Tashi, did not approve of his act and informed the local Chinese authorities. They sent the authorities a letter informing them about his performances, which they deemed political in nature. The letter accused Dhondup of conversing, singing, and performing many freedom-related activities during his five-months at the Institute. They also informed authorities about his previous travel to India in 1996, and his connection with TIPA in Dharamsala, India.

Dhondup said that 'he even composed and sung 'eulogy' songs to the re-incarnations of Kirti Rinpoche and other high 'Kirti' lamas which Dakpa (the director) has made 'political' and informed to the authorities'. Dhondup further said 'around five Tibetan artists had forsaken their work in the Lhabrang 'song/dance' institute because of to constant 'annoyance' by Dakpa' and his favoritism to Chinese authorities.

Dhondup fled to Lhasa for fear of being arrested. His friends advised him to find a job in Lhasa and not return to Lhabrang or Huyen County.

There are five members in Dhondup's family and his parents are nomads. While in Lhasa (1998), Dhondup found work with a group called Nangma where he played the Tibetan guitar. When Dhondup found out that Dakpa and the Lhabrang authorities had send letters to all cultural institutions in Lhasa regarding his background, he had to leave the group as well.

Dhondup left for Dram with three other escapees and reached Nepal on 4 March 2000. ❁

A media worker flees Tibet

A media worker from Gansu Province who wishes to remain anonymous arrived in Dharamsala on 23 March 2000. She was a television broadcaster.

Part of her work involved broadcasting Chinese Communist ideology denouncing the Dalai Lama, and this was very much against her own feelings. People in the villages would be very angry when they heard these things, and she felt very uncomfortable working for the station that transmitted such propaganda. When the informant was at school, she was very interested in this kind of work, but her actual experience has compelled her to leave and try to find similar work in exile where there is freedom of expression and better facilities to learn English, she said.

The TV station she worked for - Gannan People's Television - was government run and employed 100 people, about 50% of whom were Tibetan. The managing director was Chinese, but his deputy was Tibetan. The station translated central Chinese broadcasts into Tibetan, but only broadcast Tibetan programmes for two days of the week - the rest was taken up by Chinese programming. There would be 15 minutes each day devoted to propaganda; broadcasting parts of the Chinese Constitution, law and information about the "prosperity" of the region. Most villagers weren't interested in this as they had little faith in the information given out. She stated that her family were caught between feeling pride that she held such a good position and sadness at the things it broadcasted.

The facilities for the workers were good - she was given a salary of 600 yuan a month and free accommodation. During the two years she worked for the station, she did not pay any tax on her income, but was unsure whether money had already been deducted before it reached her. Sometimes, usually once a month, her office would collect approximately 50 yuan from each employee for a "development fund", but she is unsure as to whether this was an official tax or merely an office initiative.

Like all employees of the TV station, she was required to work for some time on the local radio station, but she said that all programmes were equally censored. She possessed an official Press Pass, which enabled her to travel all over China, but to get this she was required to sign and take a vow swearing her allegiance to the unity of the motherland.

Office regulations specify that all employees get 50% off their health care treatment costs, but according to the informant, this was rarely true in practice. Only a handful of employees who have connections higher up were able to enjoy these benefits. No one possessed a green health pass in the area, highlighting the differences between 'TAR' (the focus of Chinese development) and the other Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures, which still suffer from very few facilities. In 'TAR', an employee doing the same job as she would receive up to 1,500 yuan instead of 600 yuan because the economic conditions were so much better. Opportunities for Tibetans in her region are very scarce and the education of a very poor standard. If there are 50 Tibetan students in a class only about three or four will pass the exams and go on to higher education. Most seats at this level were filled by Chinese students. She reports that that without fluency in Chinese, no-one can get a job, and the unemployed are offered no financial assistance by the government.

Broadcasting the regional family planning policy formed part of her job. Tibetans were allowed to have two children, Chinese only one. This was a great problem for the local nomadic communities who were often forced to break this rule in order to have enough children to look after their animals. Those who did exceed the limit were subsequently fined 4,000 yuan for each extra child. While pregnant employees in her office were given three months paid leave, the informant also had some knowledge of many women being sterilised in hospital apparently through government-funded operations.

While there was little discrimination practised in her actual office, the informant did report that in general, Tibetan nomads were treated as second-class citizens by the Chinese, especially in terms of healthcare where they would be given dirty rooms and only the most basic of treatment. There are no official agencies to which the Tibetans can complain because every service is government run, and all local officials in the local assembly are nominated by the higher county officials. This makes any 'election' a mere farce. ❁

23

profile

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

RESENTENCED FOR FINANCIALLY ASSISTING FELLOW PRISONERS

Dawa Tsering, 29 years old from Phenpo Lhundup County. He has no formal education as he comes from a poor family and his help was needed at home. In 1985, he stayed with distant relatives as a handyman. Then in 1986 he joined Dralhaluphug Monastery in Lhasa where he worked as a caretaker.

In 1989, when he was 18 years old, Tsering and two other monks from Gaden Monastery initiated a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa Barkhor. They had prepared the forbidden Tibetan national flag. They knew their actions would have serious repurcussions, because at that time, Lhasa was still under the martial law imposed by the People's Republic of China on 7 March 1988. The monks were therefore immediately arrested by the Lhasa Public Security Bureau and were detained in Gutsa Detention Centre.

In 1990, Tsering was sentenced to three years 'reform through labour' in Drapchi Prison. His friends were sent to units for 're-education through labour'.

According to a former Drapchi inmate, "Tsering came to Drapchi in February 1990. He was very smart and resourceful, and although he was very young, he exhibited maturity beyond his age. He would always answer back to officials, and this earned him many beatings and put him in the bad books of the prison guards." Dawa was later injured at work, and developed a limp that caused him constant pain. His work performance suffered as a result, but instead of being given medical care, he was beaten for "shirking his duties." As the officials did not beleive he was suffering, Dawa was forced to perform his labour alongwith the able prisoners until May 1992, when he completed his term and was finally released from Drapchi.

Upon his release, he was prohibited from returning to his monastery. For a while, he took up odd jobs in Lhasa, sometimes indulging in petty businesses. With the little money he earned, he visited his fellow prisoners in Drapchi, who had no visitors. The prison officials quickly grew suspicious of his actions and sent an order to have him arrested. The police were unable to locate him for a long time, as Dawa was hiding in Nagchu.

Finally, in June 1997, when he was running a small restaurant in Gyatsa County in Lhoka Region, he was arrested. He was charged for 'distributing documents published in India' and 'compiling a list of political prisoners,' and was subsequently detained in Lhoka Tsethang Public Security Bureau Detention Centre; where he sufferred inhumane treatment during interrogation. He was denied visitors, and none of his relatives nor friends knew of his whereabouts and thus, he failed to receive adequate food and clothing during this time.

In December 1997, the Lhoka Intermediate People's Court sentenced Tsering to five years' imprisonment and three years deprivation of political rights.

Upon his sentencing, he was transferred back to Drapchi Prison where he is currently serving his term. Former Drapchi inmates who knew him are concerned about his well-being considering his intrepid behaviour. And especially since no specific details have emerged from the protest in May1998 in Drapchi. ❁

continued from p.2

15 monks including Tinley Tenzin. The members further declared that "the three detainees in prison and the rest who have visited India or Lhasa are expelled." Monks who were not present at that time in the monastery were also expelled. Their names were removed from the list of the residents at the monastery. There are currently 90 monks at the monastery. Sixty of them were issued ID cards allowing them to remain. The remaining 30 are at the monastery and may remain for a year as a trial period but will be expelled if they get into trouble.

Upon expulsion, Tenzin stayed at home as a farmer. Finally in November 1999, he came to Lhasa and from there he fled to India. ❁

Death of a religious scholar

Gunthang Jigme Tenpae Wangchuk Rinpoche, the sixth incarnation of the 50th Gaden Tripa Gunthang Tenpae Nyima Gedun Phuntsok was formally enthroned in Ladrang Tashi Khyil Monastery in Amdo in the early forties. In 1958, Rinpoche was arrested, charged with being an accomplice in a revolt against the Chinese government in the regions of Kansu, Tsongon and Sichuan. During his 21 years imprisonment, Rinpoche was kept in the First Unit of Lanchou Prison where he was subjected to hard labour.

Rinpoche was highly regarded among the Tibetans in Tibet for his unyielding devotion to the Dalai Lama and his repudiation of the Chinese-recognised Panchen Lama. He was an avid proponent of education of Tibetans and raised funds to set up schools and to re-build destroyed monasteries.

Although he held positions as a Standing Committee Member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Vice-President of the Buddhist Association of China, he was loyal to the Dalai Lama. In his seventies, Rinpoche was receiving treatment for cancer when he passed away on 1 March 2000 or 29 February 2000 at 6.48 am (Peking Standard Time). ❁

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

APRIL 2000 VOLUME V NUMBER 4

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DRAPCHI PRISON PROTEST

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy has received additional information about the Drapchi Prison protest in May 1998. Confirmed reports indicate that Tsultrim Sangmo (Lay name: Choekyi), a 25 year-old nun, earlier incorrectly reported as Ngawang Choekyi, died from beatings sustained as a result of her participation in the 1 and 4 May 1998 protests. This information indicates that 10 Tibetans are known to have died due to injuries received during or shortly after the protests.

The full text of Choeying Kunsang's testimony follows. Kunsang participated in the protests and is the first former prisoner from the "new" 3rd female unit of Drapchi Prison who has come into exile. To date, no other former prisoner has fled into exile that participated in the main protests in Drapchi. The unavailability of first person accounts has made it difficult to assess the full extent of the protests and subsequent reprisals. Information from the other units who were involved in the protests remains incomplete.

Choeying Kunsang Interview: 29 April 2000 (Full Text)

On 1 May 1998 except for some sick nuns, the people from our unit were summoned on the prison ground to attend a flag-raising ceremony. Approximately 1000 prisoners, both political and non-political had gathered. When the Chinese flag was being hoisted, a male prisoner threw freedom literatures in the air and shouted, "You cannot hoist a Chinese flag on Tibet's soil." More people joined in and this sparked off a protest. Prison authorities and 'People's Armed Police' forces surrounded us and started beating us indiscriminately. By that time, all of the nuns in the 3rd unit, about 100 in total, had sustained serious injuries and many were bleeding.

The function was disrupted and we were immediately taken back into our units while simultaneously being beaten. The authorities randomly took in 20 nuns for solitary confinement and because there were other prisoners also confined from the other units, there was not enough space. The rest of us were made to kneel for three hours at a stretch, during which time they beat us again. Out of the 20 nuns in confinement, three nuns had their sentences increased and were released from confinement after three months. The nuns, Chogdrup Dolma (lay name Namdrol), Che Che and Jangchup Dolma (Lay name Palkyi) had their prison sentences extended to five, two and six years respectively. They were confined for three months in a dark unlit cell, with hardly enough space to stretch ones legs. The three nuns' were singled out for an increased sentence because the prison authorities normally do not like them so much and possibly that the three were in the front of the protests and came to the attention of the authorities during the protest.

The rest of the 17 nuns were kept in solitary confinement for seven months. They were regularly called in for interrogations. That same night (1 May), we started a hunger strike and gave in our food bowls to protest against the prison officials' treatment.

On 4 May, to celebrate Youth Day, 20 nuns were taken out for another flag-raising ceremony. That time the monks initiated pro-independence slogans, and nuns in the other female unit (old 3rd unit) who could view the protest from their cells joined in. From their cells, they started to shout and break windowpanes. The protest was harshly repressed again. During this time, the hunger strike was still going on. On the 6th day, some of us were so weak we were falling unconscious and vomiting blood. Some of the more critical nuns were forced to receive intravenous fluid.

On the 7th day, we were called for the third time and made to learn eulogy songs. We refused to co-operate resulting in further punishment. That same night, Dekyi Yangzom, a nun, came back to the cell having received severe beatings. She was black and blue on the face. She told me the authorities hit her with the electric prod on her breast, cheeks and inserted it into her vagina. She could barely talk. However, the next day she had to join in with the rest of us when we were made to stand in the sun starting at seven in the morning until eight in the night. We were made to put newspaper between our legs and under our armpits and had to balance a bowl filled with water on our head. Many of us were falling unconscious but none of us were allowed to help each other. The moment we made a movement, we received beatings. We had approximately 10 minutes break in between when we could either eat or go to toilet. After eight in the night, we were given a tiny steamed dough, which was not sufficient at all. In

between we were called in for interrogation. This went on for seven days. On 13 May, around came and some prison authorities carried away some of the nuns. That night we discovered that Dekyi was missing from our unit. We did not see her again. When we were released, we found out from her family members that she died. The authorities had informed them that she had 'committed suicide'.

For the remaining time I was in prison, the quality and amount of food further deteriorated. Many nuns fell sick but were not allowed medical treatment. After the protests, none of us were permitted to receive visitors for five months.

Gender-Specific Abuse:

Reports of gender-specific violence have been prevalent in Chinese-administered prisons in Tibet since the late 1980's. In particular, nuns have been singled out for sexual assault. Although no Chinese government sources have appeared describing the purpose of these harsh and illegal acts, former political prisoners and experts believe that they are used to humiliate and demoralise the victims due to the social stigma attached to such experiences, especially for nuns who take vows of celibacy.

The use of sexual assault and rape against women and in particular nuns was documented beginning in the late 1980's. The victims were nuns who had participated in the demonstrations from 1987 to 1989 against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Throughout the early and mid-nineties, reports from Tibet indicated that this practice was continuing, but from 1995 this type of abuse was not reported. With the recent arrival of Choeying Kunsang, who reports on the rape of Dekyi Yangzom, it appears that gender-specific violence continues to be employed.

Methods of abuse include: stripping the woman naked and inserting wires which send electric shocks in the sexual organs and wrapping electric wires with high voltage around the nipples. The use of a cattle prod is a common form of torture, whereby the instrument is applied to the hands and feet, inside the mouth, anus and vagina. Other methods that do not leave physical marks are also applied, including: prolonged periods of standing in the sun, exposure to extreme 'exercises', solitary confinement, long hours in green houses and deprivation of food and sleep.

Profiles of the five nuns who died directly as a result of the protest:

1. Tashi Lhamo was a 24 year-old nun of Nyemo Jogon Nunnery in Nyemo county. For her participation in an independence demonstration in the Barkhor (central market in Lhasa) in December 1994, she was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison. She was also one of the participants in the 1 and 4 May 1998 Drapchi protest and as a result of that, she received extensive beatings and passed away on 13 May 1998.

2. Lobsang Wangmo (also known as Tsamcho Dolma) was a 31 year-old nun from Dokdhe County, north Lhasa. She belonged to Nekor Do Nunnery. She was arrested in February 1995 for staging a peaceful protest for independence in the Barkor and given a five year sentence in Drapchi Prison. She died after the Drapchi protest in May 1998.

3. Tsultrim Sangmo (lay name Choekyi) was a 25 year-old nun of Phenpo Shar Bumpa Nunnery. On June 1994, she was arrested for shouting independence slogans and sentenced to five years imprisonment. She died after the Drapchi protest in May 1998.

4. Dekyi Yangzom (Dupgyal Pema) was a 21 year-old nun of Nyemo Dowa Choten Nunnery. She was arrested and sentenced to four years imprisonment in Drapchi Prison due to her participation in an independence demonstration in Lhasa in February 1995. She died as a result of ill treatment she suffered after the protests.

5. Kundol Yonten was a 28 year-old nun of Nyemo Jogon Nunnery. She was sentenced to five years imprisonment because of her participation in December 1994 independence demonstration. She died in May 1998 after the Drapchi

However, Kunsang's testimony of Dekyi Yangzom's maltreatment calls for serious speculations on the reason behind the death of five nuns. This testimony completely overrules the claims by Chinese authorities that the nuns 'committed suicide'.

Profiles of Drapchi prisoners whose sentences were increased:

Ngawang Sangdrol: is the longest-serving political prisoner. Her involvement in the Drapchi protest resulted in a four-year increase in her prison term, bringing her total sentence to 21 years.

Choekyi Wangmo: is a 25 year-old from Phenpo Sharbumpa Nunnery. In June 1994, she participated in a demonstration in Lhasa and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. Due to her involvement in the May 1998 protest, her term was increased by a year and a half. She was released on 31 December 1999 and is currently with her parents at home. She is reportedly suffering psychologically effects of her time in prison.

Chogdrup Dolma: is 28 years old and she is from Phenpo Gyara Nunnery. On 13 February 1995 along with 13 nuns at the same monastery, Dolma participated in a demonstration. She was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. She received an additional five years increase in her sentence due to her involvement in the Drapchi protest.

Jangchup Dolma : is a 21 year-old from Yangchen Galo Nunnery. She participated in a freedom demonstration in February 1995. She was sentenced to five years' imprisonment which was increased by another six years due to her involvement in the May protest.

Che Che is from Phenpo Gyara Nunnery. In February 1995, she participated in a demonstration and received a five-year prison term. She

received an additional two years increase for her participation in the May protest.

Phuntsok Rigchog: is 37 years old and is from Tashi Gang Monastery in Chusur County. On 31 May 1995, along with six monks from the same monastery Rigchog initiated a pro-independence protest. He was sentenced to six years' imprisonment, which was later increased by four years due to the May protest.

Ngawang Ngonkhen: is 24 years old from Nyethang Tashi Gang Monastery. He received a six-year-imprisonment for his participation in a February 1995 demonstration. Due to the May protest, he received a four-year increase.

Lhasang: is 23 year-old from Gonsar Monastery in Phenpo Lhundrup County. In 1995, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for his involvement in a freedom demonstration. He received an additional four years increase due to the May protest.

Pasang: is 23 years old from Jang Taklung Monastery. Due to his involvement in a 1995 pro-independence movement, Pasang received a five-year prison term, which was increased by another four years due to the Drapchi protest in May.

Norbu Phuntsok: is 22 years old from Jang Taklung Monastery. He received a five-year prison term for his involvement in a pro-independence movement in 1995. For his involvement in the May protest, he received an additional three years.

Wangdue: is 24 year old from Taktse Dechen Sangak Monastery. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in December 1994. He received another four years for his involvement in the May protest.

Chinese government ignores abuses in Tibet's Prisons: Denies Drapchi prison Protests Ever Happened

27

27 April, Dharamsala, India - On 17 April 2000, the Chinese government released a report on prison conditions in the Tibetan Autonomous Region ('TAR'). The report, released by Xinhua News Agency paints a glowing picture of the conditions in Tibet's prisons, with a Tibetan prisoner quoted as saying that, "I regard the prison term as a school semester." Contrary to the report, prison conditions in Tibet remain some of the harshest in the world. Ill-treatment of Tibetans includes: beatings with iron bars and sticks, electric shocks applied to sensitive parts of the body including mouth and genitals, hanging by the arms twisted behind the back, exposure to cold water and cold temperatures, attack by dogs, denial of adequate food and medicine and prolonged periods of solitary confinement. According to a 1998 report from the International Commission of Jurists, Tibetan women, particularly nuns are subjected to some of the harshest treatment, including cases of rapes with electric cattle batons.

"Since the Chinese government ratified the Convention Against Torture in 1988, 71 Tibetans have died as a direct result of torture and ill-treatment in prisons in Tibet" stated Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. Reports from Tibet contradict the Chinese government report, with every major human rights organization in the world condemning the treatment of detained Tibetans.

Commenting on conditions in prisons in Tibet, Amnesty International in 1998 noted that, "Torture and ill-treatment of detainees and prisoners held in detention centres, prisons and labour camps remain widespread, sometimes resulting in death. Prison conditions were often harsh, with inadequate food and medical care, and many prisoners suffered serious illness as a result." The Chinese report claims that doctors conduct regular medical check-ups for prisoners and have found most of them to be in good health.

The report comes on the heels of the Chinese government's statement to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women in February 1999 in which the government claimed that protests never occurred in Drapchi Prison in May 1998. During these protests, Tibetans inside Drapchi protested for Tibetan freedom and were fired upon by Chinese prison guards. As a result of the firing and subsequent reprisals, 10 Tibetans died.

The Tibet Information Network, an independent news monitoring organization has examined the treatment of Tibetans in Chinese prisons and has noted that, "The rate at which Tibetan political prisoners are dying under detention or as a demonstrable result of detention shortly after release is increasing. Female political prisoners, particularly those held at Lhasa's Drapchi Prison, are at greatest risk. The death rate is about 5% or 1 in 20. Drapchi's male political prisoners have died at a rate of about one in 40 from 1987 to 1998." Lobsang Geleg, Deputy Director of the Tibetan Autonomous Regional Administration for prisons in the 'TAR' is quoted in the Chinese report as saying, "local prison authorities manage prisons according to law, which guarantees the basic rights of prisoners."

The report claims that women prisoners do not perform heavy labour, and male prisoners work only four days a week for six hours. These claims are repudiated by Tibetan prisoners who have escaped Tibet and report on forced labour and harsh exercise regimes coupled with inadequate food and denial of timely medical care.

'Patriotic Re-education continues in various religious institutions in Tibet

28

Gar Monastery

Nga-ga (ordained name Thupten Tsultrim) is a 52 year-old monk from Gyama village, Kyichu township in Nangchen County. He reached India on 8 March 2000.

When Nga-ga joined Gar Monastery in 1981, there were approximately 25 monks in the monastery, the strength of which has now increased to 45. Like many other monasteries in Tibet, Gar Monastery too suffered complete destruction during the Cultural Revolution. Following Deng's liberalisation policy in Tibet in the eighties, Gar Monastery was restored with the help of local Tibetans.

Before becoming a monk, Nga-ga was a farmer in Kyichu County of Nangchen County. After three-years stay in Gar Monastery, Nga-ga left for Golok 'TAP' where he studied religious scriptures under *Khenpo* Murser Rinpoche. For the next six years, he travelled on a pilgrimage and attended different religious teachings in Derge County. Following this, he returned to Kyichu County where he spent two years in meditation in a hermitage of Gar Monastery. For the simple reason that the Head Lama of the Gar Monastery is a member of the County Religious Office, the 'work team' has not visited Gar Monastery to date.

In October/November of 1998, while visiting his relatives in Lhasa Nga-ga made an arrangement with a group of 58 people to escape to India. The main aims of his escape plan were to seek an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and to meet his relatives who are living in India. However, their escape plan failed when the Chinese border police arrested the group of escapees in Sakya County. They were all taken to Shigatse Nyari Detention Centre. After a month-long detention and interrogation in the prison, the group of arrested people, including Nga-ga were released. Tsega, a 38 year-old guide in the group from Derge, Chamdo was kept in remand by the prison authorities while the others were sent back to Lhasa. After staying only a few months at home, Nga-ga again went to Lhasa in 1999, where he joined a group of 16 escapees and fled to Nepal through Rongshar border.

Nga-ga and his family live in Gyama Drongtso of Kyichu County, Nangchen County where the villagers are either nomads or farmers. There are around 13 villages in Kyichu County and around 10 of them are inhabited by semi-nomads. His 12-member family includes his sister, brother-in-law and their children. Nga-ga's family has around 30 yaks, 36 dri (female yak), 100 goats/sheep and seven horses. Their livelihood depends on their annual crop production having a yield of around 5000 gyama per annum. Despite the limit set by the Chinese authorities of 'two children per woman' in the Kyichu County Villages, there was no strict adherance to the policy until now, as all the local authorities are Tibetan.

There is relatively little electricity, schools and markets, and only few clinics in the villages. The un-motorable road makes transportation virtually impossible by modern means of transport. Hence, the age-old custom of using beast of burden for transportation purposes still exists in Tibet in this millenium. Regarding the various taxes levied, Nga-ga's family has to annually pay 780 yuan as tax for land, animal, grass, 'yartsa-Gunbu' (medicianl plant) and human (Tibetan: mitrel) The *mitrel* is collected as 27 yuan per person from his family. There are only a few Chinese villages in and around Kyichu County.

Nga-ga escaped through Rongshar border with a group of 16 escapees and reached Nepal on 8 March 2000.

Lura Monastery

Gonpo is a 22 year-old monk who was born and brought up in Chakta township, Chamdo Prefecture, in Makham County. Except for his younger brother, none of his other four brothers have received formal education. Since the age of 10 until he joined Lura Monastery in 1996, Gonpo assisted his parents in field work.

When Gonpo first joined Lura Monastery, there were more than 100 monks residing at the monastery. Lura Monastery, destroyed completely during the Cultural Revolution, was renovated in the eighties by local Tibetans. Around March 1997, six 'work team' officials from Makham County came to Lura Monastery to forcibly conduct 're-education' sessions for the monks. The 'work team' officials instructed them to denounce the Dalai Lama and to oppose 'splittist' activities. The monks who were late for class were fined 10 to 15 yuan. The 'work team' members forcefully installed a huge poster of the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama in the main prayer hall of the monastery which was also used for the 're-education' sessions.

The 'work team' appointed a Democratic Management Committee and a new supervisor for the monastery.

During the course of 're-education' session, a 30 year-old monk, Tadhon, rose in protest saying that he could not denounce the Dalai Lama and oppose 'splittist' activities, as instructed by the 'work team' and left the session. The officials declared Tadhon expelled from the monastery.

The 'work team' members also issued an order stating that monks below the age of 18 were to voluntarily leave the monastery. The 'work team' members stayed in the monastery for approximately 40 days.

Gonpo further elaborated on restricted religious practices in Lhasa. In 1998, when he was in Lhasa he spent some time performeing d religious prayers (Tibetan: *shabten*) for Tibetan families in Lhasa. There he noticed that the families of Tibetan officials were not permitted to have elaborate and obvious religious rituals that are common for Tibetans. Whilst going to any home for religious prayers, the monks wore laymen's clothing and recited the scriptures in a low voice. Tibetans at official levels were restricted from displaying the traditional Tibetan altar in their homes.

Gonpo left Lhasa on February 2000 and reached Dharamsala on 16 April 2000.

Kumbum Monastery

Yeshi Gyamtso is a 24 year-old monk of Kumbum Monastery. He was born in Tsongon Province, Tso-shar 'TAP', Bayan Khar Hui Autonomous County (Chinese: Hualong). He went to school for six years and at the age of 16, he joined Kumbum Monastery. His parents have a business in Tsongon Province. Gyamtso said there are around 700 registered monks and 200 student monks in Kumbum Monastery. His monastery, destroyed completely during the Cultural Revolution was renovated in the 90's by local Tibetans.

A 'work team' started coming to Kumbum Monastery in the early nineties. However, they came in larger numbers after 1998. In September/October of 1998 ɔund 50 Chinese 'work team' officials trom the County, 'TAP'and Tsongon Province came to the monastery and stayed for more than three months. Regular meetings were held in the monastery to 're-educate'the monks. Since all 'work team' members were Chinese, they conducted 're-education' sessions in Chinese language and distributed documents to the monks, which were translated into Tibetan. The 'work team' members instructed the monks to be patriotic, to accept the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama, to oppose 'splittism' and to stop giving political affiliation to the Dalai Lama. Bans were imposed on pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the monastery. Furthermore, prior permission has to be sought from the ɔongon authorities to assemble the monks in the monastery for religious services, religious discourses and other gatherings.

At the end of every 're-education' session, 'work team' officials conduct examinations. The monks are issued with a questionaire which they have to answer according to what the 'work team' has earlier instructed them. Gyamtso said the monks are threatened with expulsion and arrest if they fail to follow the instructions of the 'work team' members. There are many cases of monks running away from the monastery to avoid this forceful act of signing papers.

The 'work team' officials held three mass meetings(Tibetan: Tsokchen) and instructed the monks to comply with their orders or face punishment. In Kumbum Monastery, a limit of 400 monks has been enforced since 1994, and only monks above the age of 18 are allowed to stay in the monastery.

In February of 1995, four monks of Kumbum Monastery were arrested by the County police on charges of having posted pro-independence posters in the monastery. They were detained at the County police station for more then three months and then released. The four arrested monks are Kalden (in his thirties), Tendhar (in his late twenties) and two other monks whose identities remain unknown to us. All four monks were expelled from Kumbum Monastery after their arrest. Except for Tendhar who escaped to India in 1997, the remaining three monks are currently staying with their families.

Dhungar Monastery

Choedup is originally from Sangri Village, Tharlag County, Tsongon province, Golok 'TAP'. He is a 25 year-old monk of Dhungkar Monastery. Choedup's parents are nomads. At the age of 10 in 1985, he became monk of Dhungkar Monastery which had 30 monks at that time. This number, however, increased to 130 by May 1998.

A 10-member 'work team' from Golok 'TAP' and County came in May 1998 to Dhungkar Monastery. During their one-month re-education of the monks, the 'work team' officials instructed the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama and to oppose 'splittist' activities. All the photographs of the Dalai Lama were confiscated and banned at the monastery.

The 'work team' issued ID pass to only 30 monks, and a further 10 monks were expelled because they were below the age of 18. The remaining 90 monks were ordered to leave the monastery to work as a 'patriotic citizen' in their villages. But none of the monks obeyed the order and stayed in the monastery. These monks were not allowed to wear monk's robes and participate in any religious activities in the monastery. A limit of 30 monks was set by the 'work team' for the monastery.

During each of the ten visits the 'work team' officials paid to the monastery, they asked the non ID holders to leave the monastery or else they would be forcibly evicted. The 'patriotic re-education', however, continued for the remaining 30 monks. These monks were forced to sign pledges individually denouncing the Dalai Lama. Of the 143 monasteries in Tharlag, the largest is the Drak-la Monastery which has 500 monks. Each one of these 13 monasteries have been visited by the 'work teams' and 're-education' continues unabated in all of them.

On the pretext of pilgrimage, Choedup escaped from Tibet and reached Nepal on 27 December 1999.

Woeser Monastery

Sonam Dhondup is originally from Golok township, Markham County. He became a mon! of Woeser Monastery in Markham County when he was 11 years old. He is now 17 years old. There were 83 monks when Sonam first joined the monastery. At present, there are around 108 monks. Sonam's parents are farmers.

Sonam Dhondup stayed for six years in the monastery. He said the 'work team' comprising of eight Tibetan officials from township and County offices first came to the monastery in the autumn of 1997. During their one and a half month stay at the monastery, they conducted re-education meetings, set a limit of 60 monks and ordered the remaining monks to leave the monastery, especially those who were below the age of 18. Many monks disguised themselves as laymen and continued to stay on at the monastery.

As all of the 'work team' officials were Tibetans, the 're-education' sessions in the monastery conducted were not as strict and forceful as in other monasteries. The 'work team' officials instructed the monks to oppose 'splittist' activities and banned pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The constant disobedience from the monks to every order of 're-education' session evoked little reaction from the 'work team' officials. Presently, there are 108 monks

in Woeser Monastery. Dhondup said that the 'work team' had visited all 18 monasteries in Markham County since 1997. 'Work teams' had visited these monasteries at different intervals for inspection.

Dhondup voluntarily escaped from his monastery with two other monks, to join his Rinpoche in South India. In 1998, four other monks also fled from Woeser Monastery for the same reason.

Dhondup and the two monks stayed a month in Lhasa from where they trekked through Saga County to Trango-la, to reach the Jomsom border of Nepal. It took them three months to reach the border on 7 April 2000. On the way, Sonam suffered frostbite on his feet and lost some of his toes. He is being treated at the Tibetan Reception Centre Clinic. The three monks now wish to join Sera Monastery in India where their Rinpoche is staying.

Rakor Nunnery re-opened

Twenty-two year-old Ngawang Dechen was born in Nyedrong township in Damshung County, Nagchu Prefecture. She is from Rakor Nunnery in Toelung County but was expelled from her nunnery due to the 'patriotic re-education' campaign.

In March 1997, approximately 16 'work team' officials from Toelung Dechen County came to Rakor Nunnery, which had 83 nuns at that time. During the meetings that were held and the 'patriotic re-education' conducted, the officials called on the nuns to denounce the Dalai Lama and to oppose 'splittist activities'. A small group (Tibetan : *tsok-chung*) of nuns, 20 in each group were organised and given political instructions by the 'work team'. During the political education which continued for some months, the nuns were asked to denounce the Dalai Lama. When the nuns refused to obey their orders, the 'work team' officials called in the nuns individually and forced them to sign a pledge denouncing the Dalai Lama. Two 'work team' officials were assigned for each nun to instruct and force the nuns to denounce the Dalai Lama.

As the nuns of Rakor Monastery continued to disobey the instructions of the 'work team' and not utter a single word against the Dalai Lama, the officials sent a letter to Lhasa Municipality Government, citing the situation in Rakor Monastery and sought further instructions. On 16 September 1997, around 20 officials from Lhasa Municipality Government, led by an official named Dolkar came to Rakor Nunnery. Meetings were held and questions asked. Dolkar, the head of the officials, threatened the nuns with expulsion and closure unless the nuns denounced the Dalai Lama. But the 83 nuns remained stubborn in their stand and were declared expelled from the nunnery on 25 September 1997. For three days after this announcement, the nuns destroyed their quarters, which they had built themselves. The officials ordered confiscation of all houses and wooden structures like pillars, beams and window frames that escaped destruction by the nuns over those three days. Later, three monks from Toelung Chubsang Gonpa were appointed by the County officials as caretakers of the temple of Rakor Nunnery.

All the expelled nuns of Rakor Nunnery now live with their families in the adjoining township and Counties of Toelung Dechen and Lhasa. The officials ordered the nuns not to join any other nunnery.

After expulsion, Dechen lived in Nyedrong township of Damshung County with her family. She attended different prayer services at her village and went around Lhasa on a pilgrimage with a nun friend. Dechen saw some expelled nuns of Rakor Monastery working as servants or housewives in Lhasa. However, most of them lived with their families and lead the life of a nomad or farmer in their villages. Dechen said the nuns were completely deprived of their religious freedom since their expulsion.

In October 1999, Toelung County officials called eight former nuns of Rakor Nunnery and assigned them the responsibilities of looking after the nunnery. However, all the valuable objects of the Rakor Nunnery were 'registered' and kept under County authority. The eight nuns had to bring food from their home on a daily basis, as they were not allowed to use the kitchen of the nunnery. Every new activity in the nunnery needs to have the consent of the authorities.

Dechen escaped from Tibet with another expelled nun from Rakor Nunnery. Both the nuns fled from Tibet along with 17 other Tibetans. They reached Nepal on 31 March 2000 and plan to join a nunnery in India.

Statement on the Chinese Censure resolution at the United Nations

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy is concerned that the 56th United Nations Commission on Human Rights has dismissed, without debate and vote, the United States sponsored resolution censuring China for its human rights violations in the past year. "The continued success of the Chinese 'no-action motion' calls into question the legitimacy of the Commission on Human Rights and is a great disappointment for those suffering under the repressive policies of the Chinese government" stated Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of TCHRD.

The mildly worded resolution failed because of a lackluster lobby effort by the US government, most notably President Clinton's silence on the resolution. This silence during the crucial period leading up to the scheduled vote in Geneva is all the more notable as Chinese entry into WTO and a vote in the US Congress on Permanent Normal Trade Relations (NTR) are due for action this year.

Combined with a low-key effort on the part of the U.S., the European Union's decision not to co-sponsor the resolution left little doubt whether the Chinese motion would pass. As in past years, China aggressively lobbied Commission member states, including using both economic and political leverage to influence voting. The inability of the Censure Resolution to

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Profile

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

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FREEDOM SMOTHERED: SENTENCE EXTENDED

Chokdup Dolma is a 28 year-old nun of Phenpo Gyara Nunnery. She was born in Nyendong township of Lhasa City, Dhamshung County. Her family are nomads, and she attended a local school for only few years. She became nun of Phenpo Gyara Nunnery in the late eighties and studied religious scriptures.

On 13 February 1995, Chokdup Dolma, along with 14 other nuns staged a peaceful independence demonstration in the Barkhor in Lhasa City. During that time, the nuns raised slogans like, 'Tibet is independent', 'Chinese quit Tibet' and 'Long Live H.H. Dalai Lama'. Within minutes of their protest, Lhasa PSB officials arrested the nuns and took them to Lhasa City PSB Detention Centre. They were interrogated and beaten continuously during their detention. In the following months, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court passed verdicts on the arrested nuns. Of the fourteen arrested nuns, Jampa (29 years), Chime Dolkar (30 years), Yangdon (27 years) and Jamdon (26 years) were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Chokdup Dolma, Monlam Choenyi (27 years) and Tsering Chokey (27 years) were sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Ngawang Soepa (31 years), Ngawang Tsomo (27 years), Namgyal (23 years), Sherab Choephel(27 years), Paljin (27 years), Chungkyi (22 years) Cheche (27 years) were sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

As their time of arrest coincided with the start of the 're-education' sessions in and around the 'Tibet Autonomous Region', there were numerous demonstrations staged by nuns.

On 30 July 1995, almost 60 nuns who received sentencing were transferred from Lhasa PSB Detention Centre to Drapchi Prison. During this time, the 60 nuns were put into a new female unit. The prison authorities warned the new prisoners not to intermingle with prisoners of the old unit. While in Drapchi, they were forced to run all day for three months under the pretense of 'exercise' in Chinese terms. These exercises were supervised by PAP, who would strike any 'lazy' nuns on the head. Chokdup Dolma once suffered a blow on her head by arms-belt? the pain of which still persists today. The nuns had to make yarns from four *sangs* of wool in a day, and sometimes they would be forced to work throughout the night to complete one's share. The conditions relating to food in the prison was appalling.

To celebrate International Labour Day on 1 May 1998, the prisoners of the new male and female units in addition to the other non-political prisoners, were taken to the prison ground for a flag-raising ceremony. Fearing protests, prison officials had already posted prison guards in the surrounding area. Suddenly, a monk political prisoner from the new unit protested by shouting 'Tibet is independent', 'The Chinese flag cannot be hoisted on Tibetan soil' and 'Long Live H.H. the Dalai Lama.'

Subsequently, all the other prisoners gathered participated in this protest, causing a riot. The prison officials immediately began beating the protesting prisoners, causing many injuries. Later, all prisoners were returned to their cells.

Even though all the prisoners present participated in the protest, Chokdup Dolma and two other nuns caught the prison guards' attention who they found in the forefront of the demonstration. Chokdup, along with two other nuns were placed in solitary confinement for three months in a dark unlit cell big enough to stretch one's legs. During that time, she was interrogated and beaten frequently, and given a steamed dough bun once a day.

In October 1998, her sentence was extended by five years in addition to her earlier six-year sentence. She is currently serving her 11-year sentence.

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come before the Committee only further encourages continued illegal, repressive measure committed by the Chinese government against its citizens.

The decision by the Commission on Human Rights is particularly notable as the conditions in China as well as Tibet continue to deteriorate. Reports by TCHRD, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the US State Department and others indicates that fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, association, religion, press, and assembly are repressed, often violently. In Tibet, 615 Tibetans remain imprisoned for peacefully expressing their political views, over 11,000 monks and nuns have been expelled from their monasteries in the past four years for refusing to denounce the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama and swear allegiance to China, and the Chinese government continues to hold the world's youngest political prisoner, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet.

The use of the "no-action motion", not employed by any other country, curtails the stated mission of the Committee. If the Chinese government, a permanent member of the UN Security Council is able to prevent discussion of its human rights record, the purpose of the Commission is called into question.

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TIBETAN CHILDREN AND THEIR RIGHTS

Reliable information indicates that a group of Tibetan students have been arrested at Dram border (Tibet-Nepal) by Chinese Border Security Police. This incident took place between the end of March and mid April 2000. A group of fresh graduates from Tibetan schools in India were on their way to Tibet for their vacation to visit their parents and relatives after completing their class X and XII examinations.

Approximately 50 students were brought in for questioning and have since been detained under suspicion of dissident political activities. Reports also indicate that some of these children were arrested in Lhasa. Due to a lack of information at this time, the identities of the children detained are still unknown.

Information filtering in from Tibet indicates that these students are currently held in Nyari Detention Centre in Shigatse Region. Some of the students are awaiting trial while others have been transferred to a prison in Lhasa. These students are all below the age of 18 and hence below the age of criminal or political prosecution according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which China ratified in 1992.

The CRC also binds State Parties to respect the rights of children and their parents to travel between countries in order to maintain relations. Furthermore, detention by State Parties is permissible only as a last resort and cannot be arbitrary or unlawful.

Chime Yangzom is a nine year-old from Lhasa Barkhor. Her parents are from Kham and came to Lhasa to start a small business. Although they have been in Lhasa long enough in Lhasa, none of them have yet received one even Yangzom, who was born in Lhasa in 1991. Her parents reside in Lhasa on a rental basis.

From the age of five, Yangzom attended a day school in Lhasa where she studied for three years. This was run by a private organisation. This was expensive although she can't tell how much.

Yangzom was then admitted in Lhasa Lobchung No 2, which was established by the government. In Yangzom's class, there were 52 other students. The subjects taught in the school were Maths, Chinese and Tibetan. As Yangzom's parents weren't official residents of Lhasa, they had to pay higher fees than other parents. Each semester, which lasts eight months cost Yangzom's parents 660 yuan, with an extra 120 yuan for uniforms. Eight other students in Yangzom's class did not have the residential permit and were also subject to these inflated fees.

Yangzom's parents eventually decided that they could not afford the school expenses, but knew the importance of quality education, so decided to leave for India.

Thus, in April the family fled to India. After 17 days of walking through the Himalayas through Sharbhumbu border, they reached Nepal and then Dharamsala in May 2000.

Chagdar Bum is 21 years old from Magra township in Kuiyan County in Tsongon Province Tsolho 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.'

When he was seven years old, Chagdar attended Luwar village school for three years and then Magra township school at the age of eleven. At the time, there were 70 students from the local area, all from farming backgrounds. In this school only three subjects are taught - Maths, Chinese and Tibetan. The annual school fees for this school were 150 yuan and an additional 200 gyama of cereals.

In 1993 Chagdar attended Chabcha County Middle School where there were 250 students. The annual school fees in this school were 250 yuan and 250 gyamas of cereal. Most of the students in this school are Tibetans and it is a government administered school.

However, the school places major emphasis on political subjects, including Chinese history and orientation on opposing 'splittists' and the importance of 'Unifying the Motherland.' On Sundays, veterans of the Cultural Revolution are invited to speak on Communism and its benefits. In this school, Chinese festivals are observed and the school remained closed but Tibetan festivals are completely ignored.

In 1996, Chagdar was admitted to the main middle school in Chabcha 'TAP.' At the time, there were approximately 500 students, of which approximately 200 were Tibetan. In this school every subject is taught in Chinese apart from Tibetan itself. Moreover, almost all the teachers are Chinese except for the Tibetan language teacher. Political ideology was of much greater importance at this school than the

others Chagdar had earlier attended. Many students were encouraged to join the Chinese Youth Organisation, which is a stepping stone to becoming a fully-fledged Chinese Communist Cadre. No one was allowed to practice religion.

In 1997, a student had to tear a page out of his workbook where he had posted a picture of the Xth Panchen Lama.

The fees for one year at this school are 1200 yuan. In 1999, Chagdar joined Tsongon Province Teachers Training School where he had to pay an annual fee of 2500 yuan. In this school, there were approximately 1000 students, about 200 of whom were Tibetans. English was part of the curriculum.

Chagdar added that upon graduating from the teacher's training school, the Tibetan students find it very difficult to obtain jobs, as employees always recruited Chinese students first.

Reting Monks Arrested

According to a recent arrival who wishes to remain unknown, on 16 January 2000 a boy named Lodroe Gyatso (layname: Sonam Phuntsok) was declared as the reincarnation of the 6th Reting Rinpoche by Chinese government. On 21 January 2000, the enthronement ceremony of the boy, originally from Lhari County, was performed at the Reting Monastery.

On 17 May 2000, the monks of Reting Monastery protested against the illegal selection of the reincarnation. That same day, approximately eight monks were arrested on suspicion of plotting to kill the reincarnate boy. There are unconfirmed reports that these monks might be detained in Taktse County or Gutsa Detention Centre. The names and details of the arrested monks are also not available. Subsequent to this incident, no tourists or common people are allowed to enter Reting Monastery. It is reported that heavy security check posts have been stationed by the authorities in the monastery and on *Taktse Samchen* (Taktse Bridge).

An unconfirmed report also indicated that two German tourists were also detained following the incident in Reting Monastery but were later released.

The 5th Reting Rinpoche was the regent (*Gyaltsab*: King's Representative) of Tibet. Appointed by the Dalai Lama, a reting's role is to assume responsibility in the absence of the Dalai Lama or at the time of his infancy. The 5th Reting Rinpoche played an instrumental role in the identification of the XIVth Dalai Lama. Currently there are approximately 130 monks in Reting Monastery with the residential permits. In 1997, about 17 monks were expelled from Reting Monastery and in May 1998, approximately 32 monks were expelled following the 'patriotic re-education' campaign.

Death, Arrest and Expulsion in Chamdo Monastery

25 year-old Lobsang, from Sagang township in Chamdo County in Chamdo 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' arrived in Dharamsala, India in May 2000. Lobsang joined Chamdo Monastery when he was 17 years old. Chamdo Monastery had approximately 1200 monks of which 850 monks are registered and has residential permits.

The first 'work team' visited Chamdo Monastery in 1996. In 1996, two monks were reportedly arrested on the charge of having pasted pro-independence posters in Chamdo Monastery. The names and identity of the two monks are not known. However, it is likely that they were arrested at the same time as the first 'work team' arrived in Chamdo Monastery in 1996. The two monks were reportedly tortured severely in Chamdo Detention Centre and then transferred to an unknown prison.

Later in 1999, it was reported that both monks died in prison due to excessive torture and its repercussions. No further information is available on both the monks.

Since 1997, the County authorities posted police in Chamdo Monastery to check any pro-independence or political activities in the monastery. There are five policemen who usually inspect and keep records of visitors parents, relatives, friends or countrymen of the monks in the monastery. All the visitors are charged one yuan as an entrance fee by the policemen.

Later in autumn 1999, 15 'work team' members came to the monastery to conduct 're-education' sessions and stayed for a month. The members called regular meetings in the monastery, instructed the monks to repeatedly denounce the Dalai Lama and to oppose the 'splittists'. Furthermore, they gave political lessons to the monks. When it came to denouncing the Dalai Lama, the monks refused to comply. The 850 monks who complied were issued identity cards, while the rest were ordered to leave the monastery. The 350 remaining unregistered monks reside in the monastery, but they are not allowed to attend any religious gatherings or take part in monastic activities.

In autumn 1999, 700 young monks from monasteries in Tengchen County, Palbar County, Pakshoe County, Zogang County and Drayab County visited Chamdo Monastery to study religious scriptures. The 'work team' officials expelled all the visiting monks from Chamdo Monastery and ordered them to return to their respective monasteries. The County authorities then prohibited this tradition of providing religious education to monks from different monasteries in Chamdo Monastery.

One monk named Bhuga from Chakha township, Chamdo County was reportedly arrested in 1999 on charges of having pasted Free Tibet posters in Chamdo Monastery. He is said to be detained in a prison in Lhasa but no further information is available at this time.

Since repressive policies in the monasteries have been intensified, many monks have either been expelled or voluntarily left the monastery. Most of the former monks are working as farmers or nomads in Chamdo County.

Lobsang also fled from the monastery as he wishes to join a monastery in India and continue his religious study. Lobsang reached Nepal on 27 April 2000 through the Solukhumbu border.

Birth Control Policy in Terda village

20 year old Yangchen, is from Terda village, Lochu township in Derge County Kandze 'TAP' in Sichuan Province. She reported that family planning policies initiated by the Chinese government are carried out extensively in her region. There were regular inspections of the village by the health officers from both county and township levels. Tibetan women who already had the set number of permitted children in a family were summoned for sterilisation in the nearby hospital.

The local health officers set a limit of two children for the officer's families while nomads and farmers are allowed to have three children. The fines for exceeding the set number of children would range from 2000 to 3000 yuan. Due to immense financial constraint, only three women in the village have more than two or three children. If these women were unable to pay the fine, the officers would confiscate their belongings. In order to avoid being sterilised, many women resort to different methods of family planning.

The most common method is the insertion of IUD (Intra Uterine Device). This prevents the cabablity of bearing children for three years. Every three years, they must replace this device, the cost of which is borne by the woman herself. Some girls from well off families can afford to purchase better quality and more expensive IUDs which cost 200 yuan, but the poorer women pay only 30 yuan.

One woman died in her village and two others complained of physical problems due to this form of contraception. If a woman in a family exceed three children she has to pay three thousand to four thousand yuan. Thus, aware of the risks and complications involved in IUD insertion, many women prefer to undergo permanent sterilisation.

33 year-old Bhukyi from Terda village had a fourth child and subsequently all aid was stopped and she was fined 2000 yuan. Approximately four county authorities come once a year to check for births outside the quota. The village leader has to register each new birth and report it to the county authorities. These township authorities are mostly Chinese assisted by a Tibetan.

In this village, there are approximately 14 girls who are of child-bearing age. The population of the village is approximately 300 people.

Arrest of Seven Tibetans

21 year-old Takla is a farmer from Karang township, Yazae County in Tsoshar 'TAP' in Qinghai Province. He fled Tibet and reached Dharamsala on 20 March 2000.

At the age of seven, Takla attended primary school for five years and spent another six years in Yundhu Tibetan Middle School. This school was established by the Xth Panchen Lama in the late 1980's. All subjects at the school, expect for Tibetan language, were taught in Chinese. Each semester cost his family approximately 700 yuan. "Even after completing education it is difficult to obtain job if you are not Chinese. This is because Chinese students have better connections with high-level Chinese officials," added Takla.

Takla did not attend further studies and discontinued his education after middle school and left for Lhasa to help run his sister's business. While in Lhasa, he met some people from Qinghai whose arrest and imprisonment details are given below.

According to Takla, since January 1999 a total of seven people have been detained by the Chinese officials on charges of 'guiding Tibetan escapees' and for their participation in 'pro-independence activities in collaboration with the Tibetan government in-exile.'

Takla reported that Choephel (30), a former monk of Rong Gongchen Monastery was arrested in January 1999 in the Bakhor area of Lhasa. He was arrested on suspicion of guiding Tibetan escapees to India. Upon his arrest he was first detained in Lhasa for two months before being handed over to the Qinghai Provincial authorities. While in Lhasa Detention Centre he was interrogated several times and simultaneously beaten. In Qinghai he was detained for two months in Xining Detention Centre.

Choephel was later sentenced to seven years' imprisonment on charges of guiding Tibetan escapees into exile, and received an additional year for 'bad behaviour' during the trial by the Qinghai Higher People's Court. He was later transferred to Drai-Drang Prison in Ziling City. Drai-Drang Prison is very large according to Takla. "If a person stands at the gate of the prison he would not be able to recognise the person at the other end." It can accommodate at least several thousand prisoners, both political and non-political. Choephel's family survive by farming. Choephel became a monk at the age of 11 at the Rong Gongchen monastery, and remained there until he left for Lhasa at the age of 25

Tsewang, aged 22 from Karang township in Shunghai County, Tsoshar 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture', was arrested on 14 June 1999. He was suspected of guiding Tibetan escapees into exile and arrested immediately after talking to some of his friends in a restaurant in Lhasa. Six officers of the People's Armed Police searched his room and discovered pictures of the Dalai Lama, political leaflets and some political audio cassettes. Tsewang was then detained at the Beijing Road Police Station. He is still in detention.

Yang Bhu Gyal (32) from Rebkong County, Maga shang in Qinghai Province was arrested in January 1999 from Dha bu lon area in Lhasa by seven Public Security Bureau officials for allegedly guiding Tibetans into India. He was detained for five months in Nachen Police Station in Lhasa until June 1999. Yang Bhu Gyal was then sentenced to eight years' imprisonment by the Tibetan Autonomous Region's Higher People's Court. He was denied access to lawyers during the trial. At present nobody knows his whereabouts or his physical condition.

Dukar (27) from Hualong County in Tsoshar 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' was also arrested in December 1999 for his alleged involvement in guiding people across the border into India. He is believed to have been detained for at least six months where underwent interrogation at the hands of the procuratorate and Public Security Bureau officials.

In February 2000, he left for india where he wishes to continue his studies.

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Severe Religious Restrictions in Nyemo County

17 year-old Tsetan Lhamo is a nun of Nyemo Terdhak Nunnery from Retso village in Nyemo township, Nyemo County. She arrived in Dharamsala, India in May 2000.

Nyemo township was formed in 1999 by integrating four other townships Dhadril township, Chuling township, Dhongkar township and Ritso township. In Nyemo township, there are both *mangtsuk* (public administered) and *shungtsuk* (government-administered) schools in all the sub-townships and it is compulsory for all the children to go to school. The parents have to pay heavy fines if they fail to send their children to school until middle school level. However, for further studies and scholarships, the parents have to depend on connections (Chinese: guanxi) within the administration which usually only benefit the children of officials and are not available easily for most Tibetan children. Even the official jobs in county or township offices are reserved for the children of the officials. As such, the majority Tibetan children who complete their schooling, work with their parents as farmers or nomads.

From the beginning of 1999, the Chinese authorities implemented a two-child policy in Nyemo township, and imposed heavy penalties on those who bore more than two children per family, from then on. They also offered rewards for those who adhered to the official policy and rules.

The Nyemo County authorities also banned religious altars from all Tibetan households in the County. Nyemo Tibetan officials were also banned from performing any traditional religious activities, be they circumambulating around *Choeten* (stupa) or offering butter lamps on altars or even performing religious rites for the deceased. This ban was imposed at the start of 2000 and is applicable to all Tibetans in villages of Nyemo County. An official order was given to all the Tibetan farmers and nomads in the villages disallowing them to keep altars and burn butter lamps in their households. The township and county authorities even removed altars from the houses of official doctors, teachers and retired staff. Orders were also issued to either remove or replace prayer flags with Chinese flags. The authorities frequently inspected houses and instructed people not to keep pictures of the Dalai Lama in their homes.

In February 2000, the authorities took down the names of all monks and nuns who were related to Tibetan government official in Nyemo County. These monks and nuns were then instructed to be removed from the religious institutions. If any Tibetan official refused to do so, his/her job would be terminated irrespective of his/her position in the office: The authorities say that 'this would strengthen the image of the Tibetan officials and their reputation in the governmental offices of PRC'.

Tsetan's parents are farmers in Nyemo township. When she was seven years old, she attended lobchung (Primary School)and studied Tibetan. At the age of 13, she became a nun of Nyemo Terdhak Nunnery where she stayed for three and a half years. She studied religious scriptures and helped other nuns in the re-constructions of the Nyemo Terdhak Nunnery. When Tsetan joined the nunnery, there were 10 nuns, though currently there are only seven.

In summer 1998, approximately 23 nuns of three different nunneries, namely Drowa Choeling Nunnery, Neyon Nunnery and Terdhak Nunnery were called to Nyemo township by the county authorities and were forced to attend a mass meeting for 'patriotic re-education'. For approximately four months, 10 officers from township and county held frequent meetings in Nyemo township and conducted 're-education' to the nuns. The 're-education' sessions were conducted in the morning and in the afternoon, while the nuns were examined individually by the officials. The nuns were continuously instructed to denounce the Dalai Lama as 'head of the splittists' and the exiled Tibetans as 'separatists', to accept Tibet as part of China and that it was never independent from China. The nuns were individually asked to accept every official instructions and to agree with all the re-education points.

During the 're-education' sessions 'work team' officers expelled two nuns, Choenyi Dolma and Yeshi Saldon from Terdhak Nunnery. They were charged with avoiding 're-education' meetings and showing 'bad expression' to the officials. Both the nuns now live with their parents in Nyemo township and they are prohibited from joining any other nunnery.

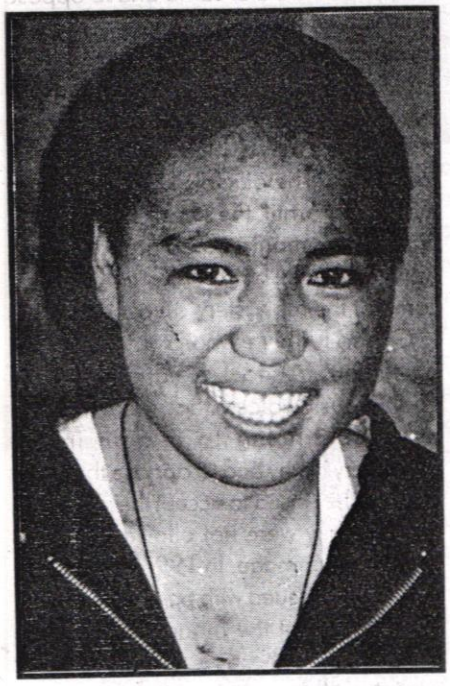
In July 1999, the county and township authorities conducted a re- evaluation of their 're-education' campaigns in nunneries in Nyemo County. In Terdhak Nunnery, the officials stayed for three days and conducted a re-examination of all the nuns, each one on their opinions. The authorities then summoned all Terdhak Nunnery nuns to Nyemo township for eight days, where they were again 're-educated' and 're-evaluated', in the presence of PSB officials. The county Public Security Bureau officers were also present at the time.

The same month, the village authorities came to the nunnery and registered all the properties of the nunnery aside from the personal belongings of the nuns. The authorities then expelled two more nuns-Tsetan Lhamo and Tendol-from the nunnery on charges of dosobeying orders and 'bad behaviour' in response to officials. Both nuns were sent back to their homes and ordered not to wear religious robes in future. The authorities restricted both the nuns from performing any religious activities or services in any place and continued to monitor their movements after expulsion. The officials put them under three years of political scrutiny and twice every month the nuns had to report to the township PSB officials. The officials continuously advised both nuns to do business or work in hotels but the nuns always wished to escape to India to pursue their religious study.

Tsetan Lhamo secretly left her home on 18 February 2000 and escaped to Lhasa. She then escaped to Nepal across the Dram border. She reached Nepal on 8 May 2000. Tendol currently resides with her parents in Nyemo township and works as farmer.

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Testimony of a Former Political Prisoner



22 year-old Lobsang Choezin (lay name Seldron) is a nun of Phenpo Shar Nunnery in Jangkha township in Phenpo Lhundup County. Choezin comes from a farming background of eight members. Choezin had never been to school. She became a nun of Phenpo Shar Nunnery in 1991 at the age of 14 and stayed there for three years studying Tibetan and religious scriptures.

On 14 June 1994 Lobsang Choezin with nun Choenyi Gyaltsen and three other nuns of Phenpo Shar Nunnery staged a pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa at six in the evening. The nuns shouted slogans such as "Free Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama." Within 15 minutes of demonstration, eight personnel of the Barkhor Police station arrested the five nuns. The nuns were kicked, punched and severely beaten for approximately 15 minutes with sticks. Then on their way to being taken to Gutsa Detention Centre in a police vehicle, the nuns were again beaten brutally. Choekyi Wangmo, one of the nuns was seriously injured when she was kicked and struck on the head with a stick by a security police that by the time they reached Gutsa, Wangmo could not talk properly. The five arrested nuns were Choekyi Wangmo, Tsutrim Sangmo, Lobsang Choezin, Gyaltsen Sherab and Choenyi Gyaltsen.

Choenyi Gyaltsen and Choekyi Wangmo were detained in Gutsa for approximately eight times without any judicial proceedings. Both were interrogated for approximately seven times in Gutsa. Choenyi said "every interrogation was associated with severe beating and torture if not answered properly." On November 1994, they were tried in the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa. Lobsang Choezin was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights.

Tsultrim Sangmo(23),(lay name: Choekyi Kyemo), originally from Gachoy township of Phenpo Lhundrup County was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison and deprived of political rights for two years. Choenyi Gyaltsen (26), (lay name: Chemi Yangchen) was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. Lobsang Choekyi (lay name: Choekyi Wangmo and Gyaltsen Sherab both 24 years old originally from Phenpo 'Gachoy township, were sentenced to four years' imprisonment in Drapchi and deprivation of political rights for two and one year respectively.

Whereas Choenyi Gyaltsen and Tsultrim Sangmo were transferred to Drapchi in December 1994, Lobsang Choezin, Tsultrim Sangmo and Gyaltsen Sherab were detained in Gutsa for one year and four months and finally transferred in August 1995 to Drapchi. At that time, the construction of the new 3rd unit was underway in Drapchi and therefore could not accomodate more people. The three nuns were in Drapchi for a longer period of time.

Lobsang Choezin, Tsultrim Sangmo and Gyaltsen Sherab were kept in the new 3rd unit of Drapchi Prison. In Drapchi additional to their regular 'exercises', the nuns were assigned daily tasks like, making yarn out of wool and military exercises.

Lobsang Choezin and Gyaltsen Sherab were released from Drapchi Prison on 30 June 1998. She was handed over to the Lhundrup County PSB. The County PSB officials took 'pledge letter' both from their parents and themselves stating "they will not engage in any political work in future and in every matter or movement they will seek permission from township or County authorities." The letter barred the nuns from joining any other nunnery or performing any religious activities.

Lobsang Choezin decided to escape to India on 26 February 2000 with other nuns. They paid 900 yuan each to a guide who took them through Solukhumbhu border to Nepal, where they reached on 11 April 2000. They finally reached Dharamsala on 24 April 2000.

Arrest of Kandze Monks

21 year-old Sangye Gyatso is from Karak township in Kandze County in Sichuan Province. He is a former monk of Kandze Monastery. For three years he attended *Lobchung* (primary)school in his area and then helped his parents on the field.

In 1996, he joined Kandze Monastery. At that time there were approximately 500 monks most of whom were young monks. Prior to his admission in the monastery, 'work team' members had already visited the monastery.

In June 1998 a ten-member 'work team' visited Kandze Monastery for three days to conduct 're-education' campaign. The monks were prohibited from possessing or displaying any pictures of the Dalai Lama. The members forced the monks to sign documents stating that the monks comply to the instructions of the 're-education'. Many monks resisted at that time therefore, the monk's parents were called to 'advice' their children to 'uphold the principles of the motherland.' Sixty monks below the age of 18 were not issued the residential permits to stay in Kandze Monastery.

At the end of the session, members announced that they plan to complete the

're-education' within four years. In 1998 the 'work team' members visited their monastery four times.

In 1999, the 'work team' members visited the monastery again. Gyatso said that the members were stricter and the policies were spelled out more affirmatively. On 15 April 1999 (Tibetan) Gyatso and Gyalpo (32) from the same monastery posted pro-independence posters in Kandze County, on the walls in town and the townhall. On the county main gate, the two monks put a cross on the Chinese flag. They returned to the monastery that night.

After approximately a month, on 18 May 1999, county PSB arrived at the monastery and made the monks write a page to check their handwritings. Fearing arrest, Gyatso left the monastery after he submitted his writings.

The next day, the PSB officers searched Gyatso's room and discovered incriminating literarures from his room. The officers searcher other monk's room and discovered the forbidden flag from Gonpo's room. 28 year-old Gonpo from the same monastery and Gyatso's accomplice Gyalpo, were arrested the same day. The two monks were immediately taken to Kandze Detention Centre where they were held for three months. While in detention, Gyalpo reportedly sustained severe injuries, including damege to his ribs. At that time, monks of Kandze Monastery noticed Gyalpo being taken to the hospital. His relatives were prohibited from visiting him while in detention.

After their three-month detention in Kandze Detention Centre, the two monks were reportedly transferred but no information is available on their place of detention.

Sangye Gyatso was in hiding for a year after which in February 2000 he fled into exile and reached Dharamsala, India in April 2000.

Restrictions in Tsang Monastery

A total of 24 Tsang monks arrived India reluctant to accept Chinese political pledge. Jigdral Gyatso from Tsang Monastery in Hoiba township in Chabcha 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' is 27 years old.

Gyatso, along with 17 monks from the same monastery made their first attempt to escape to India in January 2000. They were arrested in Lhatse and transferred to Shigatse and detained for seven days. They were later released and sent back to Lhasa. In Lhasa they spent one month. They made a second attempt in February to escape to India along with 24 people from Tsang Monastery. The journey took 22 days of walking, finally arriving in Nepal on 24 March 2000.

Gyatso comes from a nomadic background. He attended school for five years and at the age 16, became a monk of Tsang Monastery. At that time there were 500 monks in the monastery. In June 1996 the first 'work team' comprising of 12 officers came to the monastery and spent seven days there. They were asked to learn about the political system of People's Republic of China (PRC), such as adhering to the law of the People's Republic of China and to the principles of 'love the country and religion.' At this time, no one was arrested or expelled. In 1996 there were in total 700 monks in the monastery.

The second 'work team' of officials arrived at the monastery in 1997, during three different months; January, June and in August respectively. The 'work team' officials conducted 'patriotic re-education' campaign for eight days. The monks were distributed books on 're-education.'

The third 'work team' came to the monastery in January, May, June and August 1998 respectively. On each of these visits there were 15 officials who spent six weeks at the monastery. In 1998, strict orders were issued to adhere to and accept the political pledge if wanting to remain in the monastery. 12 monks voluntarily left the monastery for India.

In January, April, June and August of 1999, 12 officials visited the monastery and stayed at the monastery for 15 days each month. This time the monks were forced to accept the Panchen Lama recognised by the Chinese government, to oppose the Dalai Lama and to oppose 'splittism.' If they refused to accept these pledges, they were threatened with expulsion. They were constantly harassed by the officials, to sign and accept these conditions if they wished to remain in the monastery. The officials kept visiting the monastery until the monks accepted. None of the monks dared argue, as they were threatened by expulsion of their head Lama or the monastery's closure.

Gyatso further elaborated on the lack of religious freedom. He and his friends unanimously voiced that there was no point continuing to remain in the monastery if they had to oppose the Dalai Lama. If they failed to accept these political pledges they were not allowed to go to India on pilgrimage. In 1996, about 300 monks were issued with passes permitting them to stay at the monastery. And the monks below the age of 18 were not permitted to stay in the monastery.

At present there are about 400 monks in the monastery. Jigdral and 24 monks have left the monastery in January 2000. In 1999, a total of 34 monks left for India and 24 monks in 2000. Some monks are with the family members helping to run the farm or nomadic work and some are in Lhasa and other places in Tibet.

'Work team' in Gyaltri Monastery

Tsewang Rinchen (20) and Norbu Gyaltsen (22) of Methang village in Rushu township, Markham County, 'TAR' reached Dharamsala on 15 April 2000.

In 1995 at the age of 15, Rinchen joined Gyaltri Monastery of Sakya tradition. At that time, there were 50 monks in the monastery. Four members of a days. On the first day of their arrival, they called a meeting to introduce themselves. Later, they distributed leaflets denouncing the Dalai Lama, advocating the unity of the

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

NUN DERANGED DUE TO PRISON TORTURE

Namdrol Lhamo (layname: Nyidron) is 35 years old, and born in Shigatse (Rinpung) County in Shigatse Region. Both her parents have passed away when she was very young. She was raised by her only sister who morgated her house in Shigatse and shifted to Lhasa to be able to visit Lhamo easier.

Lhamo joined Tashi Choeling Nunnery in Northern Lhasa in 1984 when she became a nun. She attended a local school only for one or two years when she was young.

When Lhamo was at the nunnery, she intensively studied religious scriptures. Her period of stay in the nunnery was one of the most active periods of times for independence demonstrations and protests in Tibet. Some nuns from her nunnery had participated in these demonstrations.

Inspired and spurred by the independence movement that was at its peak then, Lhamo and two monks from a monastery around Tashi Choeling Nunnery, left for Lhasa in 1990 and staged a demonstration in the Barkhor in Lhasa City. They raised slogans with much fervour like "Tibet is independent'', "Chinese quit Tibet"', "Tibet belongs to Tibetans" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". Immediately, Chinese Public Security Bureau officials came armed with guns and baton sticks to disperse and arrest the protesters. The officers took the three to Gutsa Detention Centre in eastern Lhasa where they received harsh beatings. Long interrogation process coupled with inhumane treatment followed the arrest.

Approximately in November 1990, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court issued court verdict on the arrested prisoners. Lhamo at that time was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. They neither appealed nor questioned the court sentence, knowing well the futility of such an act. Lhamo was transferred to Drapchi Prison at the end of the same year.

Lhamo, like all other prisoners, was forced to make yarn out of wool in the initial days of her imprisonment in Drapchi Prison, One's share of work has to be finished within the stipulated time or else she would be beaten or given a harsh punishment. The prison guards have always regarded Lhamo as difficult and do not have a very good impression of her. She would be singled out for harsh treatments and more beatings. There are times when the prison officials would beat her for no specific reason.

In October 1993, Lhamo and 13 other nuns recorded independence songs and poems on a tape recorder in the prison, which was considered by the Chinese as unlawful and an illegal act. Their sentences were extended and Lhamo was sentenced to an additional six years of imprisonment, in addition to her earlier five years, making her total sentence to 11 years.

Due to harsh beatings that she sustained from the prison guards, Lhamo's health is deteriorating by the day. Furthermore, she has become mentally unstable. In the infamous Drapchi Protest of May 1 and 4 in 1998, Lhamo received additional beatings for her participation in the protest. She was kept in a solitary confinement as punishment. However, Lhamo refused to take any food during her confinement causing immense worry to the prison officers. The officers took her out after three days fearing that she might commit suicide.

She was once more kept in solitary confinement.

It is reported that Lhamo would sit on the floor while other inmate slept on their beds. When the others are busy in their regular 'exercise' sessions and hard work, Lhamo would sit upright on her bed. She curses and is constantly talking, which continues to earn her beatings from the prison guards. She has now become mentally insane, because of the beatings and torture that she has sustained in the prison. At present, she is suffering from severe mental problems and needs immediate medical help, yet she is not allowed any medical assitance.

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motherland and prohibiting any talk of Tibetan independence. Every evening the monks had to speak about what they had learnt. If they did not speak they were not allowed to go home and were beaten. Those monks who went on a pilgrimage, on retreat at the time of the arrival of the 'work team' and those below 18 years of age were expelled from the monastery.

The two were among 18 monks, including eight novice monks below 18 years of age, who were expelled from monasteries in the area for not complying with the orders of the work team.

After expulsion from the monastery the monks were forced to disrobe and were banned from carrying out any religious activities. The 32 remaining monks were permitted to stay in the monastery and subsequently they were issued a residential pass, which cost them five yuan.

If the monks were late for a meeting they were levied fines ranging from 10 to 100 yuan. In October 1999, a second 'work team' from the County and township, along with two village heads, came to the monastery. The monks were then forced to put their thumb prints as signatures on declarations of loyalty to the motherland, and were also asked to recite what they had learnt from the political leaflets. The officials also instructed them not to escape to India. On the third day, a committee of five members was set up to manage the monastery. They monitor if the monks have any contact with people in India and ensure they obey the rules of the 'work team'.

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'PATRIOTIC RE-EDUCATION' CAMPAIGN RESULTS IN ONE DEATH AND 25 ARRESTS

TCHRD has first-hand information that Tashi Rabten, the Treasurer of Thenthok Monastery died and five other monks were arrested during the 'Patriotic Re-education' campaign launched by Chamdo Religious Department Officials. Subsequently, Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials arrested 20 lay people from the locality and imposed strict surveillance to the entire area.

On 1 May 2000, a 30-member 'work team' officials from Chamdo Religious Department visited Thenthok Monastery in Dzogang County, Chamdo, 'Tibet Autonomous Region', to launch 'patriotic re-education' campaign. During the campaign, officials ordered the monastery to remove all pictures of the Dalai Lama. This was ensued by a strong protest from the monks. In retaliation, three monks were severely beaten with one sustaining broken ribs. Furthermore, the officials confiscated all the pictures of the Dalai Lama.

Tashi Rabten was interrogated and forcefully led to the private hall, which is on the third floor of the monastery to search for Dalai Lama's photos. Soon after, fellow monks discovered Tashi lying on the ground floor in a critical condition. He had reportedly fallen from the third floor under suspicious circumstances. Tashi Rabten died immediately despite efforts by monks to save him.

The following night on 2 May 2000, a group of monks pasted independence posters in the monastery. Inscriptions such as 'Tibet is independent' appeared on the walls of the main prayer hall. Subsequently, PSB officials from Dzogang County in collaboration with the local officials conducted a joint investigation resulting in five arrests. Among those arrested were Jamyang Tashi (28), Tenpa (25), Tsultrim Jinpa (20), Tsering Chonden (22) and Yeshi Nyima (25). They are currently incarcerated in Dzogang County Detention Centre.

On 3 May 2000, the PSB officials announced that heavy prison sentence will be imposed on anyone who dares to blame the local officials for the death of Tashi Rabten. They denied any responsibility of Tashi Rabten's death and described his death as a case of suicide.

Members of the locality speculated that the death of Tashi Rabten was a pre-meditated murder. Some of the householders who live nearby the monastery even asked the authorities for clarification and displayed strong resentment. Fearing a possible outbreak of violence, more forces were deployed and security tightened in the area. About 20 civilians were detained in Dzogang County Detention Centre on 3 May 2000 as an additional security measure.

Since the launch of this campaign in April 1996, a total of approximately 13,333 monks and nuns have faced expulsion and 596 arrested in Tibet. A total of 20 religious institutions have been closed down by chinese authorities of which two occurred as recent as this year. ❁

CANADIAN OFFICIALS REPORT WORSENING RELIGIOUS RIGHTS IN TIBET

Canadian Cabinet member Raymond Chan recently toured China and was allowed to visit Drapchi, the No.1 Prison in Tibet. The Canadian Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific was given a rare opportunity to look at the treatment of incarcerated Tibetan dissidents. Mr.Chan said he was not allowed to talk to the prisoners during his visit.

"The control on religion is getting worse," Chan said in a telephone interview from Beijing as reported in 'The Globe and Mail'. "On the surface you won't see much, but below the surface there are concerns. And I think it's important for us to know that" he added. He felt that religious repression is worsening in Tibet, where government officials are being refused the right to practice as Buddhists and aging monks are being forced from the monasteries.

He said the main complaints are that Tibetan government officials are not allowed to "openly preach the philosophy of Buddhism to the public, and that the number of monks in the monastery is decreasing". He was told that "there's not enough people to pass on the knowledge."

This observation is a clear contradiction to the Chinese White Paper entitled, "The Development of Tibetan Culture" issued by the Information Office of the State Council which was released on 22 June 2000. It claims that Tibetan religion and culture are relatively progressing and being preserved over the years.

Chinese authorities have rejected the request by Mr. Chan to see the Panchen

ama, but he was told that the boy was in ood health. The Chinese authorities efused to provide further details. The hinese government has once again efused to let an international delegation ee the 11 year-old Panchen Lama, a high anking Tibetan Buddhist boy, who has not een seen in public since his isappearence in May 1995.

However, Mr. Chan affirmed that such uman-rights violations would not stop anada from investing in Tibet. Raymond han is the first Canadian Cabinet ember to travel to Tibet since the Chinese vasion in the 1950s.

ibetan woman official recounts her experience

Khando Kyi was born in 1971 in Akham wnship, Ngaba County, Ngaba 'Tibetan utonomous Prefecture' in Sichuan rovince. At the age of six, she attended a cal primary school; where she studied r eight years. She later went to lower iddle school at Marthang County for ree years. After completing lower middle chool, she did vocational training in eterinary science for another four years Ngaba Prefecture.

In 1992, Khando was appointed to the st of Secretary in the township office and ceived a monthly salary of 300 yuan. er job involved distribution of important ocuments and pamphlets within the wnship, preparing speeches for township fficers and organising meetings and atherings. She was promoted in 1995, s an important official of Akham wnship, which made her responsible for omen's welfare in the three units and me villages that come under Akham wnship. Khando worked in the Family anning Department of Akham township. er responsibilities included: generating areness and monitoring birth control licy, and to oversee that the laws on arriage and Mother and Child Care are ing implemented.

Official notifications were issued, which placed limits of three children for nomads and farmers. Those who exceed the official limit would be fined upto 3,000 yuan as punishment. The department also carries out inspection in the villages every March, and impose fines for those who procured extra child.

Furthermore, fines were imposed on spacing between children. If a second child is born within the three years period from the first child, the family will be fined around 80 yuan. The total annual fee and fines from the families would come around 2,000 to 3,000 yuan. The government provides monetary incentives of 12 yuan per month to a one-child family until that child reaches 16 years of age .

Khando describes that the majority of Tibetans are steeped in poverty. Except for the distribution of official notifications and proclamations concerning family planning policy, the Family Planning Department never caters to developing and improving the necessary infrastructure. On January 2000, it was decided that the fines of 200 to 800 yuan would be collected from community fund for any excess child from the village.

There is only one primary school in the township and three categories of primary schools in the villages. The students pay 24 yuan for textbooks and they are taught mainly communist ideology and Chinese language. The Tibetan officials at the township level have to attend political education class once a week.

The main criteria for selection of Tibetan officers in the government entails opposing 'splittist', striving for the unification of the motherland, and having communist ideological stand. The person should have clean political background and must not have any religious inclination.

The township authorities convenes public meeting every winter, during which people are involuntarily forced to sit through political education. The total population of Akham township is estimated at 2,180. In 1998, Khando was promoted to the post of Deputy Head of township, where her wage was 800 yuan per month.

The villagers have to travel as far as one day by motor vehicle to reach a hospital, in which there is no qualified physician or nurses. There is hardly any well equipped and standard hospital in Khando's area. The medicines available in the hospital are either outdated or of poor quality.

Despite her official position, Khando reports that she could not exercise any extra authority. As there is lack of freedom to practise one's religion and preservation of one's culture, she fled into exile, reaching Dharamsala on 27 May 2000.

Forceful evacuation in Gangchen Monastery

Sonam Wanglak from Shigatse, Saga County, Drashuk township reached Nepal on 30 May 2000. He is a 32 year-old former monk of Gangchen Monastery. Born into a farming family in Gangchen village of Drashuk township, Saga County, Sonam never had any schooling opportunities as there were no schools in his village.

In Gangchen village, there are 53 Tibetan families and most of them are farmers. Of these, 37 families face cereal shortage due to small landholdings, unfavourable climate and heavy taxes. At the age of 20, Sonam became monk of Gangchen Monastery, located in Saga County of Shigatse Prefecture and did intensive study of religious scriptures since then.

Gangchen Monastery suffered complete destruction during the Cultural Revolution, and saw renovation in 1987 when local Tibetans and some elder monks took collaborative actions. Until March 1997, Gangchen Monastery had 29 monks, but the number has now reduced to 12 monks. In 1997, Sonam was appointed as a member of the Democratic Management Committee and 'tru-ren' (Vice-President) of the Religious Committee

of Gangchen Monastery.

A six-member 'work team' came to the monastery in March 1997, and stayed for three and a half months to conduct 're-education'. The members banned the pictures of the Dalai Lama and set a limit of 19 monks. No arrests were reported at the time. In June 1997, Gangchen Lama, a close associate of the Chinese authorities, visited the monastery. He called a special meeting of the monks whereby he gave instructions on 'showing loyalty and patriotism for PRC'.

Gangchen Lama visited the monastery again on 3 December 1999, and instructed the monks to worship *shugden* deity (Shugden is a spirit which the Dalai Lama discourages to propitiate). He claimed himself as the re-incarnation of 'Panchen Sang –Tashi', the founder of Gangchen Monastery, and called the monks to respect and worship him. He distributed booklets to the monks that has detailed explanation about his 're-incarnation'. However, no monks accepted him at the time.

Later, Gangchen Lama called 10 officials from the County Religious Department and PSB to instruct the monks to worship shugden and to respect him. A meeting was held in the monastery that very same day where the officials threatened the monks with arrest, detention and imprisonment if they oppose Gangchen Lama. Furthermore, refusal on the monk's part would be deemed political and they would be investigated for crime against the nation.

Since the beginning of 1999, Gangchen Lama had started building a new monastery of his own on the northen valley of Gangchen Monastery. The officials of County Religious Department and PSB forcefully evacuated the monks of Gangchen Monastery to the new monastery on 27 December 1999. Two new statues of the *shugden* deity placed in the prayer hall by Gangchen Monastery were met with protest by the monks. The statues were later taken by the monks who hid them in a nearby cave, which was used for meditation. There has been no history of *shugden* worship by the monks of Gangchen Monastery.

Owing to constant pressure to worship the deity and orders to carry out the instructions of Gangchen Lama, seven monks fled the monastery.

Sonam fled from his monastery on January 1999, and stayed in Shigatse for two months. He escaped to Nepal in a group of eight Tibetans by paying 1800 yuan to a guide. He wishes to join a monastery in India. ❁

Prison sentence doubled for nine monks in the aftermath of Kandze arrest

Reliable sources confirm that soon after the recently concluded 56th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the prison term of the nine Tibetans who were arrested during the mass demonstration in Kandze on 31 October 1999 were further raised by five years.

On 31 October 1999, approximately 3,000 protestors demonstrated in front of the Kandze County People's Government and Kandze Detention Centre. The protestors were demanding the release of Geshe Sonam Phuntsok (48), Sonam Choephel and Agya Tsering who were arrested on 24 October 1999. The three monks were arrested for their alleged involvement in pro-independence activities. The demonstration was quelled by the Public Security Bureau officials who fired openly at the unarmed demonstrators. At least 10 Tibetans were reported to have been arrested on that day, of these, nine were initially sentenced to five-year imprisonment by the Kandze County People's Court in February 2000. These nine Tibetans were paraded around their village to intimidate the other Tibetans of such consequences. During that time, two of them were severely beaten.

Currently, TCHRD is unable to discern the reason and charges for the additional prison term. Despite international scrutiny of China's human rights record, China continues to disrespect international norms by imposing arbitrary and dispropotionate heavy prison sentences. Lobsang Nyandak, the Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy observes that "the failure of the UN to censure China on its human rights record is responsible for such flagrant violation of human rights in Tibet."

Following are the names of the seven Tibetans available (out of nine): Chemi Tsering (56) and Pema Tso (55) both from Rego, Jampa Sod (38) from Sadhu, Chemi Gyaltsen (33) from Shigatse, Sonam Yeshi (32) from Kharghang, Ani Khalu (35) and his girl friend whose name is not known both from Golo, Bheshe Tsewang Wangdu (43) and his brother from Dhura, whose name is not known.

Series of other arrest have also been reported leading to the arrest of the prominent monk Geshe Sonam Phuntsok and his two friends. In June 1999, Gonpo Lhudrup (24) from Kandze Monastery was arrested for pasting posters and the banned Tibetan national flag in his residence and around Kandze County. He was detained in Kandze Detention Center for some days and was later shifted to an unknown destination. His sentence and whereabouts is not yet known.

On 20 July 1999, PSB officials arrested 11 monks from Kandze 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. The details of their identification and whereabout are not yet known.

Again in September 1999, a monk named Tashi Nyima (27) from Kandze Monastery was arrested on charges of political activities. Information about his sentence and his whereabouts is still unknown.

This report is a clear indication that Geshe Sonam Rinchen is not released as reported earlier in the February issue of 'Human Rights Update which was based on unofficial sources. ❁

Strict measures to enforce birth control

Tenzin is a 21 year-old former monk of Hortsang Kirti Monastery (a branch of Kirti Monastery). His parents are farmers in Marthang township of Lhabrang County, Khenlo 'TAP', Gansu Province. Tenzin became monk of Hortsang Kirti Monastery at the age of 14 years. The current strength of Hortsang Kirti Monastery approximately 50 monks.

Tenzin reported that a two-child birth control policy is strictly implemented in Lhabrang County. The County authorities call regular meetings to generate awareness among the people on the new birth control policies of the Chinese government. Every married and sterilized women are issued with a yellow-coloured certificate by the County authorities and were required to be present during every meetings. There were regular inspections by the officilas on the Tibetan families. The families are instructed to hang the yellow birth control 'certificate' at a visible spot in their house so that the inspecting officials could easily see it. Such inspections usually entail showing their children and certificates to the officials.

A penalty of 500 to 2000 yuan is imposed on the families with more than two children. Failure to pay the penalty results in confiscation of animals and properties. In 1999, four Tibetan women from Marthang township of Lhabrang County were fined for violating the official policy.The authorities would give birth control education on a regular basis for those Tibetan women who have more than two children. The yellow certificate stipulates that any Tibetan women having two children shall undergo sterilization at the county or township hospital.

Tenzin always wanted to study in India. He escaped to Nepal through Dram border by paying 1500 yuan to a guide. He reached Nepal on 15 May 2000. He now wants to join school or a monastery in India. ❁

Tibetan nomad lack basic amenities

A 45 year-old nomad (anonymous for security reasons) of Pongkhor township of Lithang County Kandze 'TAP', arrived on 19 May 2000. He plans to return to Tibet after admitting two of his children, aged six and nine respectively to schools in India.

.In 1998, he sent his eldest son to India to join a monastery. Most of the residents in the village of Pongkhor township are nomads.

The eight villages in Pongkhor township are inhabited by Tibetan nomads. With no educational facilities available, the nomadic children are deprived of their primary education and opportunities. The only school available is outside of Pongkor township but the teachers are not qualified and the school facilities are poor. Only about 20 students from nearby villages attend this school. The parents however, cannot afford to send their children to this school because of the long distance and high expenditure incurred in school fees. Approximately 90% children from his village are deprived of basic education with no schools located nearby.

The villages do not have proper electricity, roads, clinics or even a traditional doctor. They have to go to far-off county hospital for major treatments which depends on the family income and expenditure involved for treatment and transportation for the nomads. Many poor Tibetan people prefer to die in their home than get treated in the county hospital due to the high expenditure.

Despite the general poor condition of the nomads in the villages, the Chinese authorities have collected taxes since 1992 on butter, cheese, meat, animal skin etc. For instance, the authorities annually collect 10 *gyama* of butter from his family depending on the number of animals they own. He further reported that the authorities do not allow more than three children per family. ❁

Life in Drapchi Prison

Passang Lhamo is a 24 year-old born in Phenpo Lhundup County, Tsoding township, Thrukgye village. She had been to a *Mangtsuk* (Public) school for one year when she was 13 years old. All of her family members work as farmers except for her eldest brother who works as a Tibetan medical doctor in *Men-tse Khang* (Medical and Astro Institute) of Lhasa. Though Lhamo became nun of Garu Nunnery at the age of 15 years, she was 'registered' after one year. She stayed in the nunnery for two years studying religious scriptures. She can not recall the total strength of the nunnery at the time of her admission.

In May/June of 1994, Lhamo with four other nuns of Garu Nunnery staged a peaceful pro-independence demonstration in Barkor. The five nuns gathered in Lhasa *Tsuk-lha-khang* (Central temple) and raised slogans like "Free Tibet", "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" and "Give Rights and Freedom to Tibetans". The demonstration lasted only for about 15 minutes when the security personnel of Barkhor Police Station saw and immediately arrested the five nuns. Around 20 security personnel took the five nuns to the nearby Police Station where they were interrogated and beaten brutally. Later, they were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre in a police vehicle. Besides Passang Lhamo, the four other nuns were Lobsang Dolma (27) from Drikung Meldo Gongar County), Phuntsok Pelyang (33)from Toelung Dechen County), Yangkar (24) from Phenpo Lhundup County and Dekyi Nyima(26), from Lhoka Tsonak County.

The five nuns were detained for six months in Gutsa Detention Centre. During that period, the nuns were routinely interrogated except on weekends.The prison authorities regularly interrogated them about the 'demonstration', and beat them with whatever they could lay their hands on in order to extract confessions. The nuns were given one *tingmo* (steamed dough) in the morning and a bowl of rice for lunch.Then, at a trial conducted by Lhasa Intermediate Court in the presence of seven judges, the nuns were prosecuted



Passang Lhamo, soon after her arrival in India

under the charges of " propagating counter-revolutionary activities". The court sentenced Lobsang Dolma and Phuntsok Pelyang to six years imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. Both are presently imprisoned in Drapchi Prison. Yankar, Dekyi Nyima and Passang Lhamo were sentenced to five years' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights. The three nuns were released from Drapchi Prison on 25 May 1999.

In November 1999, the five nuns were taken to Drapchi Prison and kept in the 3rd unit of the prison where they were forced to participate in rigid 'exercise sessions'.The sessions involve standing in the sun with a book placed on their head and a piece of paper placed under their armpits for about nine hours a day. Many times, the nuns fell down unconscious because of heat and pain, but the prison authorities ignored their pleas and forced them to stand in the sun. Lhamo reported that from February 1995 to May 1998, the prisoners were forced to exercise like military men, as they were made to run for almost the whole day with only an hour break from 1 to 2pm. The prison exercise was mainly running all day within the prison premise.

During the May 1998 protest in Drapchi Prison, Lhamo and other inmates in the 3rd unit were beaten severely by the prison guards with belts, iron rods and electric cattle prods. After the protest incident, the prisoners were confined in their cells for the whole day, and it became impossible for them to know the condition of other inmates confined just near them. The prisoners were forbidden to talk or look outside their cell window as surveillance cameras and bugs were installed in each cell for vigilance. The prisoners suffered from isolation and, suffocation due to long period of confinement in their small cells. Only once a month, for a period of 10 to 30 minutes, they were allowed to meet their relatives.

When Lhamo was released from Drapchi on 25 May 1999, a team of three PSB officials came to the prison from Phenpo Lhundup County to take her.

Upon leaving Lhamo with her parents, they instructed them not to let her move out of home to any other places. Lhamo had once visited Lhasa for a medical check-up. When the county PSB learned about her visit, they interrogated her parents and Lhamo was ordered to instantly return without getting a medical check-up.

Lhamo believes that she was constantly scrutinised and harassed by the PSB. Unable to bear such restrictions, Lhamo took permission from the county PSB to go on a pilgrimage to Lhasa.

Lhamo left Lhundup County on 1 April 1999 with three other former political prisoners of Drapchi Prison and escaped to India. They paid 900 yuan to a guide who took them through Solukhumbu border to Nepal wher she finally reached on 11 April 2000.

'Patriotic education' in Dechen Choekhorling Monastery

Karma Choedak is a 25 year-old ex-monk of Ngari Dechen Choekhorling Monastery. Choedak spent most of his childhood years in Lukhang township, Gergye County, Nagchu Prefecture. His parents are nomads. There are seven monasteries in Gergye County namely Tashi Choekhorling Monastery, Dragya Monastery, Kyawo Lhakang Monastery, Gonkhor Ling Monastery, Khorkhang Monastery, Dira Monastery and Dechen Choekhorling Monastery. Tashi Choekhorling Monastery is one of the biggest monastery in Gergye County and with only 25 monks in the monastery.

'Work team' first came to Dechen Choekhorling Monastery in 1996. At that time, there were 35 monks. From 1996 to 1998, the 'work team' officials visited the monastery about four times and conducted 're-education' to the monks. The officials imposed a ban on the pictures of the Dalai Lama and set a limit of 14 monks resulting in 20 monks being gradually expelled from the monastery till 1998. The registered monks in the monastery were issued with 'passes,' and admission of new monks in the monastery was restricted in all the monasteries of Gergye County. Likewise, 'work team' official had visited six other monasteries in Gergye County for 're-education' banned pictures of the Dalai Lama, limit for the monks and expelled many monks.

Karma's family consist of ten members who are nomads in Bartso Drongtso in Gergye County. They have 500 sheep, 400 goats, and around 100 other cattle. The Chinese authorities collect taxes annually on grass, meat, butter and other animal products based on the size of family annually. The annual tax collection comes to 3000 yuan per year. The 10 villages in Lukhang township of Gergye County are inhabited by Tibetan nomads and farmers.

Only one *lobchung* (primary) school provides education for all these villages and the township authorities collect around 500 yuan per year as school fees from the Tibetan parents, despite their poor living conditions.

Detention and arrest while attempting to escape

Tashi Sangpo, a 27 year-old monk of Tashi Cho-Gang of Chushul township nDulan County, Tsonub 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture', Qinghai Province recounts his detention and arrest while trying to flee Tibet.

As a youth, Tashi did not attend school because his parents needed his help at the farm. At the age of 16, Tashi joined Tashi Cho-Gang Monastery. When he joined the monastery, there were 50 monks in the monastery. In 1995, seven 'work team' officials visited the monastery continuously for six months with two visits a month. During the time, the monks were asked to be poltically clean, and the officials threatened the monks with imprisonment if they disrespect their order. The monks were told to be 'patriotic, love the religion, and the country'. A similar campaign was continued both in 1996 and 1997.

In 1998, the campaign became more rigorous with visits by 'work team' officials once or twice a month throughout the year. The officials later banned the photos of the Dalai Lama and told the monks to denounce the Dalai lama. The monks were forced to accept the Panchen Lama selected by the Chinese government. Novice monks below the age of 18 were expelled from the monastery.

In 1999, all monks were issued with a pass, costing them 23 yuan per pass. These pass restricted the monks from travelling beyond the County. Those monks who wishes to visit beyond their area had to get a permit from the county authority. The officials placed a ceiling of 25 monks in the monastery. On 7 June 1999, eight (PSB) officials visited the monastery to search the monk's rooms. In the ensuing search, they discovered a Tibetan national flag in Tashi's room. He was immediately taken and interrogated amidst a big congregation of monks. Tashi was asked, "Don't you know that it is forbidden to possess the Tibetan national flag, and do you know its implications?" Tashi responded that it is just a drawing and nothing else.

The following day, a police vehicle carrying five PSB officials drove into the monastery and arrested Tashi. Immediately after arresting him, he was asked to make thump imprint on the letter accepting all charges. Soon after Tashi was driven to County Detention Centre. At the detention centre, two officials came with the flag found in Tashi's room and severly interrogated him. On several occasions the Chinese officials tied wire around his ear to pass electric current through him. "I fell unconscious on the ground," said Tashi, when the electric current was passed through him. During Tashi's interrogation sessions, he was kept leaning against a wall, with his hands behind him, and then they stamped on his toes. The interrogation sessions would last from 12 noon to 7 pm. He was then detained in a cell along with eight people.

"I was initially told that I would be detained for a year, but because of the appeal and assurance from the head lama of the monastery I was released after 17 days," reported Tashi. One of his friends was also detained for 17 days, but his name is kept confidential for security reasons.

Since the release of Tashi and his friends, the authorities constantly watched them and their movements. Unable to withstand such an atmosphere, Tashi left for Lhasa on 10 December 1999. After staying in Lhasa for 20 days, along with 27 people he left for India. Tashi and the other refugees paid their guide 700 yuan to bring them to freedom. When they reached Chushul County, they were arrested by the Chushul PSB. Except for Tashi, the rest were taken to Lhasa and detained at the local police station. However, Tashi was held for the night at Chushul, because the officials thought he was the guide.

"The next day, I was shifted to Lhasa and detained with the rest of the group. The following day we were all transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre for three months and nine days. In Gutsa, they identified the guide and he continues to be held there."

Tashi made a second attempt to flee Tibet, after staying in Lhasa for 15 days. Along with five other people, he paid 500 yuan to a guide to take him to Nepal. After walking for 20 days they crossed into Nepal via Sher Gumbhu. Tashi reached Dharamsala on 2 June 2000. He now plan to go to Sera Monastery in South India. ✹

A Glimpse of a Chinese-administered school system

Yungdrung, a 26 year-old was born to a five-member family in Shigatse City, Unit 3. His two brothers are factory workers and his father is a government officer.

From the age of nine, Yungdrung studied in Lhatse Drongdel Chatsang Lobchung for six years. The main subjects taught in that school are Tibetan, Chinese and Mathematics. Approximately, half of the 300 Tibetan students who study in the school comprises of Chinese government officials' children.

When Yungdrung was 16 years of age, he got admission in Lhatse County *Lobdring* (middle) School that had 180 students. The subjects taught were Chinese, Tibetan, Mathematics and Politics. Except for the Tibetan language, all other subjects were taught in Chinese. Religious activities are banned in school. Majority of the students are Tibetans. However, for the approximately 80 Chinese students, they had separate class in the school. One class session cost 400 yuan.

In 1993, he joined Shitse Teacher's Training Course where greater importance is laid on political education than on the training itself. There were almost 400 students. There were different types of associations in the school like Chinese Communist Youth Association and Branch Organisation of Communism. The students are taught communist oriented ideologies.

Yungdung reports that all the 43 students in his class were Tibetans, most of whom have become members of Chinese Communist Youth Association.

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profile

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

IMPRISONED FOR PRO-INDEPENDENCE PROTEST

Namdrol Wangmo (layname Yangdrol) is a 29 year-old former nun of Phenpo Shar Nunnery. Originally from Phenpo Lhundup County, Gelpa township, Rama village, Wangmo is the second youngest of her four siblings. Wangmo's family are nomads by occupation.

At the age of eight, Wangmo studied for four years in a *Mangtsuk* (Public) school. She then went to a school in Gelpa township for five years. Later, she studied for two more years in *lobdring* (Middle) school. After completing her second year, she dropped out to help her parents in their household chores for six months. She joined Phenpo Shar Nunnery in 1990. At that time, Phenpo Shar Nunnery had 94 nun.

Wangmo busied herself with the renovation work at the nunnery. From the beginning of 1993, officials of both Lhundup County and Gelpa township issued an order to halt the renovation work. As the reconstruction work continued, another strict order came saying that the permission has to be sought from the offices in Lhundup County and Gelpa township regarding the reconstruction work. Chinese 'work team' would conduct frequent visits to the nunnery. These visits adversely affected the daily religious activities in the nunnery.

Frustrated with not being able to practise her religion, Namdrol, along with seven other nuns decided to stage a demonstration in Barkhor in Lhasa. They walked towards Lhasa but their plan got foiled when Lhasa PSB officials restricted them from entering Lhasa City.

However, on 25 May 1995, they managed to demonstrate at the Barkhor through the *Lingkor* (circumambulation) area around 5pm. They shouted slogans like "Tibet is independent", "Chinese quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama." Around 25 policemen from Lhasa Police Station arrested and beat the nuns while they were taken to the Barkhor Police Station. There, they were kept for an hour and later transferred to Lhasa Public Detention Centre where interrogation process involved serious beatings of the nuns. The relatives were not allowed to visit the arrested nuns while in detention.

On 4 July 1995, Lhasa People's Intermediate Court sentenced the nuns on charges of 'counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement'. Both Namdrol and Damchoe Dolma were sentenced to six years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. Penpa Lhakyi, Norkyi, Phuntsok Gachoe, Choekyi, Choeying Kunsang and Tenzin Dolma were sentenced to four years. The nuns along with other political prisoners were detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for six months.

On 30 August 1995, the nuns with approximately 60 other political prisoners were transferred and imprisoned in the then newly established units of Drapchi Prison. They were the first nuns to occupy the new units. The initial three months in the prison were spent in learning rigorous exercises and prison laws. Afterwards, their daily routine came to include weaving wool.

Wangmo suffered from a kidney problem for a long time which deteriorated with inadequate medication.

During the infamous Drapchi Protest of 1 and 4 May in 1998, Namdrol received severe beatings and was kept in solitary confinement for two months. She is still incarcerated in Drapchi Prison. She is expected to be released in 2001.

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Eight students from his school were members of Communist Organisation. The organisation laid stress on educating the students on the concepts of splittism and 'love for the motherland'.

Having passed the teacher's training course in 1997, Yungdung worked as a primary teacher in Lhatse *Lobdring* (middle) school. He worked as a Tibetan language teacher ina middle school, where he was paid a monthly wage of 763 yuan.

According to Yungdung, there are major differences between primary and secondary subjects. Tibetan language is not included in the primary subject and given the least amount of time for study. Subjects like Chinese are given greater prominence thereby automatically sidelining the Tibetan language. And as such, students have low interest in Tibetan language and the Tibetan language teachers are not regarded highly.

Everyday during morning assembly where all the students and teachers would be gathered, the Chinese flag is hoisted and Chinese national anthem is sung. Holidays are observed only on Chinese national festivals.

In 1999, through the connection of her relatives, Yungdrung was promoted to Lhasa fourth *Lobdring* school. He had to discontinue after prolonged illness of tuberculosis. He later escaped into exile and reached Dharamsala on 12 June 2000. ❁

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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STRICTER BANS ON RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN TIBET

The Chinese authorities have hardened their policies towards religious practice in all regions of Tibet particularly in Lhasa, the centre of religious activities. The massive campaign launched in recent months has seriously affected the freedom of the Tibetans inside Tibet. The Chinese security forces are conducting extensive raids of Tibetan homes for religious artefacts and the photos of the Dalai Lama. The atmosphere in and around Lhasa has become more tense after this crackdown and so far, 450 Tibetans were fined with 500 yuan each for having displayed the Dalai Lama's picture in their homes. Two students were reportedly suspended from their school for having offered prayers. Photographs of the Dalai Lama were burnt in Nangkha township in Toelung Dechen County. Religious articles like thanka-paintings, statues and altars were thrown into Kyichu River following confiscation from Tibetan families.

The five government offices; Lhasa City People's Government, Lhasa City Information Department, and Lhasa City Discipline Inspection Committee, Lhasa City Justice Bureau, and the Lhasa City Nationalities and Religious Affairs Commission jointly issued an order in March 2000. The order prohibits the Tibetan government workers and Party members in Lhasa from displaying pictures of the Dalai Lama, setting up of religious altar, hoisting of traditionally symbolic prayer flags, and installation of juniper hearth for incense-burning. Furthermore, students residing in Lhasa are restricted from visiting temples or attending religious congregation and circumambulating around the holy city of Lhasa.

In March 2000, the officers of Lhasa City Municipality summoned the teachers and students of Lhasa Jebumgang Primary School to a meeting and warned them of suspension from school if they visit temple or participate in religious activities. Two students who were caught offering prayers to the Drazhi goddess for successful result in the examination were reportedly expelled from the school.

In June this year, during a search operation conducted in 18 houses of the Tibetan members of Lhasa-based Tibetan Opera Association, the Chinese officials forcefully seized religious belongings including altar, thangka-paintings, statues, and other religious articles, which were finally disposed off in the nearby Kyichu River. Approximately, 450 Tibetans were fined 500 Chinese yuan each for having displayed the Dalai Lama's picture in their homes. Following the unexpected raids by the officials, many Tibetan workers have reportedly shifted their altar and religious articles in nearby monasteries for safekeeping out of fear.

During Saga Dawa (the month of Buddha Shakyamuni's Birth Enlightenment and Death), vigilance was intensified in the Lingkor (circumambulation) area. A large number of officers of the Public Security Bureau, the People's Armed Police, and other regional security force, were stationed there to watch the movement of the Tibetans. Staff of Chinese government offices and schools were made to assist the Chinese officials in identifying the common Tibetans and the students who made circumambulation in and around Lhasa.

In a meeting held on March 2000 of various heads of townships under Toelung Dechen People's Government, an order prohibiting the display of the Dalai Lama's picture was issued to the local farmers and nomads. Members of Inspection Committee instituted by County and township authorities warned residents of Toelung County of unexpected raids in their homes.

According to a recently arrived Tibetan refugee from Toelung Dechen, a Review Committee set up in June 2000 by officials of Toelung Dechen County and the heads of various townships undertook extensive raids on the pictures of the Dalai Lama. Forcible seizure of the pictures of the Dalai Lama from the homes of Tibetan residents took place in as many as ten townships in Toelung Dechen County, namely, Leu (also known as Sangda) township, Ma township, Gurum township, Jarak township, Nechung township, Lamo township, Dechen township, Yada township, Thongka township and Nangkha township. In the third week of June 2000, the Committee members set ablaze the confiscated photographs of the Dalai Lama in Nangkha township. The Review Committee threatened the local Tibetans of legal investigation if pictures of the Dalai Lama were discovered from their homes.

The Chinese government is reported to have circulated a notice to the concerned Chinese offices instructing them to subject the religious institutions to greater scrutiny and control. Stricter restrictions and greater control on the monasteries were enforced than ever before. As part of the campaign,

30 monks were expelled from Tsuglagkhang, the central cathedral of Lhasa on 15 July 2000.

The claims made by the Chinese government in it's White Paper on Tibetan culture released on 22 June 2000 blatantly contradicts the actual reality of restrictive religious policies that grossly violates the rights of the Tibetan people. Lhasa City Discipline Inspection Commission during its sixth general body meeting held from 15 to 17 March 2000, restricted people from developing devotional faith, considering the Dalai Lama as an enlightened being, sending children to schools run by the Dalai Lama, and pursuing the path of the Dalai clique. It further stresses that those violating the statutory law shall be subjected to severe punishments following strict investigation.

The Chinese authorities are also keeping watch over the religious institutions. Since the inception of 'Strike Hard' campaign in the religious institutions in 1996, the Chinese authorities have introduced the 'patriotic re-education' whereby they impart political ideologies to the monks and nuns. This campaign has resulted in the expulsion of 11,847 monks and nuns and nearly 565 arrest and imprisonment as of June 2000. ❁

Mass Expulsion in Lhasa's Central Cathedral

According to information aired by Voice of America (VOA) on 23 July 2000, the regional Chinese authorities expelled 30 monks from the Tsuklhakhang (central cathedral) of Lhasa City on 15 July 2000.

Information gathered from reliable sources describe how the concerned local Chinese authorities made an announcement on 15 July 2000 calling for the urgent need to subject the religious institutions in and around Lhasa to greater scrutiny and control. The expelled monks were prohibited from practicing and engaging in any religious activities in Lhasa or their localities.

After their recent implementation of radically strict policies aimed at effacing the Tibetan race and religion, the Chinese government has now turned toward monasteries, nunneries, and other institutions. The monks and nuns in Tibet are deprived of their right to faith and religion, and lack the freedom to practice their religious training. Various policies designed at ridding the monastic institutions of its monks and nuns were introduced in all parts of Tibet, thereby turning the institutions into places comprising of only a handful of caretakers.

Problems arising out of restrictions placed on religious activities and forced expulsion is the main cause of fear and apprehension to the religious people of Tibet. ❁

Closure of A-Kyong Yarthang Monastery

A-Kyong Monastery was declared closed on 13 November 1999 by the Chinese 'work team' officers. The closure was in response to repeated failure of the monks to turn up for 'patriotic re-education' meetings during three visits of the 'work team'. The officers threatened the monks as well as the county and township officials with arrest and reduction in pay if the mass boycott was not put to an end. Chokun Pal, the representative of the monastery was told at Religious Affairs Department of Golok 'TAP' to exert every possible effort to make the monks accept the re-education. Desperate attempts to offer reward to the monastery on successful completion of the campaign resulted in failure. The monks remained adamant in their stand. Only a deserted monastery awaited the 'work team' on three different occasions.

A-kyong Monastery has a history that dates back to 500 years. The monastery was demolished during the infamous Cultural Revolution that lasted for ten years between 1966-76. The local people in the 1980's restored the monastery to its original form and glory. No assistance in terms of finance and labour was forthcoming from the Chinese authorities in the renovation matter. Before the 'work team' officers' arrival in Pema County, there were approximately 60 monks in the monastery.

The 'work team' comprising of seven members from Pema County and Chaktri township made their first visit on 17 June 1999. In a meeting held for the villagers at the village office, plans to re-educate the monks in a week's time were announced. The officials ordered the parents to advise the monks to abide by their orders and follow the 're-education'. The sessions, the officials said, might continue for a year if it is not completed within the stipulated week's time. Any monk who dared to engage in political activities would face arrest and imprisonment. The officers who visited A-Kyong Monastery five days later to impart 're-education' to the monks found the monastery empty with no monks. Left with no alternative, these officers had to leave after two days' stay in the monastery.

On their second visit ten days later, the officials called a meeting with the disciplinary in-charge and other concerned staff of the monastery. The officers reprimanded the staff and ordered them to ensure that the monks follow the 're-education session'. However, the monks' refused to oblige and further stated that to oppose the Dalai Lama is against the basic principle of 'refuge-taking' in Buddhism and against the monk hood itself.

On 1 November 1999, officials of Golok Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture notified the monastery that 30 'work team' officials would visit the monastery for a week. The monks were threatened with closure of the monastery if they oppose the orders. To their chagrin, none of the monks were present during their visit, not even the caretaker of the monastery. After having stayed for seven days in the monastery, the officials left but declared the monastery closed on 13 November 1999.

Thupwang (35) who related the incidents leading to the closure, was a former monk of A-Kyong Monastery since he was 18 years old. He has six family members with two brothers and one sister. They farm for a living. At the age of eight, he attended Yarthang village Primary School. For the next three years, he helped his parents in the farming activities. Thupwang escaped into exile on 6 July 2000. ❁

Political unrest in Sog County; 12 detentions

According to a recent arrival from Sog County, eight people were arrested from Sog County in March 2000 on charges of political activities. Additional information from another source indicates that four people were arrested at a later stage although the date of their arrest still remains unclear. Five out of the eight people reported to have been arrested earlier were monks of Sog Tsendhen Monastery and the other three were lay people from the county. They were arrested on two different dates although the charges were same. On the night of 17 March 2000, Yeshi Tenzin (32) and Gyurmey (28) were arrested and were beaten and compelled to reveal the names of their 'accomplices.' Two days later, on 19 March 2000, three monks, Tenzin Chowang (63) Namgyal Sopa (26) and an unidentified monk, and three lay people; Diru Dadak (36), Tsering Lhagon (40) and Serpa Sichoe (80) were arrested. The eight were alleged with engaging in political activities and linked to past pro-independence incidents in Sog County. They were initially taken to Sog County PSB office and later transferred to Lhasa where they were detained in Lhasa Intelligence Bureau. Since their last detention in the 'TAR' Intelligence Bureau, the eight have not been seen nor their family members have been allowed to visit them.

From another source, four people, Khedrup, Thupten Tsering, Dhra Thutop and Yeshi from 3rd village, Yong Nag township were arrested. They were all from Sog County and were reportedly arrested under suspicious grounds of involvement in political activities. While details surrounding their arrest is not clear, it is possible that they could have been associated with the aforementioned people. Khedrup is reportedly being detained in Sangyip Prison and Thupten Tsering is the younger brother of Tenzin Chowang.

Sog County and Sog Tsendhen Monastery in particular, have been noted for being the breeding ground for resistance activities including the bomb explosion on 23 October 1995. The principal culprit escaped arrest, but others involved for other political activities have experienced their share of punishment. Three of the aforementioned Sog residents were already arrested in 1997. Tenzin Chowang was arrested on 20 June 1997 and Serpa Sichoe on 23 August 1997. They were both arrested on grounds of suspicion for the bomb explosion in Sog County and other political activities. While in detention, they were reportedly ill treated and as both of them were old, their conditions became so critical that they had to be released after six months. Namgyal Soepa who was arrested on the night of 18 August 1997 for the same reason as Chowang and Sichoe was apparently also released due to his parents' relentless appeal.

In 1998, a huge military barrack was built in the pastureland of Yakla township in Sog County. At the time of construction, people in the county believed that it was a school. Following the completion of the building, PLA forces were stationed there. On the day of inauguration in 1999, the head of the Sog County (xian zhang) announced that it is a military barrack constructed particularly for the protection of the people in Sog County and that 1000 PLA forces were specifically brought in from China for the purpose. According to the same informant, PLA personnels are stationed at Sog Tsendhen Monastery. The monks are subjected to strict vigilance and are ristricted from moving around freely. This restriction is also extended to the lay people.

Additional information on the arrest of 28 year old Lobsang Lhundup, also from Sog Tsendhen Monastery was received by TCHRD. 'Work team' members who were present at the monastery conducting the 'patriotic re-education' campaign arrested him in July 1998. They discovered cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama from his room. Ludup whose name was spelt Lhundup was initially detained in Nagchu Prison and was later transferred to Drapchi with a prison sentence of two years. ❁

Three arrests and three expulsions in Dozong Monastery

Three monks from Dozong Monastery were reportedly arrested and three more expelled in connection with 'patriotic education', that started in June 1998 with the arrival of 15 'work team' members. The officials' order to sign pledges of denunciation against the Dalai Lama was met with fierce resistance by the monks and resulted in the arrest of Phurbu (22), Jangchup Dakpa (23) and Khedup Phakchok (21). Several monks were slapped and as many as 60 monks underwent political education for 15 days in the aftermath of the arrest. Following an order that called for voluntary expulsion of monks below 18 years of age, the three monks were expelled but their identities still remains unclear. This case was reported by Gaden, a 21 year-old former monk of Dozong Monastery located in Chamdo Region, Pema County, Chel township.

'Re-education' session in Dozong Monastery involved regular meetings, distribution of booklets and political education classes for the monks that was specifically designed to denounce the 'Dalai separatist forces' and to garner support for the Chinese government policies. The three monks were arrested when they back-answered the 'work team' members, subsequent to the signature drive scuffle. The members in collaboration with Pema County PSB officials arrested these three monks and continue to detain them in Pema County.

Almost 100 monks of Dozong Monastery who were mostly of young age were called for a meeting and asked to decry the acts of the three arrested monks. The monks' refusal to go along the official line was deemed politically motivated and hence, special political classes were taken for the monks for two weeks. The 'work team' members left the monastery after giving strict instructions to the monks to continue with their political education till

their next visit.

Dozong Monastery was restored and rebuilt in the early eighties after it was demolished during the Cultural Revolution. The monastery has approximately 120 monks comprising mainly of younger monks. Gaden, who became monk of Dozong Monastery in 1998, had a total period of eight years schooling; the first seven years in a government-administered school in Chel township and a year in Pema County Middle school. Due to limited religious freedom in the wake of 'work team' visits, Gaden escaped from Tibet and reached India on 23 July 2000. ❁

Former ward of Gyatso School for Orphans reaches India



Wangchen Choegyal is a 12 year-old orphan from Taksi township in Jondha County in Chamdo Region.

When he was three years old, his mother died of childbirth. A year later his father died in a road accident. In 1993, his uncle sent his brother and sister into exile as he was poor and could not afford to take care of them.

Choegyal stayed with his uncle till he was seven and finally in 1996, he was admitted to the Gyatso School for Orphans. Choegyal remembers that he was very comfortable at the school until its closure this year.

Following the closure of the school, he recounts, "Officials from the Civil Administration Department came to sort us out. Those with relatives in Lhasa were summoned to the care of their relatives while 20 of us who had no one in Lhasa were taken to Chamdo. A bus took us from Lhasa to Nagchu and then we were moved into a truck for Chamdo. Once in Chamdo there were nine of us with no one to go to. Still, the authorities brought us back to Lhasa. I do not know how they got rid of the others but I realised that I was with an eight-year-old boy called **Dhondup Gyaltsen**. Somehow the authorities found out that I had an uncle in Ramoche. They took the two of us to a rickshaw driver and told him to take us to Ramoche. It had been ages since I had been there and moreover I was a child then, so I had no idea about where to look for my uncle. That night I stayed at Gyalsten's relative's place. After a few days, I found my uncle through Gyaltsen's relatives."

One day when Choegyal was with his uncle in Barkhor for circumambulation, he saw **Choezom** (13) from Derge in Kham; **Tsesong** (7) and **Norzom** begging. They were all from the same orphanage. He saw other boys selling dry seeds and loitering in Lhasa.

According to Wangchen, in October 1999, approximately ten officials, dressed plainly, came to Gyatso School for Orphans. The officials guarded the school and prohibited the children from going out. This school, established in May 1996, took care of approximately 60 orphans. Founded by Bhangri Tsamtrul Rinpoche, the school was funded by donors from abroad. Subjects like Tibetan, English, Chinese, Maths and *thanka* painting were taught in the school. The officials ransacked Rinpoche's house and reportedly found 'political' documents. Bhangri Tsamtrul Rinpoche, his wife, Nyima Chodon and four staff members of the school were arrested. The staff, Gadhe Gya (30), English teacher; Dawa Dhondup (35), Tibetan teacher; Gelek Nyima (30), Thanka painting teacher and Dawa (30), Chinese teacher have reportedly since been released.

Choegyal's uncle, being poor, could not takr care of him, so Choegyal decided to flee in to exile. He walked for 26 days across the Himalayas and reached Dharamsala, India in early July 2000. ❁

Testimony of a former political prisoner

Drupkyi Nyima is a 23 year-old monk from Dingpuche Monastery who reached Dharamsala on 23 July 2000. Originally from Lhoka Region, Nyima spent a year in Tsethang Detention Centre with Pema Wangyal in 1995. In February 1995, Nyima, Thupten Tenzin (lay name Tsewang Dhondup) 22 years old, Pema Wangyal (lay name Kalden Choezin) 21 years old, all from the same monastery, wrote three different independence posters and stuck them around Kyiru township including the gate of the PSB shop and Reti Khang, a prominent gathering place. After 15 days, PSB officials came to Dingpuche Monastery and checked their handwritings to compare with the one on the posters. On 18 March 1995, Dhondup was arrested and held in Tsethang PSB detention centre. Fifteen days later, the other two were arrested and were taken to Lhoka detention centre.

Once in Lhoka Detention Centre, the PSB officials started interrogation sessions. Nyima reports that although he was not electrocuted, slapping and kicking was commonplace. After four and a half months of detention, Lhoka Intermediate people's court settled their prison term without any trial. Tsewang was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and two years deprivation of political rights. After a month he was transferred to Drapchi Prison. Nyima and Wangyal were to be held for a year each. They continued to be held in Tsethang Detention centre as they had already exhausted more than half of their term there. While in Tsethang, Nyima reports that they had to grow vegetables and wash police vehicles and cut firewood.

Tsethang Detenton Centre is the biggest detention centre in Lhoka. There are approximately four units and in each unit, there are 7-8 cells. The bigger cells can accommodate six people while the smaller ones only three. All serious criminals in Lhoka are kept in this detention centre. There are about nine prison officials and the People's Armed Police patrol outside the gates. Majority of the inmates

(approximately 50) are Tibetans. None of them are political prisoners. In March 1996, the two of them were released. They were prohibited from joining any other monastery. They were subjected to strict scrutiny and had difficulty moving around.

On 14 June, Nyima was arrested on Dhingri Dhamar by Chinese border police. He was held in Gangkar border military police for one day where he received severe beatings. He was handed over to Dhingri County PSB officers and where he was held for ten days. After confiscating 50 yuan, he was released but ordered to return to Lhasa. Nyima believes that the officials had no knowledge about his background. In stead of returning to Lhasa, Nyima walked for another 13 days and reached Kathmandu, Nepal.

Nyima is from Kyiru township in Dranang County, Lhoka Region. He comes from a family of eight members. He has been to mangtsuk school for three years and another years in shungtsuk school. In July 1994, Nyima joined Dingpuche Monastery where there were 50 monks at the time of his admission. ❁

A mother's perseverance pays off

After years of perseverance, a mother's campaign to meet her son in prison in Tibet paid off. Sonam Dekyi, mother of Ngawang Choephel, the ethno-musicologist who was arrested in August 1995 by Chinese officials on charges of "espionage" has been allowed to visit her son. Although Dekyi is the first Tibetan, out side of Tibet to be allowed a visit, Choephel happens to be the only Tibetan prisoner from India with entire relatives in India. This visit has come about as a result of joint campaign by many organisations, individuals and some high-level officials and Vermont Congressional delegation.

TCHRD has campaigned for Ngawang Choephel's release since his arrest in 1995. The Centre has organised press conferences and numerous marches and candle-light vigils in support of his release. A signature campaign was launched by the Centre in 1997 urging the Chinese government to allow Sonam Dekyi to meet with her son. In 1998, the Centre in collaboration with International Campaign for Tibet and Campaign Free Tibet organised an international tour for Sonam Dekyi to seek support for the release of her son.

Yet, Sonam Dekyi remains the main catalyst who never once gave up hope to see her son. According to Rutland Herald, Vermont, the Chinese ambassador to the United States accepted Dekyi's visit over a debate on the permanent normal trade relations between China and the United States.

Ngawang Choephel, a Fulbright scholar in Middlebury college, Vermont, was in Tibet researching ethnic Tibetan traditional music when he was arrested by Chinese officials in 1995. He has since been sentenced to 18 years for espionage and is reportedly suffering from a number of diseases including hepatitis and pulmonary infection. While this visit is viewed as a victory by many, human rights organisations continue to staunchly opt for his release on medical parole.

Choephel was reportedly transferred to the remote and high security Powo Tramo Prison on 1 July 1998 after being held in Nyari Detention Centre in Shigatse. He was reportedly held in Drapchi Prison for three days. Since the travel itinerary did not include visiting Powo Tramo, it is likely that Ngawang Choephel would be brought to Lhasa to meet with his mother. The visit is seen as a moral booster for Ngawang Choephel and another impetus for activists who want him released. ❁

Farmers imprisoned for posters

Tsering Choephel aged 33 years and Chungdak aged 31 years are farmers of Lhasa 'TAP'. In June 1995, the two farmers pasted pro-independence posters on the office gates of the local authorities.

The PSB launched an investigation, resulting in Tsering Choephel and Chungdak being arrested by PSB officials. Taken from their homes, the two were kept in Lhoka Region PSB Detention Centre for four months. During their stay in Lhoka Region PSB Detention Centre, they boeth endured intensive interrogation sessions.

At the end of 1995, the Lhoka Region Intermediate People's Court sentenced the two detainees. Tsering Choepel was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, and Chungdak was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. They remained in the detention centre for another 20 days after their sentencing, before being transferred to Lhasa's Drapchi Prison.

Life in prison entailed hard labour and exercise, punishments and inhuman treatment by the prison guards. Tsering Choephel and Chungdak suffered innumerable hardships in the prison until their release in the year 1998 and 1999 respectively. ❁

Appalling condition of Tibetan peasant

Che-ga and all his family membes reached Dharamsala on 4 July 2000. Che-ga escaped into exile to seek blessing from the Dalai Lama, to send his children into school in India and to speak about the situation in Tibet. He describes that there is no school in his village, and although there is a school in the township, it is too expensive and education imparted to the students are inadequate and Chinese-orientated. Che-ga says "These schools are just for the name sake." However in the county there are schools but it is especially meant for government officials and Chinese immigrants. These schools are much better in every respect compared to their village school. Nomadic children rarely get an opportunity to attend these school, since they don't get required percentage of

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A former political prisoner testifies



Kalsang Dorjee reached Dharamsala on 23 July 2000 after travelling for a month and a half. On 5 March 1988, after the conclusion of the Monlam Chenmo festival, Kalsang Dorjee (34) from Lhasa participated in peaceful demonstration for Tibetan independence along with hundreds of people in Lhasa City. Kalsang was involved in fighting with three Chinese officials, in the ensuing fight he broke the teeth of one Chinese officials. On 7 March 1988, at around 12 midnight three trucks full of People's Armed Police rounded up his house and arrested him. After his arrest, Kalsang was taken to Barkhor Local Police Station and detained there for five hours. In the local Police station, Kalsang was severely beaten by the Chinese person whose teeth were broken, and 20 other PAP officials. As a result severe physical damage occurred and he vomited blood.

Kalsang was later taken to Outridu Prison and detained there for 12 days. During the time, he was interrogated five times and simultaneously struck with electric baton and iron rod. He received hard jolts with iron rod on his head. Due to severe beatings coupled with poor nutrition in Outridu, he fell unconscious several times.

Kalsang was later transferred to Seitru along with 60 people. After a day, he was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre with 50 people. In Gutsa, he was kept in Unit 1, cell # 5 with 34 year-old Tsering Dhondup of Drepung Nechung Monastery, Tsering (29) monk of Drepung Monastery and Yeshi Lodroe (60) a monk of Drepung monastery. While in detention he was randomly interrogated for more than six months. Each interrogation lasted three hours. He was asked about his personal background, reason for his participation, and his companions.

Kalsang was originally sentenced to two years imprisonment, but due to pressure by the previous Panchen Lama, Kalsang was released along with 84 other people from Gutsa on 10 November, 1988. In December 1988, through the influence of his cousin, who is working in the Chinese government office, Kalsang secured a job in a bank in Dram, at the Tibet- Nepal border. In 1990, Kalsang received a special eight-month training on banking in the Chinese province of Haibei. He thereafter obtained an college certificate. While in Dram, he worked in the foreign currency exchange counter where he got hold of many incriminating documents and cassesttes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama. Kalsang claims that he stole these cassettes from the border security army who had confiscated them from people returning to Tibet. Kalsang carried these documents to Lhasa when he had official business to attend to.

In April 1992, he was transferred to Bank of China in Lhasa City to work in loan service section.

In July 1993, he was arrested again for distributing audio and video cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama, Future Constitution of Tibet and various other documents from India. Kalsang was arrested at work in the Bank of China in 1993 by several officials of PSB intelligence wing.

Kalsang was detained in 'TAR' PSB office, and in the night he was shifted to some unknown location in Lhasa. Kalsang was kept there for 10 days during which time, he was interrogated to find out whoelse were involved. The officials tried every possible method s including enticing him with good food and cigarettes. However, Kalsang stuck to his original version of having obtained the documents himself. Unable to withdraw any information from him, the officials finally released him under the conditions that he would observe the activity of a person (name withheld for security reason) who was suspected of being involved in political activity, and report to the PSB office every Saturday. The other suspected person was instructed to observe the activity of Kalsang. But since, both of them knew each other, they did not report anything. Fearing their ultimate arrest, he fled Lhasa in December 1993 along with his friend and a monk.

They travelled to Ngari for four days. Upon reaching Lhasa, Kalsang fell sick and started vomitting blood. Unable to travel further he returned to Lhasa, leaving behind his friend. On the way, he was arrested by the local army and detained in a village in Ngari for a few days. He then returned to Lhasa with a friend. Upon reaching Lhasa he was admitted into the Tibetan Medical Institute for three months. On 30 May 1994, 'TAR' PSB officials arrested him and interrogated him on his attempted escape. Kalsang was put under house arrest for a year, and was later expelled from his job at the bank.

Kalsang was further debarred from admission in to the government hospitals, and was not issued the medical pass required to receive a reduced rate for medical expenses.

Once a person is involved in political activities, they are generally expelled from their job and are unable to find any means of livelihood. Even the basic papers such as citizen card, are being excluded from political prisoners, and the right into public services and public representation are permanently denied to them. Moreover, relatives and family members of a political prisoner are found working in a government office are constantly kept under surveillance and the security of their job is under threat.

Unable to withstand such a situation, Kalsang finally left Lhasa on 9 June 2000 for India. He reached Dharamsala on 23 July 2000 after travelling for one month and 14 days.

Kalsang is from a three-member family with one elder sister and a father. Kalsang had been school from 1972 to 1977 for five years in Lhasa primary school and from 1977 to 1981 for four years he attended Lhasa City Middle school. After completion of Middle School, he was appointed as teacher in Nagchu primary school but due to family problem he could not take that job. Then in 1984, Kalsang worked in a general store in Tromsekhang area, and simultaneously worked as a office secretary of the areas local committee. He was a member of area security guard as well. From March 1986 for almost six months he was sent for military training at the Tsel-Gungthang military school. ❁

profile

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

A NUN DRIVEN TO INSANITY UNDER BRUTAL AND INHUMAN TORTURE

Jangchup Dolma a 21 year-old nun from Yangchen Galo Nunnery reportedly became insane due to prison ill treatment she received while in detention.

Dolma participated in a political demonstration in the Barkhor area on 28 February 1995 along with her cousin Rinchen Palmo (21). Four Public Security Bureau Officials (PSB) immediately arrested the two. While being taken to Gutsa Detention Centre, they were kicked and punched. The nuns were detained in Gutsa Detention Centre for five months. For the first two months the nuns experienced severe maltreatment. They were hit with electric batons, kicked and punched.

Later Dolma and Palmo were transferred to Drapchi Prison on 30 July 2000. On 15 July1995 about 150 ml blood was extracted from each of the nuns by the officials of the People's Hospital. It was told that the extracted blood will cover the cost of food during their stay in Gutsa. During their stay in Gutsa the nuns were denied any visitation rights. Jangchub Dolma later developed heart problem because of treatment meted out on her.

In June 1995, the Intermediate People's Court of Lhasa sentenced Dolma and Palmo to five years' imprisonment with a deprivation of political rights for two years. Along with 58 other nuns, Dolma and Palmo were transferred to Drapchi Prison on 30 July 1995. In total 60 nuns were placed in the new female unit '3' of Drapchi Prison. On the second day of their arrival, the nuns were forced to wake up at 4 am and attend an hour-long military exercises after which, they were served a Tingmo (steamed dough) and black tea.

Their routine for the next three months was set on the second day of their arrival in Drapchi. They were made to stand in the sun from 8.30 am to 8 pm. To make them stand still, papers were placed in-between their legs and under their armpits. They were forced to balance a filled bowl on their head. If they made any movement they were beaten and sometimes hot water was thrown on their body. Electric batons were used on their bodies. Many nuns fell unconscious during this harsh punishment, but none of the nuns were allowed to help each other. Sometimes they were made to stand until 12 midnight. Occasionally, there were given 10 minutes break to go to the toilet, but these were random and infrequent.

At a particular military exercise, in November 1995, the nuns were forced to run from 8.30 am to 12 noon and from 2 pm to 6.30 pm but sometimes they were made to do it till 1 am. Often the nuns were forced to balance a brick on their foot for approximately seven minutes with their legs stretched out horizontally. Various other forms of punishment like standing barefoot in cold water during winter from 7 pm to 2 am was also applied. The diet too was extremely poor as well. Such ill treatment went on till 2 December 1995. Eventually, Dolma developed ulcer and kidney pain. She was specially scrutinised by the prison officials and often faced reprisals for trivial matters. Dolma found it suffocating and ultimately became insane.

Since 13 December 1995, the nuns were engaged in wool weaving work in their respective cell. Each prisoners is given a quota of four *sang* of wool per day, so the prisoners had to stay until 12 pm mid night to finished their quota.

On 20 February 1997, during a meeting in a prison, Rinchen Palmo was subjected to solitary confinement for showing 'bad expression' at prison officials. Unable to bear this, Dolma questioned the prison officials. That evening at six, prison officials took her away and she did not return until midnight. Upon her return, I found out that she endured severe beatings for six hours.

Dolma continued to get into trouble and receive beatings for her intrepid behaviour such as complaining about the poor prison diet saying, "it is mouldy." Again in November 1997, Dolma, along with 10 other cell mates were kept standing barefoot in cold water for reciting prayers. Dolma received additional beatings for laughing at the prison officials.

During the May 1998 Drapchi protests, Dolma, Chogdrup Dolma, and a number of other prisoners were placed in solitary confinement for three months from May to August 1998. During this time, she was again hit with electric baton, rubber cord and belt buckles on her head and over her body. As a result, Dolma suffered a fracture in her finger. In October 1998, Dolma's sentence was increased by six years. She is currently the longest serving female prisoner in the new "3rd" unit.

Jangchub Dolma now suffers from complex health problems but has not received any medical assistance. ❁

continued from page 5

marks. There are 300 families in his village only a couple of people are literate, even the village leaders are mostly illiterate.

In the election held in Che-ga's village, the candidates are pre-determined and people do not have any voice in the election. He states that "if the person is good and capable and people choose to elect the person, he or she will not be accepted by the township and county authorities and instead would appoint some other candidate."

Che-ga has never been to school. As a nomad, his family possess 10 animals, one Yak, five Dri (female yak) and four horses. Fifteen years earlier Che-ga's family had 17 yaks and dri and 30-40 sheep, but due to lack of available grassland several of his livestock gradually died. He explains that scarcity of grassland was caused due to excessive exploitation of mineral resources, such as gold and silver in Gama township. Despite fewer animals, taxes are imposed on the animals. Land tax, health tax, butter tax, hides tax, meat tax and taxes on Yartsa Gunbhu (Cordrypsis senesis a medicinal plant).

Each animal is charged one yuan as a land tax and 10 yuan per head each year as health tax. Animal health tax: two yuan annually for each animal. Five to six gyama of meat for each animal, butter tax of one gyama. One hide every year.

Animal Drung tax: Che-ga has to give 40 khel of dry drung to the authorities each year. All married women in his village can not exceed two child. If failed to meet the requirement, they are fined 2000-3000 yuan. The women have go to the township for sterilization.

Che-ga is a 32 year-old nomad from 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture' in Sichuan Province. His wife and three children escaped to India together. ❁

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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Exile students forced to return to Tibet

Waves of withdrawal of exile students from various schools in India were reported in August following the intensification of 1994 ban on children of cadres and government employees going to schools administered by Tibetan exile government. At least 20 students have left this month from five schools and the number is expected to increase. Many parents from different occupational background working for the Chinese government have reached India to take their children back to Tibet.

The school authorities have expressed serious concern over this policy but are unable to do anything. The majority of the children are adolescent and attending high school, some of them are in their last year of completing school. The youngest child to have left one of the schools is an eight year-old girl who joined a school in 1996, and was in her third grade before leaving. In 1996 at the age of four, she walked across the Himalayas with a group of escapees in order to join a Tibetan school in India.

At the time of departure, the children express regret for having to leave school unfinished but are reluctant to put their parents at risk. The parents share the same sentiment about having to retrieve their children, however they are left with no choice but to comply due to the consequences involved. These consequences of neglecting the orders are serious including sanctions, expulsion from jobs and party, freeze in promotion and salary increase, and forfeiting the residential permits of their children.

This is supported by the contents of the 6th General Body meeting of the Discipline Inspection Commission of the 'TAR' Party Committee held from 15 to 17 March 2000 which states clearly, "all party cadres and government employees are strictly instructed to observe orders prohibiting their children to study in schools administered by the Dalai Lama."

Those who fail to comply "should never be promoted. Those who are leaders and who are in important positions should be transferred to other places without hesitation." This policy was launched as a result of the Third Work Forum on Tibet in June 1994 whereby it was decided that all party members, especially the leading members "are not allowed to be sent abroad to study in schools run by the Dalai clique."

The policy was specifically designed for party members and government employees, however it did not entirely exclude the lay community. It stated that if the parents were citizens, peasants or herdsmen, the authorities should "enhance our work on educating them, but if they are party members in government departments or are cadres, then we should let them call back their children within a specified period." The policy clearly stated that "those who do not call back their children should be dealt with seriously, and their children's residence cards should be cancelled."

The ban was first introduced in 1994, whereby the same instructions were given to government employees to bring back their children within three months. At the time 37 children in total returned to Tibet. Most of them took up jobs as tourist guides upon their return. Unfortunately, the recent July crackdown on tour guides left 29 of them jobless. They were all exile returnees. While restrictions are intensified to bring back children studying in Tibetan schools in exile, employment opportunities are strictly denied to exile returnees. The Tibetan youngsters bear the brunt of such a void logic. "Those graduates from schools of the Dalai clique who have come to work in Tibet should be controlled strictly; they should not be allowed to work in the party or the government or in any other department" as stated in the Third Work Forum.

In a similar incident, in 1998 three parents came to India to take their children back as they were facing serious reprisals, including suspension from work until they complied with the order. The authorities issued parents with travel documents when they found out that they had not left and were ordered to pay 1000 yuan as a deposit until they had returned with their children.

Every year over a thousand children flee across the Himalayas to study in India and some of them perish in the perilous journey yet, parents spent their entire life savings and risk the lives of their children to send them to schools in exile. This exodus of children into India is perceived as deserting the idea of 'unity of motherland' and fostering nationalism. The ban is aimed at cutting off ties between the exile Tibetans and the Tibetans in Tibet thereby enabling the PRC to wield total control over dissident activities in Tibet.

29 Tibetan Tour Guides Dismissed

29 Tibetan tour guides from Shigatse Prefecture Tourist Travel Agency in Lhasa were reportedly dismissed from their jobs on 1 July 2000 following a major investigation to identify and expel guides who are exile-educated Tibet returnees.

'TAR' Tour Guide Discipline Management Department, established June this year, conducted an extensive investigation into 18 branch Tourist Agencies in Lhasa that comes under China International Tourist Service (CITS).

According to Sonam Wangdu, one of the 29 expelled Tibetan guides who reached Nepal on 27 July 2000, "An Inspection Committee dispatched by the newly set up Guide Discipline Management Department, conducted strict investigation in various tours and travel agencies in Lhasa City functioning under 'TAR' International Tourist Service. Inquiries are made regarding the guides' personal background, particularly names of educational institutions where we have studied and any history of political activism. We were further interrogated concerning our knowledge of guide regulation and made to produce documents to prove our credentials. These led to the dismissal of 29 tourist guides educated in India just five days before the Dalai Lama's birthday celebration this year. However, three Tibetan graduates from Chinese universities were not stripped off their tour guide jobs."

Wangdu returned to Tibet in 1997 after four years of schooling in a school administered by the exile Tibetan government. In Tibet, he worked in Shigatse Prefecture Tourist Travel Agency in Lhasa, as a tour guide for three years from August 1997 till his expulsion last month. According to Wangdu, his office employed a total of 75 staff with 43 office personnel and 32 tourist guides. The 'TAR' Chinese authorities with the Inspection Team members brought out a 13-Point Regulation for Tourist Guide that restricts the guides from explaining the real condition of Tibet and Tibetans to foreign tourists, thereby violating their individual freedom of expression.

The 13-point guide regulation forbids discussion with tourist about Tibet's cause, political prisoners and prisons, deforestation, mining and taking photographs of chapels, beggars and poor people in Tibet. Both tourists and guides are prohibited from displaying and distribution of Dalai Lama photographs among the local Tibetans. Guides are restricted from taking tourist into prohibited areas. No guides are allowed to show the direction of army encampments or discuss about the strength of military force. Impoverished state of Tibetans and the mass population transfer of Chinese into Tibet are not to be discussed with the foreigners.

Similar cases were reported in 1997 when 69 tour guides were sacked and refused renewal of guide permits. That came on the heels of scrutiny stepped up against Tibetans returning from trips to India, as the authorities were concerned over 'splittist' influences from foreign countries in general and India in particular. At the sixth "Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress" in June 1994, it was announced that "acts of some tour guides colluding with foreign tourist to harm state security" should be put to an end.

In May 2000, more than a hundred Chinese tour guides were reportedly recruited threatening employment opportunities of Tibetan tour guides. Tibetan guides are required to pass a political examination and produce a middle school certificate either from a Chinese or Tibetan school.

Chinese fears of 'splittist forces' and 'stability risks' are exemplified amply in the dismissal of Tibetan tour guides from India. Tibetans from India are at greater risk of arrest and imprisonment for [illegible] are perpetually viewed with suspicion [illegible] political involvement. A recent rep[illegible] indicates that the Chinese authoriti[illegible] restrict Tibetans from keeping contacts w[illegible] their relatives and friends in exi[illegible] community.

Shigatse Prefecture Tourist Trav[illegible] Agency in Lhasa from where the 2[illegible] expulsion took place is one of the 1[illegible] Branch Tourist Agencies in Lhasa[illegible] Information as to any expulsion of Tibeta[illegible] guides from 17 other Branch Touri[illegible] Agencies in Lhasa is unavailable a[illegible] yet. ❁

Less school, more fees

The only school facility available in Keru township, Derge Jomda County in Chamdo Prefecture is in the far-off Marmak township where the school fees are set as high as 500 yuan per annum for students of poor nomads. The school fees also include 8 gyama of butter and 30 gyama of meat. Unaffordable high-school fee drains the meagre source of income of the poverty-stricken nomads in the area thereby increasing the school drop-out rates.

Dekyi Dolma, a 37 year-old nomad from Keru township, Derge Jomda County in Chamdo Prefecture could sent her eldest son to school for only four months. As Dolma was unable to afford the school fees, her son had to leave the school after a short duration of four months. Widowed in 1996, Dolma has only 25 yak and *dri* to make her both ends meet.

Dolma stayed for eight years in Lhasa with her late husband and owned a butter shop. Her husband used to teach in Machu County. She faced lots of financial difficulties with her husband's death in 1996. She met Chega in Lhasa and escaped to Nepal with her three children through Solukhumbu border. She paid 2000 Nepali rupees to a guide and reached Nepal on 22 June 2000. ❁

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 59

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

Eight years sentence for posters and protest

Tenzin, aged 27 years is from Norbu Village, Kyiru township, Dranang County, Tibet Lhoka Region. He is a former monk of Dranang Dhargye Choeten Monastery.

His family consists of six members including four siblings. His family members eke out their living by farming. During childhood, he studied in local 'mangtsuk' school for about three years and later worked with his parents. In 1991, he joined Dhargye Choten Monastery, located in Kyiru township. Dhargye Choten monastery was ruined during the Cultural Revolution and was later reconstructed from the donations and contributions of the local Tibetans. Tenzin's complete devotion to religious study during his stay in the monastery earned him respect amongst the fellow monks. Owing to his famed integrity and high moral character, Tenzin was later assigned the responsibility of dealing with the business matters of the monastery that involved money transactions.

One night in June 1995, Tenzin pasted posters on the gates of Druyul township in support of Tibetan independence and the Dalai Lama. The posters called for 'Free Tibet' and 'Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama'. When these posters came to the knowledge of the Dranang County Public Security Bureau (PSB) the next day, investigations and search for the culprit went on in full swing.

Only a month later in July did the Dranang County PSB officials arrested Tenzin on suspicions of involvement. He was later taken to Lhoka Region PSB Detention Centre in Lhoka Tsethang where he was tortured during severe interrogation. He was detained for four months in Lhoka Detention Centre.

By the end of November, Lhoka Region People's Intermediate Court, sentenced Tenzin to four years imprisonment. He did not appeal at the court after the sentencing knowing that it would bore no positive result. Tenzin was later transferred to Drapchi Prison in December in Lhasa, 'TAR'.

During his imprisonment, Tenzin was subjected to ' regular exercise' and hard labour. Anyone violating the strict prison rules are punished in the form of beatings, solitary confinement and deprivation of food for days together.

His arrest caused his relatives immense anxiety. Lhoka Region is quite far from Lhasa where Drapchi Prison is located, hence, it poses problems for Tenzin's relatives in terms of accommodation and general expenses in Lhasa during their monthly visitation to the prison. Tenzin has no frequent and regular visitors like other prisoners.

Tenzin was one of the active participants in the May 1998 Drapchi Prison's protest that occurred on the prison ground during a flag-raising ceremony. He was severely beaten and kept in solitary confinement for many days following his participation in the protests. Furthermore, Tenzin received an increased sentence of four more years making his total sentence a period of eight years.

He is currently serving his prison term in Drapchi Prison.

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juvenile monks and nuns

An official order that compelled mass withdrawal of juvenile monks and nuns from religious institutions has created a furore amongst the Tibetan cadres and government workers in Tibet. Cases of such forceful removal have been reported in various counties under Lhasa City.

In accordance with the order, the official cadres and government workers were instructed to withdraw their children from monasteries and nunneries or else face imprisonment or expulsion from job. Approximately, 13 nuns from Potoe Nunnery and 20 monks from Sera Monastery in Phenpo Lhundup County were withdrawn from their respective religious institutions following the official instruction. Tsering Karma, an official from Chusang township in Toelung Dechen County removed his three children; two nuns and a monk. Lhabu and Paldon from village number two of Tsodue township in Phenpo Lhundup County withdrew their son and daughter from their respective monastery and nunnery. Tenpa Samphel and Pema Youdon withdrew their son while Jampa Wangyal took his daughter back from her nunnery.

In recent times, Chinese authorities have launched a series of campaigns designed specifically to purge the influence of religious belief amongst the Tibetan cadres and government workers. In a work meeting on Tibet held in Chengdu on 20 April 2000, attended by Chen Kuiyuan (the Party Secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region), Raidi (Executive Deputy Secretary for CCP in 'TAR') and Kao Chinglung, it was mentioned that religion is the root cause of instability in Tibet. The minutes of the meeting was secretly circulated to all officers holding the rank of county head and above, in June this year.

The circulated document attributes the prevailing instability and disharmony in Tibet to religion and accuses the Dalai Lama of using it as a tool to oppose the Chinese government. It calls upon all concerned communist members and officials to enforce laws that restrict people from participating in religious practices, setting up of religious altar in their homes, and keeping pictures of the Dalai Lama, to achieve systematic effacing of religion from the Tibetan horizon. Reference is also made to the young 17th Karmapa's sudden flight from Tibet, considered as a defiant act against the Chinese government. The official document further denounces as illegal, the observance of customary *Sangsol* (Incense-burning ceremony) near Kuru Bridge in Lhasa on the third day of the Tibetan New Year and the Dalai Lama's birthday celebration in July, and directs the local authorities to curb such practices in future.

Two beggars living near Kyichu River, at the instruction and on payment of 100 yuan by Lhasa Security Bureau officials, destroyed the incense-burning hearth where celebration of the Dalai Lama's birthday is observed every year. The Chinese officials of Ngachen township built a hall to hold dance competitions on the ruins of the *Sangsol* (incense-burning ceremony) area. A long fence is built around the hall to prevent Tibetans from entering this sacred area.

Reports of deployment of additional police personnel in and around Potala Palace were received. Since 28 June 2000, movement of monks in Sera, Gaden and Drepung Monasteries have been restricted and monitored.

During the third meeting of the seventh Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference held on 10 May 2000, one of the members, Dongbu Tsering Dorjee stated, "To achieve obliteration of religious faith that is manifested in our sensibility and mannerism is an important responsibility."

With the rights and freedoms of individual Tibetans being curbed and stringent laws enforced, Tibetans in Tibet are reeling under the repressive communist policies that might eventually lead to total annihilation of Buddhist culture and religion. ❁

School & Hospital

A village of about 200 population has no school and hospital. Almost all the 60 odd children in Lekhama village do not receive education, confirmed Chaka, a resident of the village who reached India in August 2000.

In Lekhama village in Drakgo County, there are 40 nomadic families amounting. Many of these families are very poor.

There is a primary school in the township, approx 50 kilometres away from the village. This distance deters parents to send their children to school. Except for the two children of a wealthy family who can afford to go to school, the rest of the children spent their childhood doing hard labour with the adults.

There is not a trace of 'development' in the village as it is remotely located. The village does not receive any aid from the government. Not one clinic is found in the village and if people fall sick they have to go the township where there is a health centre and for serious illnesses, villagers have to travel to the County hospital which is known for being very expensive.

Every year in November, the villagers have to give to the County authorities; 70 gyama (35 kg) of butter for which they receive payment for 35 gyama at a very minimal rate, 20 gyama of wool for free and three yaks at half the price. At the time of tax collection on animal feeds, these payments are included. Every year, each family has to pay 100 yuan and firewood worth two loads of yak to old age homes. The same minus the 100 yuan has to be paid to the township office.

Township authorities hold an annual meeting where the people are 'educated' that the number of children they procreate have a strong bearing on their economic prosperity. Therefore, if families exceed the limit of two children they would be fined 1500 yuan accordingly. The officials from the county and township health centres visit families to inspect the number of children they have. As a result many women after having two children undergo sterilisation in order to 'respect the rules of the state'.

Chaka, the informant is a resident of Lekhama village. Since his childhood, he and his brother has worked with their parents and never been to school. ❁

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Statement by Mrs. Sonam Dekyi

on her visit to Tibet to see her imprisoned son

I was filled with mixed emotions when I received permission from the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi to travel into Tibet to visit my son, Ngawang Choephel, who is serving 18 years prison sentence. My mind was reeling with the prospect of going to Tibet, meeting my son after six long years and the apprehension of seeing him in an enfeebled state. On 1 August 2000, my brother, Tsering Wangdu, and I flew from Kathmandu to Lhasa. Upon reaching Gongkar airport, near Lhasa, we were not allowed to board off the plane. Five Chinese officials boarded the plane and one of them introduced himself as the head of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) Prisons. He informed me that my son was transferred to another prison in Chengdu for better medical care upon his request and that he continues to receive proper medical treatment. Two Tibetans, a male and a female, who were introduced as officials from the Lhasa Overseas Tibetan Reception Centre, attended to us. They escorted us by air to Chengdu. At Chengdu airport, we were received by a Chinese official who claimed to be from the Chengdu Reception Centre.

The next day, on 2 August, we were driven to the Chengdu General Hospital where Ngawang was supposed to have received medical treatment. We were introduced to a renowned Chinese doctor who is attending to my son. The doctor briefed me on Ngawang's health and told me that he is suffering from four different ailments. He further explained that my son was already treated of his urinary tract infection and that he is continuing to attend to his liver, lung and stomach ailments.

The following day, we were taken to a huge prison complex near Chengdu Railway Station where I was to meet my son for the first time in six years. As soon as we reached the prison compounds, we were shown to a room where a Chinese official met with us. The officer laid down pre-conditions prior to meeting my son. He made it clear that I was not allowed to speak in any language other than Tibetan and that it cannot be political, illegal and derogatory to the Chinese government. I was also informed that I would get two meetings with my son, both of which should not exceed an hour each. I pleaded for more time but it was to no avail.

When I saw my son, I could not even recognise him. In front of me, separated by two counters and two layers of wire-netting, stood this frail body with mere skin and bones. There were three prison guards with him, one at the back and two beside him. Tears rolled down incessantly from my eyes and I asked him if he was indeed my son. All he could say in response was, "please don't cry." I immediately recognised my son's voice. When I inquired after his health, he held his chest and told me that he had constant pain in the chest. With his forehead down on the counter, he broke down in front of me. We all cried for a long time until we were told that the visit would be terminated if we did not stop crying. I was desperate to have physical contact with him and so I requested if I could touch his forehead and hold his hands. I could hear my son requesting for the same. But all our pleadings fell on deaf ears.

My son told me that he had written numerous appeals for both his medical treatment and to see me but was unable to submit them. He was told he has no illness and that he was just pretending. Frustrated with the indifference, he went on a hunger strike.

On our second visit to the prison on 7 August, a day before we were to leave for Nepal, once again we were shown to the office before meeting with Ngawang. I took this opportunity to plead with the officer on my son's behalf. I told him that there is nothing left of my son except for his skin and bones and that he is suffering from multiple ailments. I urged him to allow me to stay where my son is so that I can attend to his needs. I further pleaded that my son be kept in hospital until his proper recovery and then send back to Tibet. I requested him to continue with the medical treatment and not to torture him mentally with interrogation. His response was that my son has been very stubborn and difficult and that he refuses to confess to his crime. I also gave my appeals to him in written. Since this was my last opportunity to be with my son, I could not help crying. Being very anxious about his health and well being, I asked him to show me his arms and hands and move backwards so that I can examine his legs and other parts of his body. I inquired if any torture was being inflicted upon him. He responded negatively and said that Nyari prison incident was a past event and did not say anything further. He asked me to convey his sincere gratitude to all those who supported him in this time of need.

Initially when I received permission to see my son, I was looking forward to being with him and spending all six days taking care of him. But I was only able to see my son twice and that too from a distance. I was not even allowed to make physical contact with him.

I am 66 years old and my only child is serving 18 years prison sentence since 1995. My son is suffering from a serious physical and mental trauma in prison. His health is deteriorating day by day and if he does not receive timely and adequate medical treatment, he may not survive. I make an urgent appeal to the international community and in particular to the Chinese government to hand over my only son to me for medical treatment.

Prepared by Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
19 August 2000

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Testimony of a Political Prisoner



My name is Sonam Gonpo and I am 33 years old from Uyak township in Zokhang County, Chamdo Prefecture. My mother passed away before I joined Zokhang Monastery at the age of 19. I have ten other siblings who help my father with the animals and farm. The monastery was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and local people renovated it in early 1980s.

For five years I was at the monastery as a regular monk after which I joined Jampaling Monastery for Dialectics studies along with another monk named Soepa, also from Zokhang Monastery. Soepa is 29 years old and his religious name is Lodoe Thupten.

We stayed together in a rented place for four years. During those years, on 24 March 1996, we pasted some political leaflets on the electric pole on the Chamdo Highway and two days later at the circumambulation road of Jampaling Monastery. The posters read "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibet is independent and We accept the Panchen Lama chosen by the Dalai Lama."

The next day, seven Chamdo Police men came to the monastery and ransacked all the 60 rooms of the monks located south of the monastery. When they came to our room they confiscated a few prayer books. which contain handwritings of Soepa.

On 2 May 1996, Chamdo region PSB officials came to the monastery in the night and took us away to Chamdo PSB office where we were detained in two separate cells. Upon reaching there, the officials started interrogating us and simultaneously, received severe beatings. I got kicked, punched and slapped numerous times, including being beaten with a stick on my knee. The worst was when they threw water on me and hit me with the electric shock. I often found myself unconscious. On one occasion, the PSB official kicked me on the chest and I threw up blood. A day after we were transferred to Chamdo Region Detention Centre where we were detained for three months.

There too we were kept in different cells and interrogated. We faced beatings according to how we responded to the authorities' questions. The condition in the detention centre was appalling. We were served black tea in the morning with a steamed dumpling or rice and soup for lunch. For a month I was sick and could not sit up straight.

On 25 June 1996, 21 prisoners including the two of us were taken to a public rally. We were tied with a rope and a white cardboard was hung on our necks where our 'crime' was specified. We were divided into four separate vehicles guarded strictly by PAP and PSB forces and taken to Chamdo City Municipality.

There amidst 15,000 people, mass rally sentencing of all 21 of us was held. That day ten criminal prisoners were sentenced to be executed, nine others were on probation of two years for execution. Soepa and I were the only political prisoners. Soepa was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and three years deprivation of political rights under article 102(2), 52 and 60 and I was sentenced to two years under article 162 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Law of the PRC. A month after the sentencing, three political prisoners and 17 criminal prisoners were transferred to Drapchi Prison. The third political prisoner was Yeshi Tenzin, a 16 year-old from Drayab Chithang County. He was sentenced to five years for sticking political posters. While we were being transferred from Chamdo Detention Centre to Drapchi Prison, we stopped for four nights in various detention Centres. Starting from Riwoche, we stopped in Pakshoe, Tramo, Nyintri and finally Meldro Gongkar Detention Centre before we reached Drapchi Prison on 16 October 1996. We were detained in the then new unit #5. At the time, the Unit had approximately 126 political prisoners.

Life in Drapchi was hard although it did not include the ruthless beatings and torture in the detention centres. After I completed my prison term, I was released on 1 May 1998.

Upon my release, I was prohibited from joining the monastery. I stayed at home and helped my family at farm. At the end of July 2000 I secured documents that allowed me to travel till Dram. After walking for seven days, I reached Nepal and finally on 25 August I came to Dharamsala. Soepa is still in prison. ❁

Monks Expelled from Bon Monastery

Fifteen monks, including 12 juveniles and three elderly monks above the age of 65, were expelled from Yungtrung Peri Monastery following a visit by 'work team' officials, reported Tsultrim Tenzin, a 26 year-old monk of the Monastery who fled to India in April 2000.

In June 1998, a six-member 'work team' members came to Yungtrung Peri Monastery and summoned all the residents of the monastery for 're-educaton'. Documents were distributed for study and each of them was individually interrogated. All the 65 monks were asked to put their thumbprints on a piece of paper assuring the authorities that they would not involve in any political activities against the motherland. They stayed at the monastery around two months.

In September 1999, two 'work team' members re-visited the monastery for five days as a follow up of the previous visit. The 'work team' members held a meeting with the Democratic Management Committee of the monastery to review the functioning of the monastery and conduct of the monks. The DMC was instructed to continue the 're-education' campaign and that the officials will come again to check if the discipline as set out by the 'work team' is maintained at the monastery.

Yungtrung Peri is a Bon Monastery and is located in Sershung township in Tingchin County, Chamdo Prefecture. This monastery was partially destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. In 1985 the monastery was renovated and reopened.

Tsultrim Tenzin reported that "the rules and restrictions imposed on us hindered our religious practices." ❁

TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

Press Conference for Sonam Dekyi

After six years of relentless appeal by Mrs. Sonam Dekyi, mother of Ngawang Choephel, the Chinese authorities finally granted her permission to visit her son in prison in Tibet August this year. The Centre has since his arrest, launched numerous campaigns and issued press releases on Ngawang Choephel and Mrs. Dekyi. Soon after her return from visiting her son, the Centre organised a Press Conference in New Delhi on 19 August 2000 at Kanishka Hotel. It was attended by 11 press agencies, both national and international, and received wide coverage.

China Opposes TCHRD's Accreditation to the World Conference Against Racism

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office in Geneva has opposed TCHRD's accreditation to the World Conference Against Racism. Specifically, the Mission stated that TCHRD is a "political organisation aimed at and engaged in splitting the territorial integrity of China." The Centre has written to the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference to defeat China's attempt to stop human rights NGOs from taking part in UN human rights conferences.

New TCHRD Publications

📖 The Executive Summary of the 1999 Annual Report was brought out in Hindi and Nepali languages to reach a larger audience. The Branch office in Kathmandu, Nepal produced the Nepali translation.

📖 The Centre produced a report on torture entitled "Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet" which was submitted to the UN Committee against Torture for consideration during its review of Chinese compliance to the convention (CAT) during the 56th session held in Geneva in May 2000. This report is an assessment of the Chinese government's compliance to the Committee Against Torture. It evaluates the past submissions to the Committee by the PRC in accordance with the Convention. The report examines the revised Criminal Procedure Laws of China and evaluates those laws in light of the PRC's treaty obligations. The report provides a comprehensive review of the history and patterns of torture in Tibet, including an evaluation of current conditions.

📖 Five different educational posters and a leaflet were produced to time the forthcoming 13th general election of the Tibetan parliament members. It is in response to the need to build awareness in the Tibetan community regarding democracy and the people's roles and responsibilities towards building a democratic society. The posters and leaflet were sent to all Tibetan settlements and religious institutions in the exile Tibetan community.

Our Staff attend Kalchakra at Spiti

Lobsang Tsering and Jampel Monlam, Researcher and Field Officer of TCHRD, spent two days at Kyil village prior to the Kalchakra Initiation in August, distributing TCHRD publications and talking to people about human rights situations in Tibet and activities of the Centre. They have pasted educational posters at key public meeting places and distributed leaflets to generate awareness on democracy and election. Besides they met a few newly-arrived Tibetans from Tibet and exchanged views and thoughts about the exile community.

New Staff at TCHRD

Tenzin Tseten who worked as a human rights officer in our Kathmandu office for two and a half years resigned from his duties due to personal reasons. In his place, a new staff, Dorjee Damdul was selected from nine candidates who sat for an examination and interview on 30 August. Mr. Damdul graduated from Loyola College, Chennai in English literature. Mr. Damdul will commence his work from September 2000.

Human Rights Talk at Nunnery

Lobsang Tsering, our Tibetan Researcher, gave a talk to approx. 120 nuns at the Dolmaling Nunnery in Sidhbari. He spoke mostly on concepts of human rights and also dwell on human rights situations in Tibet. Literatures of the Centre, including the two Internaitonal Covenants and UDHR in Tibetan were distributed.

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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) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 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) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Tales of Terror: *Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • TCHRD *Review* (2000) • Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet (2000).

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

SEPTEMBER 2000 VOLUME V NUMBER 9

Jigme Gyatso and Lodro Gyatso tortured in Drapchi Prison

According to a former political prisoner, Sonam Gonpo (refer to August 2000 Update for his testimony) who reached Dharamsala, India on 25 August, two political prisoners in Drapchi Prison were severely tortured in 1997.

Jigme Gyatso who was serving 15 years' imprisonment was taken outside the prison complex by four security personnel from Gansu Province in October 1997. The officers acquired permission from the prison authorities stating that "they needed to acquire further information from Jigme regarding a political incident". The officers took Gyatso to a place in Lhasa where he was detained and interrogated. The investigation was regarding poster incidents in Gansu prior to Gyatso's arrest, of which the authorities had still not discerned the identities of the 'culprit'.

The officers tied Jigme's hand behind his back and struck him with electric shocks over his body and forced him to 'confess to the alleged crime.' Jigme refused to accede since at the time of the incident he was in Lhasa with a friend. Despite producing an alibi, Gyatso was detained for five days during which time he was not given any food and water. Moreover, he was beaten and tortured intensively. At the time of his return to Drapchi Prison, inmates saw him barely able to walk by himself. He was supporting himself to the wall and his body spoke clearly of severe thrashing and ill-treatment.

Jigme Gyatso from Gansu Province was a former monk of Gaden Monastery and was arrested for political reasons in 1997. Jigme is currently held in Drapchi Prison where he continues to be detained.

Lodroe Gyatso was reportedly brutally beaten on 20 November 1997 by prison guards during prison visiting day. While waiting for their names to be called out, Gyatso walked away from the group of prisoners to get some sunlight. He was leaning against a wall when the officer in charge immediately took him back inside his cell. The other prisoners protested and said if Gyatso was not allowed visitors, they would not too. The group was taken in along with Gyatso and as a punishment, were not permitted to receive visitors.

In the meantime, Gyatso was seen with his head covered with a black cloth and beaten by prison guards after which he was taken into solitary confinement. Following his release from the solitary confinement, he was detained along with the criminal prisoners.

Gonpo confirmed that Gyatso was held there until the day of his release on 1 May 1998.

Lodroe Gyatso is from Sog County in Nagchu Province and he is serving 21 years' imprisonment. Initially implicated for murder, Gyatso was serving 15 years when he received additional six years for political activities while in detention. ✹

Deputy Head Detained Under Suspicion

Despite strict repression during the celebration of the Dalai Lama's birthday on 6 July 2000, several poster incidents took place in Taktse County in Lhasa Municipality. The posters read incriminating slogans such as 'Free Tibet', 'Tibet belongs to Tibetans' and China quit Tibet'. Following a series of investigation into the matter, Taktse Public Security Bureau officers detained Tashi Phuntsok, the deputy head of the township under suspicion.

According to the PSB officers, Phuntsok's handwriting matched with that of the posters. Phuntsok is 29 years old and lives in Karma Kunsang town. No further details on his condition nor of his place of detention is known to date. ✹

House Arrest of Khenpo Yeshi Phuntsok

Khenpo Yeshi Phuntsok, the founder of Ngarig Nangten Lobling Institute has reportedly been kept under house arrest by the Chinese government since the beginning of 1999, for seeking an audience with the Dalai Lama sometime in the mid-nineties (1993-94). The Chinese government imposed strict restrictions on his movement within and outside Tibet. Even visit to the nearest county denied to him. Kandze PSB officials ordered Khenpo Yeshi Phuntsok not to keep any pictures of the Dalai Lama in his room or the Institute. During house arrest, Khenpo was confined in his three-storey building. No further information is available on his current status.

Ngarig Nangten Lobling Institute located in Lorok township of Sertha County in Kandze 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture'(TAP), was established by Khenpo Yeshi Phuntsok about 15 years ago. The financial assistance that Khenpo Yeshi obtained during his European tour of eleven countries, greatly helped the establishment of the Institute. The Institute is one of the biggest Buddhist Institutes in Kandze 'TAP'. Around 8,800 monks and nuns from different parts of Tibet including 500 Chinese monks from China (Riwo-tse-nga) study at this Institute. Though the students largely manage their own expenses in terms of food and clothing, they also receive material help from the local Tibetans as well as from the Chinese Buddhists, through the Institute.

In 1999, approximately 70 'work team' officials from Sertha County and Kandze 'TAP', came to the Institute to conduct the 're-education' to the students. During a mass meeting held in the Institute, the 'work team' members counted the number of manks and nuns after interrogating them about their backgrounds. The monks and nuns were ordered to return to their homes especially the Chinese students. Tibetan students appealed to the officials to let them remain in the Institute and study as they have nowhere to go. Later, some monks and nuns voluntarily left the Institute for their homes although the number is not known.

The second visit of the 'work team' officials was in April 2000, during which time officials from different counties came to the Institute to take back students belonging to their own counties. As resistance followed the official orders, no forced expulsion took place during both the visits. Given the huge strength of the students, the officials feared mass protest and commotion in the Institute and later returned to their own counties.

Kelsang Gyatso, who reported on the house arrest and 'work team' visit in Ngarig Nangten Lobling Monastery, is a 20 year-old former monk of Shugang Monastery in Kandze 'TAP'. He reached Nepal on 17 July 2000. ✹

KTM -

'Work Team' in Raktsa Monastery

'Work team' officials from Ngaba County reportedly ordered expulsion of monks below the age of 18 years and set a limit of only 40 monks in Raktsa Samten Phegyeling Monastery in 1999.

15 members who stayed for two days instructed the monks to oppose the Dalai Lama and separatist activities. Bans were imposed on photographs of the Dalai Lama. As the monastery has no record of political activities, the County authorities are not very restrictive about the activities of the monks. The strength of the monks in the monastery still remains the same as before. However, regular meetings and inspections were held in the monastery whereby the monks are given strict indoctrination against political protest.

Raktsa Samten Phegyeling Monastery located in Mekor township of Ngaba County was destroyed completely during Cultural Revolution.

However after 1985, this monastery was rebuilt with help and donations from the local Tibetans. The current strength of the monastery is 160 monks. Ngawang Lodoe, a 30 year-old former monk of Samten Phegyeling Monastery reported on the 'work team' visit in Samten Phegyeling Monastery.

Originally from Sichuan Province, Ngaba 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture', Ngaba County, Mekor township, he arrived in India on 16 July 2000 by crossing the Solukhumbu border to seek an audience with the Dalai Lama. ✹

'Work Team' in Shugang Monastery

In Shugang Monastery, monks below the age of 18 years were expelled, Dalai Lama pictures banned and a limit of 120 monks was set in the monastery with the arrival of 'work team' in 1996. The authorities further announced a ban on the admission of new monks and ordered expulsion of the monks above the limit set by the 'work team' in the monastery. There were approximately 170 monks in Shugang Monastery before the visit of the 'work team'.

Usually, around five to six 'work team' members visit once a year to 're-educate', examine and inspect the monks, during their three to four days stay in the monastery. The mass meeting involves examining the monks on their opinion about the Dalai Lama, 'splittist' activities and Tibetan freedom. The officials forced the monks to memorise and write letters in opposition to the Dalai Lama.

However, none of the monks agreed to this denunciation order against the Dalai Lama on a verbal basis.

Kelsang Gyatso, a 20 year-old former monk of Shugang Monastery voluntarily left the monastery in order to escape the repressive instructions and rejoin a monastery in exile.

Originally from Tehor township, Drago County, Kandze 'Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture'(TAP), Sichuan Province, Gyatso reached Nepal on 17 July 2000. ✹

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 67

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

Solitary Confinement and Imprisonment for Posters

Nyima Tenzin is 24 years old from Bharlok township in Medrogungkar County in Lhasa. His family consists of ten members including him. They are farmers by occupation. When he was eight years old, he studied in Bharlok township primary school for approximately four years. After which he was with his parents at home.

In 1990, he joined Pangsa Monastery which is located in Bharlok township. Pangsa Monastery which was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution was later reconstructed with the help of contributions from the local Tibetan residents. At the time there were 20 monks.

While still at the monastery, Tenzin with his friend, Kunchok Tsering 37 years old and Nyima Wangdu 22 years old were actively involved in political activities.

On the night of 31 May 1993, Nyima along with three others from the monastery, put up independence posters and a hand drawn Tibetan national flag on Tashigang bridge which is on the highway from Lhasa to Kongpo. At the time of putting up posters, they saw a policeman patrolling the bridge. While one put up posters the other two started throwing stones at the policeman.

Although the policeman ran away he was able to discern their identities. Knowing that they had been discovered, the three ran away and hid amongst the nomads of the region.

The next morning, the policeman reported the incident to the Meldro County Public Security Bureau officers. Investigations started immediately for the three and the PSB officers went to the monastery. When the officers found out that they were not at the monastery, they came to the nomads.

By five pm that day, the three of them were arrested by ten PSB officers. They were initially detained in Medrogungkar Detention Centre where they received severe torture and punishment at the time of interrogation session.

Tenzin was detained along with the other two for three months during which time he was kept for 20 days in solitary confinement. He was not allowed to receive any visitors for an entire month. His parents and relatives did not know anything about his condition or whereabouts during his detention.

He was later transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre where he was detained for ten months prior to his sentencing. Later Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court sentenced Tenzin to eight years' imprisonment, Kunchok Tsering to seven years and Nyima Wangdu to four years.

Following his sentencing, Tenzin and his friends were transferred to Drapchi Prison. While in Drapchi, Tenzin like the rest of the prisoners was subjected to vigorous exercise sesssions.

In 1997 Nyima Wangdu was released. Tenzin and Kunchok Tsering continue to be detained in Drapchi Prison.

Right to Subsistence, Education and birth control of Tibetan people

Kunchok, 27 years old, is from Chulong village, Tsangkor township Gade County, Golok 'TAP' in Tsongon Province. His family consists of seven members and they are nomads by occupation. Kunchok and his four siblings did not have the opportunity to attend school. There is but only one primary school in the township where there are three teachers. However, due to the incompetent facility for education, absence of discipline and the under-qualified teachers, parents refrain from sending their children to school. There are currently about 20 children attending the school. In Chulong, there are approximately 80 families and about a hundred children of school-going age. The reputation of the school is such that most children voluntarily drop out after two to three years. The better schools are in the county and prefecture but admission to these schools is extremely difficult to acquire. The children of the village head and the wealthy families are the only fortunate ones to be able to go to these schools in the county Village head children go for further studies.

Kunchok's family has 50 yaks and three horses. Every year in the month of October, they have to pay 700 yuan (8 yuan is equivalent to 1 US $) per person to the township authorities as tax. If the nomads do not have sufficient money then they have to pay in kinds (animals). This form of cash taxation was introduced in 1999. Prior to that, authorities collected animals as a form of tax. In Kunchok's village, there are at least 30 families who are extremely poor who borrow money most of the time in order to make ends meet.

Sterilisation is also a problem as after every third child, women are sterilised. Usually Tibetan nomads bear many children and children are never considered a problem however severe the hardships. Every year, the township authorities run a check on the number of women eligible for sterilisation. And accordingly, they are sterilised. Approximately, eight to nine women undergo forced contraception annually in Chulong village. The absence of skilled doctors, appropriate medical appliances and method lead to severe physical injuries.

In August 1998, in Kyangche village, Yangzo, a 28 year-old was sterilised after her third child. She took to bed subsequent to the operation and died a month later. Like in many remote villages and counties, the absence of even a health centre is of serious concern. These villagers have to travel to the counties to receive medical attention in severe cases, investing huge amount of money, often their entire life savings. ✹

As in almost all the Chinese-administered schools in Tibet, the ideology indoctrination is high on the agenda of the primary and middle level schools of Sangchu County in Khenlo 'TAP'. Rare as the case might be, all the subjects in this school except for Chinese and Music are taught in Tibetan.

Yitham Kyab, a 19 year-old recent arrival, had studied for three years in Gyusha township Primary School and two years in Sangchu County Middle School. Of all the township schools in Sangchu County, Gyusha township Primary School is considered as cut above the rest, for it has well qualified teachers and staff members. Only approximately 30 Chinese students constitute the approximately total of 300 students in this school, and all the Tibetan students' familird are farmers or nomads. There are around 40 teachers in the school and half of them are Chinese. The annual school fees for a student is 500 yuan with a cost of 250 yuan per session in a year, but there is no boarding facility for the students. Subjects taught in the school include Chinese, Tibetan and Mathematics.

In Sangchu County Middle School, the students have to study 10 different subjects besides Chinese and Tibetan. The subject of History mainly deals with the formation of People's Republic of China, Tang Dynasty and Cultural Revolution but no explanation is allowed on the Tibetan history. Concepts of socialism and ideologies of Marxism, Angusism and Leninism are dealt with as Political Subject. The musical subjects are taught as per Chinese culture and tradition. There are around 600 students in the school and their annual fee is 400 yuan (200 yuan per session in a year), in addition to 300 yuan as school admission fee. Of the approximately 600 students, only around 20 Tibetan students can continue enrollment after passing the high school entrance exam from Sangchu County. Some join Teacher's Training Schools in Khenlo 'TAP' whereas others return to work with their parents and try the following year.

Yitham escaped to Nepal on 17 July 2000 through Dram border. He is originally from Omshi village, Sangchu County in Khenlo 'TAP'. His parents are farmers. ✹

In rural areas like Khese township, Malho County in Tsongon Province, the school authorities charge a 500 yuan admission fee and two sheep as tuition fee to the nomadic Tibetan parents. Besides 30 gyama (equivalent to 500 grams) of butter and cheese given to the authorities, the parents also have to buy school uniforms for their children. Owing to unaffordable school fees, many poor Tibetan students are left without an education. Furthermore, large numbers of primary and middle school educated but unemployed youths add to the widespread poverty. These unemployed youth work with their parents either as nomads or as farmers in different villages of Malho County while looking for paid

employment.

In Tsokha village of Khese township, only 10 children from a total of 150 Tibetan families go to school. There are no schools in Tsokha village, but a primary school exists in the township. The distance to school plus the fees discourage parent from sending their children to school. The other children work with their parents on the field or tend cattle. Four villages under Khese township, inhabited by Tibetan nomads have no school. The township authorities admit only 50 children from the above four villages in to the township schools.

18 year-old Thinlay's family consists of 12 members including five siblings. His parents are nomads in Khese township of Malho County in Tsongon Province. Except for his eldest brother, no one in his family had ever been to school. His family has 100 *dri* and *yak* and 500 sheep. As his parents wanted him to study, he was sent to Lhasa where he stayed for 20 days and then escaped to Nepal. ❁

The local authorities forced compulsory labour on the Tibetans above 18 years in Shekar township of Shigatse Region for construction of roads, irrigation and buildings. All the expenses incurred during compulsory labour, like food and travel has to be borne by the worker himself as the authorities do not provide anything for them.

However, after 1998, the authorities started paying six to seven yuan per day for a worker. A penalty of 14 yuan per day is imposed on any Tibetans failing to fill up family work quotas during compulsory labour. Such high penalties restrict the poor Tibetan villagers from avoiding work even when they fall sick.

Reports of begging in the Pelbar village of Shekar township were also received. There are nine groups of villages in Shekar township and in Pelbar village, there are approximately 85 Tibetan families with a population of 650 people. Around 35 families (190 people) in Pelbar village are poor and they usually borrow or beg cereals from other farmers to feed their families. Some of them go to Lhasa or Shigatse to beg, as they need money to repay other farmers. However, the township and County authorities banned begging which they consider as a 'disgrace and shame on the nation'. The irony of the situation is that the authorities do not offer aid to the impoverished farmers except for a few sacks of cereals and pieces of cloth, but restricts them from moving out of the village to Lhasa or Shigatse to seek their own living.

In October 1999, Dhingri County authorities had announced restrictions on sending children to schools in India. Penalties for sending children to India include confiscation of the allocated land and animals and further collection of heavy fines from the parents. In the past 20 years, it is said that only 15 Tibetan students from Dhingri County had successfully completed their high school education from Shigatse or Lhasa, but these students are children of County or township officials. Primary schools are available in all the villages of Shekar township and there is a middle school in Dhingri County, where the children of the farmers get their formative education. As the poor farmers cannot afford the exorbitant expenses incurred by further education, the school drop-out rate of Tibetan children after middle school is quite high.

Dorjee Tsering who sheds light on compulsory labour, begging and school conditions in his hometown also talks about various taxes levied on the farmers. He himself is a 54 year-old farmer from Shekar township in Shigatse region. Dorjee's family annually delivers around 150 gyama of cereals as tax to the local Chinese authorities. This form of tax is collected from all the farmers irrespective of the nature of the yearly crop production. The farmers in the region mostly cultivate *dru* (cereal) *seyma* (pea) and *paykha* (rape seed) on their land. The annual yield of Dorjee's crop cultivation ranged from 80 to 120 *dru-khel* (equivalent to 14 kg) of cereals per year. During a bad harvest season, the local authorities provide six *dru-khel* of cereals per member in a family. However, since 1996 there has been no bad crop production in their village.

There are nine members in his family including seven children in Tibet. His family has four and half *mu* (one mu is equal to 67 square metres) of land allocated to five members in his family. Dorjee had sought an audience with the Dalai Lama when he visited India in 1985 but returned to Tibet after a month stay. This time, he escaped to Nepal with his daughter Dawa Bhuti aged 17. Despite orders and threats by Dhingri County authorities, Dorjee wants to send her to a school in India. He reached Nepal in July 2000 and will return to Tibet after enrolling his daughter in a school. He fears that his land and animals might be confiscated with heavy fines if the authorities find out about his escape and the admission of his daughter in an exile school. ❁

Dechen village in Chentsa County in Malho 'TAP' has approximately 40 families and all are farmers by occupation. Tsering Dhondup, a former resident of Dechen village fled his village and after almost a month of travelling reached Dharamsala on 13 September 2000. Dhondup is 28 years old and he lives with his parents and two younger siblings.

Dhondup reports on the general living standard of residents of Dechen village setting his' as an example. For Dhondup's five-member family, seven *mu* of land area was allocated. At the time of harvest, his family has to furnish 200 gyama of their produce for one mu of land amounting to 1400 gyama in total to the county authorities. Moreover, as tax for animal feeds, 100 yuan for each animal is levied. This system of taxation requires the authorities to pay a certain amount of money in return for the produce, which is much lower than the market price. However, this is covered as the cost of fertilisers, which the farmers are issued regardless of its' necessity. Such a collection performed irrespective of the quality of harvest and the number of family members is an encumbrance to the farmers' livelihood.

Many of the farmers therefore take up in other jobs such as picking *yartsa gunbu* (medicinal plant) and working on construction sites. The farmers buy food

provisions out of the income procured through these odd jobs from the market at a much higher price. The medical fees at the clinic in Dechen township is also not consistent to the income of the villagers. This hinders villagers from employing the medical services available to them. For more serious cases, one has to visit the county hospital which is far more expensive. Dhondup corroborates that one has to have at least 1000 yuan (eight yuan is equivalent to US 1$) to receive any medical attention at the county level. However, any birth control procedures are free of cost. The authorities have set the limit of two children per couple. A third child is fined 500 yuan. Usually, after the second child the mother is required to undergo contraception. Every year five to six women in Dechen township undergo this procedure. This is strictly controlled by a group consisting of the township and village doctor and the heads of the two offices as well. This group constantly instill the notion in the minds of the villagers that they are poor because they have many children. Cases of physical impairment due to incompetent operation performed by semi-skilled doctors and health workers are common. In 1997 in Chentsathang village in Chatsang township in Chentsa County, Dorjee Dolma, a 28 year-old died following her sterilisation operation. Subsequent to her operation, she became ill and never fully recovered.

The medical expenses are high for example, an intravenous procedure would cost 140 yuan. This is in an area where the per capita income is approximately 2000 yuan per family.

There are approximately 70 children of school-going-age in Dechen township and only one primary school. The education system, mainly the course content coupled with the absence of a positive future prospects and high fees discourage parents from sending their children to school. In a year only two or three students pass the entrance exams for middle schools. The rest of them return to farm work. Parents find the whole process futile when the children end up becoming farmers.

The residents of Dechen township have been prohibited from possessing any pictures of the Dalai Lama nor can wear pendants carrying pictures of the Dalai Lama around their neck. Dhondup left home in July 2000 and reached Nepal on August 2000 after walking for almost a month across the Himalayas. ✹

Pema Dorjee, a 29 year-old nun of Dukka Nunnery reports on enforced sterilisation and contraception in her village called Dreka in Samyen township, Qinghai.

In Dreka village, the birth control policy was introduced in 1993 whereby a two-child limit was set for all couples. In Dreka village there are about 45 nomadic families. The authorities made clear the consequences for failure to comply to the orders. Dorjee recalls that a fine of 2000 yuan (US$300) was imposed for a third child born after the announcement, with progressively higher fines for each successive child. A fine of 500 yuan annually is levied for the third child until she/he reaches the age of 13. Those who do not have money to cover the fine would face confiscation of agricultural produce and animals by the health officer. Dorjee recalls that, "the Chinese health officers visit our villages and systematically check all the families. The forced sterilisation (tubectomy) procedures are conducted mainly twice a year, in April and August. At the time we were approximately 16 of us 'eligible' for sterilisation and I was told to get rid of my third child, which I was carrying at the moment and fined 2000 yuan for conceiving. As I did not have enough money, the authorities confiscated my animals instead. However, I escaped abortion since i discreetly delivered my child at my mother's country in Hotoe township."

"In my village they are no clinics save for one in the township. Medical expenses are high thus giving rise for many villagers to receive home remedies. Also, we are strictly instructed not to display photographs of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The head of our village is a Chinese and his name is La Shunyin. There are also many Chinese traders who perform business in our village. The Chinese children easily get admission in the township school where it is more difficult for Tibetan children to acquire admission."

Dorjee's immediate family consists of six members including four siblings of which she is the eldest. She has two younger brothers and a sister. All the siblings are married now. Dorjee's youngest sister has two children only due to the birth control policy. They are nomads by occupation. Since they have 50 yaks and 200 goats, they are required to pay land tax for the feeds as well as a separate tax for possesing the animals to the township officer. For a yak they have to pay six yuan, five yuan for a goat and eight yuan for horses.

Dorjee joined the nunnery after being married for 20 years. She is currently a nun and her children are being taken care of by her mother and relatives. ✹

ANNOUNCEMENT

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT IN TIBET: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE

This report evaluates China's compliance with the CAT and Other Cruel, Inhuman of Degrading Treatment or Punishment, relative to Tibet.

This report is based on information gathered from the Chinese government and other non-governmental sources, United Nations reports, interviews with Tibetans in exile, reports from internationally recognised NGO's and governmental reports, in addition to information compiled by TCHRD.

This report which is available free of cost can be obtained by writing to us or becoming a member of the Centre. For details regarding membership procedures please refer the last page.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

Human Rights Week



Human rights week

As part of the activities to highlight the human rights situation in Tibet and to educate the Tibetan community on the concept of democracy and importance of people's participation in the democratic set up, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy organised a week-long human rights awareness programme. This was held at the Tibetan Community Centre, Mcleod Ganj from 2-8 September 2000.

The first day of the programme coincided with the Tibetan 'Democracy Day' where Mr. Thupten Lungrig, the Vice-Chairman of the Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies spoke on the concept of democracy and importance of people's participation in the forth coming election of the 13th assembly election. For the rest of the week, the staff of the centre dealt with a specific human rights issue and gave talks followed by video shows. The week ended with a session with a panel discussion on the theme 'refugee: problems of adaptation and rehabilitation'. The panelists included experts from various fields representing different offices.

Alongside, a signature campaign calling for the release of prominent political prisoners was organised.



Panelists for discussion on refugee problems

Conferences and visits

- The Executive Director of the Centre Mr. Lobsang Nyandak attended a workshop on Autonomy in Delhi as a resource person from the 20-27 of September. The workshop was organised by the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre. It was attended by teachers and settlement officers from India.
- Ms. Phurbu Dolma, the Accountant visited the TCHRD branch office in Nepal to settle and renew accounts of the Centre. The trip was also meant to introduce our new staff Dorjee Damdul to the workings of our office there.

New TCHRD Members

Tsering Norzom, Namgyal Saldon and Flavio Werneck have joined as members of TCHRD this month. TCHRD has currently 116 members.

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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) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 1998 Annual Report: *Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity* • Behind Bars: *Prison Conditions in Tibet* (1998) • Closing the Doors: *Religious Repression in Tibet* (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) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Tales of Terror: *Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • TCHRD *Review* (2000) • Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet (2000).

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HUMAN RIGHTS update
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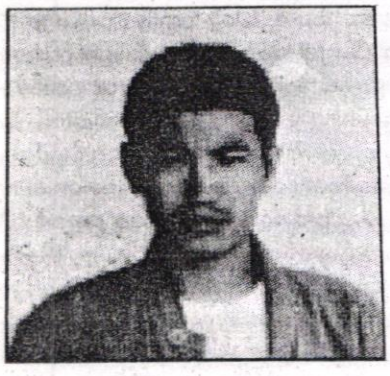
TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

OCTOBER 2000

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Testimony of a former political prisoner



Jamphel Sherab, 31 year-old Drepung monk is from Jishong village Gongkar County. He arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on 22 October 2000.

On 27 September 1988, to commemorate the anniversary of the demonstration of the previous year, six monks from Drepung Monastery staged another peaceful demonstration in Lhasa. They were Ngawang Samphel, Jamphel Wangchuk, Ngawang Zegen, Ngawang Thosam, Ngawang Chemey and Jamphel Sherab, who was the ringleader. They started the demonstration by shouting slogans such as " Tibetan Freedom", "Chinese quit Tibet", and "Tibet belongs to Tibetans".

The six monks wore laymen's clothing and while they were going around, five other people joined them. They had just managed to go around one and half rounds when the armed policeman arrived in large numbers. However, the local mass managed to drive them away. That day none of the monks were arrested. Therefore, the monks immediately escaped to Samye in Lhoka, where Sherab had an uncle. The three of them then revealed to the uncle that they were on a hide out. Since it was too risky, the monks got some money from the uncle and headed towards Chakpori.

The next day, they went to Lhasa to assess the situation. Upon reaching there, an old Tibetan woman who recognised them did not want to risk having the monks arrested. She took the monks to a Nepali-Tibetan family (Tibetan: *Ka Tsa ra*). The family gave them food and the monks spent the night in their house. The following day Sherab met an old acquaintance, Thachen, who took them to his home. Thachen gave them food and they spent another night there. He suggested that the monks should go to India and even gave them 1000 yuan towards travel expenses. The monks were basically trying to evade arrest by moving from one place to another while trying to figure out what they should do next.

In the meantime, Lamrim Rinpoche from Drepung Monastery sent a letter advising them to return to the monastery as moving around the place will do no one any good. Once the monks met Lamrim Rinpoche at his residence, he complimented them and told them to stay in the monastery. He warned them to be prepared to go to prison, to wear warm clothes, to be honest and to tell the truth.

Eleven days after their peaceful demonstration, Chinese policemen arrived in Drepung Monastery, around 9.00p.m. Sherab was called to the 'Democratic Management Committee' in the monastery and two Policemen interrogated him. They told Sherab that he did a stupid thing but Sherab responded with full determination that he was right in what he did. Then, at approximately 11p.m. the monks were taken to Gutsa Detention Centre. By the time the monks reached Gutsa, it was around 1.00a.m. They were all detained in different cells. At 3a.m. that morning, the monks were individually interrogated, severely beaten and tortured including being shocked with electric batons.

Sherab continued to remain detained for 18 months while the others were released after nine months, save for Nawang Zegen, who died six days after his release on medical grounds, following his six months detention. Sherab was confined with criminal prisoners, such as murderers, rapists, robbers, and other Chinese nationality prisoners. The only other political prisoner confined with him was Tenpa, a Lama from Ramoche Monastery originally from Drayab in Kham.

While in detention, once the prison guard claimed that Sherab insulted him by not saluting him. The prison guard made Sherab bend on all fours and hit him in the stomach, stamped on his hands and kicked him in the face.

Three days after Sherab was released, Chinese officials held a mass meeting in Drepung Monastery. The officers counted the number of monks who were former political prisoners including those currently held in prison. There were in total, 43 monks and all of them were declared expelled from the monastery. The former political prisoners were handed over to PSB officers of their respective areas. However, since there was no one from

Sherab's area, he remained at the monastery for an additional nine days. After nine days, three officers came with the religious head of Gongkar County who handed over Sherab to his family and strict restrictions were placed on him.

After some bribery, he obtained permission to go to Drepung Monastery for six months. He then alternated between being at the monastery, at home or in retreat, until Lamrim Rinpoche promised to take responsibility for him to the police. Since then he stayed in Drepung Monastery for two years until Lamrim Rinpoche's demise in 1997. Within 20 days of Rinpoche's demise, Sherab was expelled from the monastery saying, "You are a counter-revolutionary activist."

Following his expulsion, he stayed in Lhasa at a house that belonged to his relatives. There he studied and read scriptures but had no other work. He then moved to a house bought for him by his teachers, Ngawang Thochu and Ngawang Woeser, and studied under a private tutor from Tibet University, Sortha Dorjee. He studied Tibetan Literature and Poetry. However, opportunities were limited for Sherab.

Therefore, he left Lhasa on 6 October with a document that allowed him to go till Dram. There he stayed for eight days before walking for two days and one night to the house of his Sherpa guide. He paid the guide 2000 yuan, which covered expenses for the food and transportation.

He stayed five days at the Sherpa's home, whilst the Sherpa returned to Dram to collect two other escapees, a middle school student and a driver, both from Amdo. They left the house at around 1.30a.m. for Barabasi, where they hid under the bridge for six hours. An Ambulance gave them a ride, concealing them at the back of the vehicle. They travelled non-stop to the Ambulance driver's house where they waited for three hours for the Sherpa guide to arrive with their luggage. From there, they proceeded to the Reception Centre, arriving on 22 October 2000.

Sherab's family consist of ten members including his parents, two elder brothers, three younger sisters, and two younger brothers. His family are farmers. Sherab went to Jishong primary school at the age of nine and completed when he was 14. He came to Lhasa on 15 October 1980, and worked in a cement factory as a part time worker. When he turned 18 in 1983, Sherab joined Drepung Monastery. At that time there were approximately 450 monks in the monastery.

Restrictions in Gongkar County

At every political meeting held twice a week by Gongkar County Officials since 1999, the local farmers are forbidden from possessing pictures of the Dalai Lama and discussing about Tibetan freedom. Government officials are not permitted to worship or hold any religious ceremonies. Security personnel posted in every village keep vigilance over the political activities of the villagers such as engaging in freedom talks and listening to Voice Of America.

Families in Gangchu village having relatives and family members in India are interrogated to check for any communication between them. Letters received from India are checked for any political contents mentioned therein. Gangchu village has 93 families with an estimated population of 560. In the beginning of 2000, the Chinese officials held mass meetings in the village whereby every villager was drilled to speak against Tibet Freedom.

Hui She village under Jishong township is the birthplace of late Tashi Tsering who lowered the Chinese national flag in front of the Potala Palace in 1999. His father, Yebsang, passed away in 1998. Tashi has one brother and a sister at home. His parents were divorced in 1992. Tashi and his mother moved to Lhasa, whilst his father remained at home.

On 26 August 1999 Tashi Tsering from Lhoka prefecture lowered the Chinese national flag in front of the Potala Palace. He attempted to commit suicide imeediately thereafter but the explosives strapped on his body failed to ignite. Tashi was immediately arested and was beaten so severely by security officials that he could barely walk by the time he was taken into custody. He was beaten even at the time of transportation to the place of detention.

Soon after the incident in Lhasa, Tashi's native place was flooded with army policemen. His mother and wife who are residing in Lhasa were also called for interrogation. They were detained for several days. His relatives back in his hometown in Lhoka Gongkar were rigorously interrogated with humiliation and torture by the PSB.

From then on, the control of Jishong township was heavily tightened. No family dares to keep photo of the Dalai Lama in their house. One family in village # 12 of Gyaral township was caught possessing the banned photo and was called to a meeting and publicly humiliated. Later, they were allegedly fined although the informant does not know the amount.

According to a Xinhua report of 21 October 1999, Xu Mingyang, executive vice chairman of the 'TAR', "denied some foreign reports claiming that the man who attempted the explosion was killed in a local prison...The criminal, a farmer from the suburbs of Lhasa, the regional capital, is still alive and has confessed all his criminal activities, showing willingness to correct himself". The report did not mention the state of Tashi Tsering's health and did not specify whether he had been sentenced.

The Chinese officials have ignored demands by TCHRD to produce Tashi Tsering if their claims stand true.

Migmar Gyaltsen, a 27 year-old escapee from Tibet, is the eighth child of eleven siblings in his family. Born in Gangchu village, Section five, Jishong township, Gongkar County, Migmar had never been to school. Except for four of his siblings, all others are illiterate. Migmar reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 25 September 2000. Migmar also reports on forced labour and purchase of fertiliser.

* Farmers in Gangchu village, irrespective of their age, are required to work for 15 days a year without wage. The work involves road construction, digging tunnels and other manual labour.

continued on page 4

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 75

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

Seven years imprisonment in Drapchi

Che Che is a 29 year-old from Kuru village, Sumpang township in Phenpo Lhundrup County. She was a nun at Phenpo Gyabra Nunnery. There are six members in her family. Her father passed away when she was young. She has one brother and two younger sisters. They are semi-nomads by occupation. Since childhood, she was at home helping her parents at work.

In 1990, she joined Phenpo Gyabra Nunnery. Since then she was at the Nunnery which was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. She was involved in the renovation work of the nunnery. Except for 20 nuns, rest of the 120 are novice nuns.

On 12 February 1995, 14 nuns of Phenpo Nunnery set out to Lhasa to initiate a demonstration. They are Chogdrup Dolma, Ngawang Dolma, Thupten Jugney, Yangdon, Jamdron, Monlam Choenyi, Tsering Choekyi, Ngawang Zoepa, Ngawang Tsomo, Namgyal, Sherab Choephel, Palchen, Chungkyi and Che Che. For one whole day, the nuns walked to Lhasa from Phenpo. The next day, the nuns held a peaceful demonstration where they shouted pro-independence slogans. However, Lhasa City PSB officers immediately arrested the nuns and took them to Gutsa Detention Centre. Upon reaching Gutsa, the PSB officers beat the nuns individually. The nuns were interrogated for several hours at a stretch while simultaneously subjecting them to inhumane torture.

In June 1995, the 14 nuns were tried in the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court. The nuns were sentenced to various prison terms ranging from five to seven years' imprisonment. Che Che was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

On 31 July 1995, the 14 nuns were transferred to Drapchi as part of the group of 60 nuns who first occupied the new rukhag # 3. The day coincided with August First (Chinese Bayi Day) which marks the foundation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) on 1 August 1949. The nuns were kept standing for the whole day from morning to evening on their first day in Drapchi. The nuns were forced to keep papers under their armpits and in between their knees. Furthermore, the nuns had to balance a bowl of water on the head. This kind of punishment continued for three months until November 1995.

They were further subjected to an 'exercise' in the form of drill instructions. Many nuns were susceptible to severe beatings and punishment during that time as the instructions were only in Chinese and because the nuns came from rural background they did not follow the orders.

On 10 February 1997, the prison authorities assembled the nuns and made them sing patriotic Chinese songs. Two nuns sang in high pitched voices to sink the voices of those singing the patriotic songs and gradually other nuns joined in. The nuns were immediately removed from the place while the other nuns shouted for the release of the two nuns. Many nuns faced severe beatings following this incident.

Che Che was again subjected to beatings and torture following the May 1 and 4 demonstration. She was confined to a solitary cell for three months due to her participation. Upon her release from the solitary confinement cells, her sentence was extended for another two years in October 1998 totaling her prison term to seven years' imprisonment.

Che Che is reportedly under very appalling condition and is mentally unstable.

ntinued from page 2

fine of 40 yuan is imposed on any erson failing to carry out the required ork.

The farmers are forced to buy the two nds of fertiliser available every year. One used on the surface and the other is ig into the soil. The former costs 53 yuan r a load with a weight of 100 'gyama' nd the latter cost 100 yuan for a load at also weighs 100 'gyama'.

Although the fertiliser is not so useful, is distributed throughout the township nd village, and nobody has the right to fuse it. Local authorities deliver the nwanted fertiliser at the doorstep of each mily and collect the payment. On verage, each person needs to buy four oads of surface fertiliser and six loads of -ground fertiliser.

Migmar himself worked on the farm at ome. Migmar's eleven family members ave 56 *mu* (one mu is equal to 67 square eters) of land. Normally, each person wns five *mu* and they grow mainly wheat nd barley. The annual yield is pproximately 600-700 *drukhel* (one ukhel is equal to 14 kg). Each family is pected to submit 130 *drukhel* to the overnment at a lower rate.

Migmar found it stifling to adhere to e demands of the Chinese authorities. e felt that "people outside Tibet should ow about what is happening." Migmar ft Lhasa with a group of escapees and me to Nepal via Porong.

Work team' in ashoe Monastery

'Work teams' who arrived in Pashoe onastery in 1998 told that Buddhism is minority religion and preached 'freedom religion'. Their concept of religious edom is to endorse a total lack of scipline within the monastery. For stance, the freedom for monks to come nd go during prayer sessions. These eas are also distributed in a written format.

They also enforced an age limit in Pashoe Monastery that time, compelling many monks to leave. Currently, the maximum number of monks allowed at the monastery is 238. There are however, 140 monks that have been officially expelled but who still surreptitiously continue their studies, and leave during the 'work team' visits.

When the Chinese issued ID for all the acceptable monks, there was a group of younger monks who wanted to stage opposition. They were however advised against taking any such action by the senior monks as it might have serious repercussions on the monastery.

The 'work team' officials told that "the Dalai Lama was wrong in his political stance, and used as an example how he had personally been wrong before by worshipping Shugden, which he had later banned." They provided written documents expounding such ideas, which the monks later burnt or shredded into pieces in anger. Same talks were given in other monasteries, and were received with similar responses.

There was no political activity undertaken by the monks at Pashoe Monastery itself, only by some of those studying elsewhere, mainly Lhasa. As the senior monks made a declaration that the monastery had no connection with political activities or the Dalai Lama, no further 'work team' members were sent to the monastery.

Lobsang Tsering, a 24 year-old former monk of Pashoe Monastery reached India on 19 October 2000. Tsering is originally from Winda village in Chamdo. Tsering though ordained as a monk at the age of 10, stayed working with his family until 1995, when he joined Pashoe Monastery.

Tsering comes from a nomad family of eight, including three elder brothers and two younger sisters. The family owns 40 *yaks* and *dri*, 60 sheep and three horses. There are 23 such families in his village. As no school facilities are available in the village as well as in the surrounding Gochisang, the whole family is uneducated and involved themselves in nomadic work.

Tsering left for Lhasa on 26 March and spent the next five months searching for a way to get to India He studied English in the evenings at a school near Ramoche Monastery. The school employs foreign teachers that were constantly changing. There were 40-50 students and his friends paid the fees for him, so he does not know the amount. There were no restrictions or police surveillance, so he thinks the school operates with the Chinese approval.

Tsering left Lhasa on 3 October with a group of 27. They divided at Shigatse and regrouped later on. They proceeded to Dingri in a covered truck, and walked to Shar Bumpa evading the checkpoints during the nights. There was one Tibetan guide, to whom they each paid 1050 to 1500 yuan. He took them as far as the border and left them to fend for themselves.

Within Nepal, they encountered a checkpoint where Nepal police took their belongings and demanded Rs. 15,000 per person. They were told to return to Tibet and were escorted back towards the border where they escaped during the night whilst the police were asleep. They were detained in Ziri some days later and were taken to Zagoduk by bus, for which they each had to pay Rs. 50. They were then taken to Immigration Office where the police tried to exhort Rs.10,000 from them allegedly for the food provided, which had consisted solely of noodles. The Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal collected them from the Immigration Office in Nepal.

Tsurphu Monastery after Karmapa's defection

Karma Thupten Choephel is a 24 year-old monk from Tsurphu Monastery. Originally from village # 2, Shepo township in Nyemo County, Choephel

arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal on 15 October 2000.

After the defection of Karmapa earlier this year, his attendants Choedup, Dasa and Sonam Tsering were detained for one day in Lhasa and forced to stand up on the chair during interrogation session as a form of punishment and humiliation. The three were on duty the night the escape was made. They were accused of being linked to the escape plan.

Currently, Tsurphu Monastery houses 326 monks. New admission to the monastery is strictly prohibited and monks related to officers in the Tibetan administration in exile are expelled. Names of some of the expelled monks are: Jigme, Pema Dorjee, Rigsang, Sonam Tsering, Tsetan Choephel, Gyaltsen and Tenzin Nyandak. Tibetan officials working in the Chinese administration are not allowed to perform any religious ceremonies or worship.

The administrative set up of Tsurphu Monastery was reshuffled after the defection, save for Lobdun who is the head of the Democratic Management Committee. He is reportedly loyal to the Chinese government and exhibits no interest in Tibetan Freedom and the Dalai Lama. The Chinese officials praise him as a role model who keeps 'strict discipline in the monastery and loves the nation'. The monks have appealed to change him as their head but the officials paid no heed to their request.

Monks of Tsurphu monastery are subjected to serious restrictions whereby armed policemen scrutinise their movements all the time. The gates of the main prayer hall is guarded by policemen before, after and during prayer sessions. Monks are not allowed to visit each other's rooms even for study purposes. The policemen on duty barge in and ask various questions such as, "What are you talking about?" "Are you planning to escape to India?" "Are you communicating with the Dalai 'splittist'?" Choephel says, "Nowadays any talks of escaping to India, listening to Dalai Lama's speech tapes and listening to Tibetan broadcasting are treated a worse crime than criminal activities, including killing."

Following the flight of the Karmapa, all the Kargyu Monasteries were under tight control. For example, restrictions were imposed on Nyelnang Kargyu Monastery in Toelung Dechen and Kalo Kargyu Monastery in Kham Derge. The monks of these monasteries were forbidden from moving around freely. Policemen kept a strict vigil within the monastery. Similar type of restrictions imposed in Tsurphu Monastery was applied to other Kargyu Monasteries as well. In some other monasteries in Nyemo, the photo of Ugen Thinley Dorjee (Karmapa) is forbidden.

"After Gyalwa Karmapa's escape, the number of visitors to Tsurphu Monastery has declined drastically. A 12 year-old boy recognised as Pawo Rinpoche by Gyalwa Karmapa and who was staying at Tsurphu Monastery was taken away from the monastery. He was forced to attend a regular school in Lhasa although I am not sure of the name of the institution."

Karma Thupten Choephel left his native place on 3 September and escaped to Nepal via Mount Kailash with a group of four people. "My main aim for coming to India is to seek an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Besides, Gyalwa Karmapa is now in India. There is less freedom of religion in Tibet. Right now, the Tibetan officials are not allowed to worship, however, I think this will gradually apply to the monks."

Testimony of a former teacher

Rinchen Paldon, a 20 year-old former primary school teacher relates the condition of school system, annual tax, 'work team' visits and prostitution in her native town in Tibet upon her arrival in India.

Following formal tests in Maths and Tibetan, Rinchen was assigned to Thokar Choe Primary school as a mathematics teacher where she worked for four years on a meagre salary of 150 yuan per month. The students are taught Tibetan, Maths and Chinese in the school. Most of the lessons deal with the achievements of Chinese revolutionary leaders like Mao and including Chinese literature and history. In the school, there are 12 Tibetan teachers and 150 students. After six years of study in Thokar Choe Primary school since the age of eight, Rinchen joined County Middle School as a private candidate for one year.

One of the main underlying reason for Rinchen's escape is that she wants to do further studies which is made quite impossible with the high fees. The meagre salary of 150 yuan she earned as a primary teacher for four years is not enough to sustain her livelihood itself. Rinchen feels there is no future for the Tibetans in her own homeland of Pashoe. So, on the pretext of going to Lhasa for a treatment, Rinchen escaped to India.

In Yado village there are 38 families, but there is neither a clinic nor any electricity. The government on the other hand, imposes various kinds of taxes such as butter, grass, wood and grain taxes. 150 *gyama* (one gyama is equal to 500 grams)of grass is given as grass tax per year whereas for the wood tax, each adult pays 80 *gyama* of wood. The grain tax is collected on the basis of amount of *mu* that each possess but she has no clear data on the exact figure.

Public meetings are called in the village in which the Chinese announce that Tibetans are not to keep photos of the Dalai Lama. Chinese officials raided the Tibetan houses twice in 1997. The Tibetan people hide the banned photo when the Chinese come and put them back on display when they are gone. Chinese who are in the majority in Pashoe township, are engaged in various kinds of work such as business, running shops and restaurant. Such overwhelming Chinese presence and commerce deprives the Tibetans of the income generating sectors.

Besides, prostitution flourish in Pashoe township. Initially, the prostitutes carry out the work in bars and karaoke in discretion. But in 1997, concrete shelters were built where these prostitutes carry out their businesses candidly. Prostitutes numbering upto dozens are all Chinese immigrants from China.

In March 2000, Rinchen left her native place and came to Lhasa with her father and two sisters. After 15 days stay at Lhasa, they met an Amdo guide to whom they paid 600 yuan as a security deposit and agreed to pay 800 yuan each upon their safe arrival in India. Unfortunately, the Chinese policemen caught them in Chosu while they were on their way. Rinchen and her father were imprisoned whereas the two younger sisters, aged 13 and 10 were left standing outside, in the yard.

While in detention, the father and daughter were interrogated as to their destination and purpose of their journey. They got severe beatings, suffered kicks, punches, slaps and were shocked with the electric baton when they responded that they were on a pilgrimage.

Eventually, they had to tell the truth that they were going to India, for which they were detained. Rinchen was held for two days and her father for one month and 13 days. All the cash and belongings they had with them were confiscated, except for those that they managed to hide in their shoes and toothpaste container.

Rinchen's father stayed in Lhasa for 15 days after release and then returned home to Pashoe, leaving Rinchen and her two younger sisters at a relative's home in Lhasa. Whilst in Lhasa, Rinchen worked in a Chinese restaurant as a sweeper for six months, for which she was paid 300 yuan per month including food. But all these time, her determination to escape again was still alive. So, in her second attempt with a group of 27 people, they walked 14 days via Shar Bumpa and arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre on 17 October. Rinchen wishes to attend a Tibetan school in India.

Correction

In our September 2000 issue of Human rights Update, we have incorrectly identified Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok as Khenpo Yeshi Phuntsok. We humbly apologise for the mistake.

Environmental damage and racial discrimination in Mining area

Mhera Mining Area in Themchen County has led to the depletion of surrounding grassland and resulted in the accidental death of grazing herds as well as a few local Tibetans of Huo Long area. Waste materials from the mining that are dumped indiscriminately around the area cause major environmental damage. Least attention is paid to local protests regarding environmental destruction from the mining operation.

Mhera Mining Area started in 1990 under authorisation from the town has about 1000 workers, and the surrounding area and village is populated by Tibetans. The mine supplies coal to many nearby cement factories including Ghomo Cement Factory, Zhite County Cement Factory, the Xingne Khangthang Cement Factory and Lhanzhouthang Cement Factory. From July to September, considered as the peak season, 10,000 *tuen* (one tuen is equal to 1000 kg) of coal extracted from the mine would be transported in 50-60 trucks per day. One large truck could hold around eight *tuen*.

The majority of the workers are Chinese. Previously there were ten Tibetans working but that has now been reduced to less than half a dozen. The mine contractor, a Chinese man transfers his own people in to work and there were instances of open bigotry with the Tibetans being called 'Tibetan dog' by Chinese. Further discrimination is practised with the Tibetans being prevented from working at high salary posts.

There are also reports of unofficial tax being levied on the villagers. When Chinese officials or friends of the County head (Chinese: *xianzhang*) desired supplies, they would give a slip of paper with the required products written on them which could also include livestock. When this slip was presented to a particular family that the County head had chosen, that family is forced to supply these items without payment, under the auspices of it being a form of tax.

Jamyang, a 23 year-old driver at Mhera Mining Area left Tibet on 7 October and walked via Shar Bumpa in a group of 31 people. They had a Khampa guide, Tashi, to whom he paid 800 yuan but the rate varied for each escapee. The whole group was caught at Barabasi and taken to the Immigration office. Later, a staff from the Reception Centre in Nepal collected them on 24 October. Now in exile, Jamyang wants to seek an audience with the Dalai Lama and pursue further studies.

Nag Nunnery closed down by Chinese 'work team'

Sonam Wangyal who recently arrived in Dharamsala reported that Chinese 'work team' closed Nag Nunnery, situated north of Tawu County, Sichuan Province. The closure of the nunnery is part of the 'Strike Hard' Campaign that the Chinese government launched in Tibet in April 1996.

According to Sonam, a ten-member 'work team' officials from Tawu County visited Nag Nunnery in May 2000 and forced the nuns to accept political allegiance that opposes the Dalai Lama. Chinese authorities declared that those nuns who accept the political allegiance will be given identity card.

Around 130 nuns in the nunnery unanimously opposed the order of the 'work team' and refused to sign the pledges. As a result, 'work team' closed and sealed the nunnery. All the nuns were sent back to their homes and some went to other places.

Nag Nunnery is traditionally a Gelug (Buddhist sect) nunnery, which was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and rebuilt by local Tibetans.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin 79

Education talk and classes on human rights and democracy in three Tibetan schools

Lobsang Tsering, Researcher and Jampel Monlam, Field Officer, visited three Tibetan schools as part of the educational programme TCHRD organises every year.

From 3 October to 6 October, Lobsang and Jampel visited Tibetan Homes Foundation School and Central School for Tibetans in Mussoorie and delivered talks about human rights and democratic values and principles to students ranging from age 16 to 18 years. They took separate sections from class eight, nine and ten.

During the classes, they talked about present democratic system of the exile government and status of Tibetan refugees in India. The students were also informed on the United Nations offices and their mandates. Human Rights and Democracy booklets were distributed as reference book for the students. The students actively participated and questions were raised about Tibet's situation in the United Nations. In the evenings Jampel, who is a former political prisoner gave an account of his prison life to the students. The response from the students was overwhelming.

On 6 October, Lobsang and Jampel went to CST, Paonta Sahib and talked to around 150 students ranging from age 12 to 15 on human rights and democracy. Similar discussions were held and the children appeared extremely interested.

TCHRD staff in Japan

Gaden Tashi, Field Officer of TCHRD branch office in Kathmandu, Nepal is currently in Japan. His trip started on 15 October and will last a month. Gaden Tashi was invited by Amnesty International in Japan to give talks on the current situation in Tibet. While in Japan, he visited the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo and submitted a memorandum calling for the release of political prisoners in Tibet. He also met with the Foreign Secretary of Japan and informed her about the human rights situation in Tibet and beseeched for her countrys' support in improving the situation.

Signature Campaign

As of 2 September 2000, friends of TCHRD volunteered to distribute our literatures and collect signatures from visitors in Mcleod Ganj. This signature campaign is a part of petitions demanding release of prominent political prisoners who continue to be detained in Chinese-administered prisons in Tibet. So far, TCHRD received 3088 signatures of visitors from 42 different countries. The signatures have been submitted to the Chinese Embassy.

TCHRD staff members attend Diplomacy Training Programme

Four staff members of the Centre including the Executive Director, Lobsang Nyandak; Senior Programme Officer, Youdon Aukatsang; Researcher Lobsang Tsering and Tenzin Chokey attended an eight-day workshop on Diplomacy.

The training programme organised by the Diplomacy Training Programme under the University of New South Wales, Australia in collaboration with the Department of Information and International Relations was attended by 30 participants representing different departments and organisations.

The Executive Director took a session during this programme on lobbying at the UN and how the UN has functioned in the past with regard to Tibet issue. The Senior Programme Officer, Youdon Aukatsang gave a session on the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

New TCHRD Members

Tenzin Kunsel, Mrs. Geetha Basappa, Tashi Gyurmey, Sonam Gyatso, Tenzin Nyima and Choegyal are the new members of TCHRD this month. TCHRD has currently 124 members.

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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) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 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) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Tales of Terror: *Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • TCHRD *Review* (2000) • Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet (2000).

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

NOVEMBER 2000

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Death of Renowned Political Prisoner Sholpa Dawa

Sholpa Dawa, a 60-year old tailor from Lhasa City died at 7am on 19 November 2000. He was reportedly taken to a hospital outside Drapchi Prison complex just a few days before his death, after ample indications that he required medical attention. The exact cause of his death is not known. His body was apparently not handed over to his family members to perform last rites. He is survived by his eight children. His wife, Lhakpa Dolma died in August 1987 while Sholpa was still in prison.

Sholpa worked as a construction labourer and later became a private tailor until he was first arrested on 29 September 1981 for allegedly distributing pamphlets on Tibetan independence. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and one-year's deprivation of political rights of which he spent six months in Gutsa Detention Centre and one and a half years in Sangyip Prison.

The verdict of his trial as reported in the 'TAR' Intermediate People's Court Document No.17 of 1982 states: "In 1980, Sholpa Dawa and defendants Lobsang Choedar and Tsering Lhamo, met at Lobsang Choedar's house and wrote circulars on the independence of Tibet. Thereafter, he contacted his accused friend Lobsang Wangchuk who helped him to prepare a history on the independent status of Tibet and a circular titled, 'Twenty Years of Tragic Experience."

Sholpa reportedly told Kunsang and his uncle who were working at the Metal and Wood Co-operative, to type the circular and hand them back to him. Sholpa, pretending to be making copies of religious manuscripts, borrowed a cyclo-styling machine from the Co-operative and made more than 160 pro-



independence posters and the forbidden Tibetan national flag in his home.

Not only did he distribute the posters, but he also sought assistance from Dhondup Dorje and Lobsang Choedar. Subsequent to his release, he worked as a labourer for one year at Nyethang County. On 8 November 1985 he was arrested for the second time for distributing pamphlets denouncing the deteriorating living conditions of the Tibetans, and Chinese invasion of Tibet. Sholpa was indicted along with eight other young Tibetans. This time he was sentenced to four years in Outridu Prison (now known as Lhasa Prison) and was deprived of his political rights for the duration of one year.

Sholpa's third arrest was in August 1995 in Lhasa City. He was arrested in connection with distributing pictures of the young Panchen Lama reincarnation recognised by the Dalai Lama. However, at the time it was rumoured inside Lhasa that Sholpa was arrested just prior to the 30th anniversary celebrations of the 'Tibet Autonomous Region', because of fear that he and other former political prisoners would disrupt the celebrations. He reportedly faced threats of execution by the Chinese authorities at the time.

Verdicts were issued on 8 August 1996 for Sholpa and his friend Topgyal. The verdict did not mention Sholpa's involvement in the Panchen Lama reincarnation issue. Rather, it stated: "After thorough investigation, in the year 1993 to 1994, the accused [Sholpa] Dawa told Dhondup Dorje and Ratoe Dawa to collect the list of all political prisoners who have served and who are also currently serving their prison term. Moreover, in July 1993, the accused Topgyal made three 'reactionary' documents and gave them to Sholpa Dawa who handed them over to the Dalai clique."

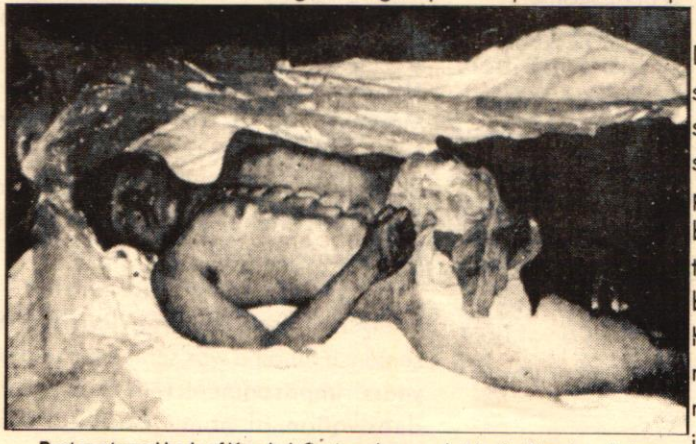
Topgyal remains incarcerated in Drapchi Prison serving his six-year sentence. Sholpa was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment with three years deprivation of political rights. Had Sholpa survived his prison sentence, he would have spent 15 years' imprisonment in total.

Tragedy at the Nepal-Tibet Border: A Tibetan paid with life to trek to freedom

Every year more than 2000 Tibetans trek across the difficult terrain of the Himalayas to escape the suppression of fundamental freedoms in Tibet. TCHRD has interviewed many such Tibetans over the years.

Gonpo Tseten is a young man of 16 who worked as a farmer as well as a road constructor in Karin township, Shoha County, Qinghai Province. He went to school for a short period but had to drop out since his parents were unable to afford the school fees. As a road constructor, he had to reconstruct the damaged highway leading to his village. His work involved laying of stones and sand. Gonpo was paid only 15 Yuan per day.

Gonpo Tseten left his hometown on 5 September 2000 for Lhasa. He left for Lhasa with a group of 24 people on 13 September 2000. They came by a truck to Shigatse and then proceeded to Laktse. From there, they walked with a Tibetan guide to the Nepal border. The guide left them at the foot of a snow-capped mountain in the Solukhumbu and told the group that Nepal is on the other side. The Guide charged Gonpo and others 1200 yuan each. From then on, the group trekked guideless till Jiri where they were arrested by the Nepal police. They were detained in a house for two days and a night. Most of the group members managed to escape but Gonpo and another member of the group lagged behind due to frostbitten legs. The group were caught and severely beaten by the policemen. They once again tried to escape and got onto a big truck. They asked the driver to take them to Kathmandu, but the driver was taking them to another police station. They jumped out of the truck and ran off with the Nepalese police chasing them. The police finally caught up with them. They were armed with rifles and batons and they fired tear gas at the group. The group ran helter skelter in fear of being shot and got split in two. The slower and the injured were left behind. The defenseless Tibetans out of fear started pelting stones at the policemen who retaliated by firing live rounds from their rifles. Kunchok Gyatso was shot through the jaw with the bullet penetrating from the left side and coming out of the right jaw. Among the several others injured were Tsewang Rinzin (20) and Daboshon Gyal (20). Gonpo Tseten was in the group that was left behind. He recounts that the policemen were beating his group severely with batons and rifle butts. There were seven people injured including a woman named Juchin Tso. Kunchok Gyatso was rushed to the Kathmandu Teaching Hospital while the others were taken to the Military Hospital. Later, upon intervention from the Tibetan Reception Centre, they were transferred to Kathmandu Hospital. It was later learned that Kunchok Gyatso had succumbed toinjuries at the hospital.



Post mortemed body of Kunchok Gyatso who was shot by the Nepalese Police

Frustrated Daboshon had this to say, " After the shooting, we were severely beaten by the policemen with rifle butts and batons. I think that it was the beating that caused Kunchok's death and not the shooting. The matter should be investigated."

Tibetan Farmer weighed down by taxation & other dues

Not only are the farmers in the Shopa Tho village in Lhorong Province, Chamdo faced with heavy taxation, they also have to pay other dues, including fees for their children's education. More often than not, because of these dues they are unable to make both ends meet.

Lobsang Choephel, a 29 year-old farmer from this same village is a case in point. His family of four draws sustenance from land measuring a mere 8 *mu* (1 mu is equivalent to 67 square meters), on which they grow wheat and barley. The income generated from this patch of land is not enough to feed his family and send his children to school. The annual turnout of harvest comes to approximately 2000 *Gyama* (1 Gyama is equivalent to 500 grams). They sell some part of the harvest for cash in order to buy bare necessities.

Lobsang's elder daughter, Namgyal Choetso, goes to the Sholpa Tho Primary School. Although the teachers are paid by the Township Administration, parents of the children have to give 300 gyama of grain and 15 Yuan in annual fees. A new classroom for the school was also built at the expense and the hard labour of the farmers themselves. Parents are also required to provide 18 gyama of butter for the teachers' consumption. Each person in the village has to obligingly provide 200 gyama of firewood.

Even after completing their education, village students have a very slim chance of getting a decent job. Bribery is all-pervasive and is a common practice among the Chinese officials, which further reduces any slight chance available to the village youth. According to Lobsang, "it is very common to see that jobs are given via a greasing of palms of the relevant authorities. Jobs are not assigned on the basis of merit or competitive exams, but, rather through personal connections."

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

Ngawang Dolma: A Voice Behind Bars

Ngawang Dolma, (lay name: Jampa), is a 28 year-old woman who hails from Phenpo Lhundup County, Melong village, Jangkhar township, in Lhasa. She is the youngest of the four siblings. Her family subsisted by farming. Ngawang was engaged in household chores from a very young age and therefore never went to school.

In 1990, Ngawang joined Gyabdrag Nunnery. At the time, there were 60 nuns, most of them in the range of 18-23 years. Gyabdrag Nunnery was completely destroyed during the the Cultural Revolution. Ngawang was involved in reconstructing the nunnery and also gathering resources for it.

In February1995, Ngawang along with 14 other nuns, planned a demonstration in Lhasa. They left for Lhasa on 12 February, 1995. On 13 February, at approximately 10 am, they took to the streets in Lhasa in front of Jokhang Temple, shouting "Tibet is Free", "Tibet belongs to Tibetans", and "Chinese go home." In a couple of minutes, they were all arrested by Public Security Bureau officials. When they began to resist the arrest, they were beaten and thrown in a police truck to be taken to the Lhasa PSB(Gutsa) Detention Centre.

Once at the Detention Centre, they were subjected to intensive interrogation. All of them suffered beatings for making inconsistent statements and not responding in the desired manner. For several months, they were detained. Neither the nunnery nor their families were informed of their whereabouts.

In June 1995, they were tried by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court. Ngawang Dolma and three other nuns were considered the main conspirators of the protest and sentenced to seven years in prison. Four other nuns were sentenced to six years and the rest were given five years.

They were then transferred to Drapchi Prison on 30 July. At that time, the new female unit #3 had just been constructed. They were the first female inmates to be kept in this unit. In order to weaken their resistance, they were subjected to torture right from day one. For a month, they were made to stand in the sun from sunrise to sunset, allowing breaks only during meals. After that, for almost four months, extended daily marchs were enforced. During these marches, Ngawang faced a lot of beatings because she could not follow the commands and also due to her physique, she had difficulty keeping up with the constant physical demands.

In 1997, on the occasion of the Tibetan New Year, the prison guards decided to allow a little celebration. Ngawang and her friends sang a freedom song. As soon as they finished, People's Armed Police (PAP) officials surrounded them. They were severely beaten with belt buckles and kept in solitary confinement.

Ngawang was also involved in the protest in May 1998. She suffered more beatings from participating in it. She now suffers from kidney problems and an ulcer. She is currently being treated at the prison and refused access to outside hospitals.

Some common forms of torture in Drapchi Prison have been reported as under:

- Physical beatings using fists, feet, electric batons, rubber cords, belts buckles, iron rods, electric cattle prods.
- Long terms of solitary confinement in dark cells too small to be able to stand or lie unbent in. Solitary confinement for showing a 'bad expression' to prison officials.
- Standing in total immobility in the sun for stretches ranging from 12 to 16 hours, with occasional, infrequent 10-minute toilet breaks. Paper had to be held between the legs and under the arms, and a bowl of water or book was positioned on the head. Any movement resulted in being beating with an electric baton, or a scalding from a cup of hot water thrown onto bare skin.
- Undergoing military drill-like sessions whilst having to shout slogans like: "strive for reformation" (*gyurkoy-la-shugnon*)"a new reformed man" (*lharyang mi sarpa*)

TCHRD Releases a new report on Racism

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has released its new report entitled *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* in anticipation of the forthcoming 2001 World Conference on Racism. The report systematically takes a look at discrimination practices in the spheres of employment, health, housing, education and political representation within Tibet; and determines the nature of anti-Tibetan racism.

The report asserts that the PRC has incorporated ancient racial prejudices and hierarchies in every sphere of life in Tibet in order to serve its contemporary goal of 'motherland uniformity'. Justifying itself through the rhetoric of Han superiority, China has attempted to diffuse Tibetan resistance through derogatory propaganda, economic pressures and sheer force of numbers.

The report describes how the massive Chinese immigrant populations have made it demographically impossible for Tibetans to participate on an equal basis in society. "Systematic discrimination in the spheres of employment, health, education and political representation continues to restrict Tibetan involvement in the development of their own country, and has denigrated Tibetan status in society to the point of their being seen as second-class citizens by virtue of their race alone", said Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

The employment sphere has become increasingly competitive, with priority continually accorded to Chinese workers. Biased regulations concerning the allocation of business permits, illegal practices of copying and underselling, overt wage discrimination, as well as compulsory unpaid labour all reflect anti-Tibetan sentiment on the part of the Chinese.

Discrimination is also apparent within the sphere of healthcare. Besides discriminatory charges and excessive hospital deposits, denial of treatment, deliberately dispensed expired or incorrect medicine, and forced sterilisation and abortion are common.

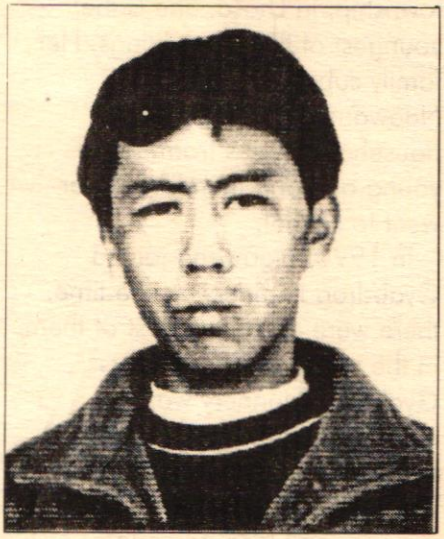
The report explains that within the education system, government expenditure is discriminatorily concentrated on developing schools in areas with high populations of Chinese settlers. There are also blatant fees and miscellaneous expenses inapplicable to Chinese students, and discriminatory examinations in which Tibetans must obtain higher pass marks than Chinese students. These examinations often must be supplemented by bribes.

Due to China's population transfer policy, Tibetans also face discrimination in the housing sector. Housing is immediately allocated to the new Chinese arrivals, and entire Tibetan neighbourhoods have faced eviction, and widespread demolition is common. Tibetans are relocated to shabbier dwellings and are forced to remain there through arbitrary searches and the restrictive Chinese household registration system. This occurs while government subsidies for the development of basic resources such as running water, electricity and proper sanitation are solely concentrated on Chinese areas, leaving Tibetan communities to fend for themselves.

China's control and manipulation of the public administration sector in Tibet is perhaps one of the most significant factors discussed in the report. The only Tibetans within the political system are token representatives lacking real or effective power to make decisions, elected through farcical elections. The grass-roots loyalty of Tibetans is also carefully monitored through the introduction of village self-government and neighbourhood committees. Lacking any effective avenues through which to make complaints, Tibetans are helpless to fight the discrimination practised in all sectors of society.

A Tibetan Student arrested for posting leaflets containing freedom songs

Phuntsok Wangchuk is a 27 year old student from Lhoka, Chongyal County, Perab township. He went to a nursery school for six years at Perab Township Public School. He also spent two more years at the County Primary School. When Phuntsok Wangchuk joined Lhoka Middle School #2 in 1990, there were



around 900 students. The students were mostly from the nomadic or farming backgrounds, but some Chinese officials also sent their children to the school. Subjects taught were Chinese, Tibetan, English, Maths, History, Geography, Natural Science, Chemistry, and Physics. Chinese was the medium of instruction in the school. He was arrested after having spent four years in school and right before his final examinations.

Students in his school started to hear freedom songs after the 1987 Lhasa demonstration. Some students even went as far as writing slogans of "Free Tibet" on the walls. With the coming of teachers from Tibet University to teach Tibetan, Tibetan language began to gain prominence and essay writing in Tibetan flourished. Phuntsok became somewhat popular in his school for being religious. With help from friends, he was able to get the Dalai Lama's cassettes to listen

to in secret. His friends provided him with news related to the freedom movement, such as the protests in Lhasa. During free time on Wednesdays and Saturdays, students got together to discuss and exchange ideas.

Four Exceptional Classes were held in four schools, in the towns of Lhasa, Shigatse, Lhoka and Nagchu. In these classes, subjects were taught in Tibetan. Phuntsok knew all the students in the Special Class of Lhoka Middle School #2. One student from that class by the name of Sherab Yeshi (late) gained permission to run a school radio station. Initially, the announcements as well as the songs were in Chinese but soon Sherab began making announcements in both Tibetan and Chinese. Tibetan songs were also broadcast. Since the students now had a cassette recorder at their disposal for broadcasting, they secretly gathered to listen to the Dalai Lama's illicit cassettes. With the initiative from the students, a weekly Tibetan magazine was initiated called "Sham Chu Se" meaning 'Spray of the Flowing River'. Indirect and veiled essays on 'Free Tibet' started appearing in the magazine. When the school noticed the magazine getting out of hand, they banned it, at the end of 1994. At the time, no arrests or detentions took place.

In the beginning of May 1994, Phuntsok wrote 'Free Tibet' on the class blackboard. He was caught and called to the School office. The authorities warned him from committing such acts again and the matter was settled without any fine or punishment. In early June 1994, he started secretly printing 'Free Tibet' leaflets and 300 song leaflets with the help of friends in School. The distribution areas were the suburbs of Nyitho, Tsetho, and Tsethan Middle School # 1, Tsethan Education Centre, and Tsethan bridge. The nuns in Tsethan Nunnery were also given some leaflets. From 4 to 15 June, he distributed leaflets with help from fellow students, Dawa Phuntsok and Lobsang Penpa.

The leaflets contained excerpts from the songs of a dissident musician Ngawang Choephel [now imprisoned in Tibet]: "... in last night's dream it seems I was in Tibet". He put the lyrics on the school notice board along with a quotation from the Dalai Lama's cassette: "China and Tibet has only priest and patron relationship and not a ruling relationship." His leaflet also carried the words: "Tibet will soon get freedom and Tibetans should be united". When students returned from their daily morning exercise, all of them saw the leaflet, and they began to sing the song loudly. An order was issued immediately by the school authority to detect the handwriting, but they were unable to establish the identity of the writer.

In an unrelated incident on 12-13 June, 1994, a student from the school landed in jail for stabbing another student. The police interrogated the arrested student on the freedom songs that were posted on the school notice board. A deal was made that if the identity of the person responsible for posting the freedom songs was revealed, he would get a lenient treatment.

On 15 June, at about 3 pm, seven policemen from Zitha police station came to Phuntsok's room and arrested him. Simultaneously, two plain-clothes policemen purporting to be his teachers arrived to interrogate him at his village home. Suspecting that they were police undercover, they pleaded that their son was mentally unbalanced. Even his teachers and fellow students made statements to the effect.

Initially Phuntsok did not confess during interrogation. However, when a young policeman told him to confess because he had been betrayed by a school friend, he had no choice. In his confession, he categorically stated that no other person was involved. He was only detained for six months at the Zitha Detention Centre after the statements made by his parents relating to his mental state. When his class mates came to visit him, he gave them an essay which contained political statements. Unfortunately, it was intercepted by the jail guard. On 20 September 1994, the Lhoka Intermediate People's Court sentenced him to five years imprisonment for counter revolutionary activities. He was given seven days to appeal. For six months, he was forced to reform labour: loading down the wood from trucks, construction work, and dumping waste. On 14 December, 1994, he was transferred to Drapchi Prison and was placed in Unit #5.

In 1998, prisoners were made to fill an annual form, promising to improve behaviour and reform political thinking. One prisoner, Samgyal Tenphel, 18 years old, refused to fill out the form and was subjected to solitary confinement. The other prisoners protested against this act. Two political prisoners were killed during this protest: Lobsang Wangchuk from Gaden Monastery, Medro Gongkar, and Khedup from Taktse County were beaten to death. Ngawang Solong suffered a shooting injury and Sonam Tenzin (25) committed suicide by hanging.

On 1 May 1998 (International Labour Day) a Chinese National Flag Raising Ceremony was held in the prison. The prisoners were instructed to walk under the flag and salute it. 60 political prisoners of the new Unit #5 were made to participate in the ceremony. At 9 am, prisoners were lined up and ordered to shout slogans: "Knowing ones guilt, "abiding by the rules", and "endeavor for self reform." Suddenly, two prisoners from Unit # 6 started shouting "Free Tibet" slogans, and threw up printed slogans; other prisoners joined in, turning the ceremony into chaos.

As a result, the following prisoners of Unit #6 were punished:

(1) Migmar (37) a former monk from Nyithang Tashi Kang Monastery, his prison term increased from six to ten years.

(2) Konto (24) from Gaden Monastery, was arrested in 1996 and sentenced to four years. His prison term was increased by one year.

(3) Tenzin (26) formerly a monk from Lhoka, Dranang County. He was arrested in 1994, sentenced to five years and his term was increased to nine years.

(4) Norbu Phuntsok (27) formerly a monk from Phenpo Lhundup County. His initial sentence of five years in 1995 was increased to eight years.

(5) Kapasang (27) formerly a monk from Phenpo Lhundup County, was

arrested in 1995. His sentence was increased from five to eight years.

(6) Ngawang (30) formerly a monk from Drepung Monastery, was arrested in 1991. Another five years was added to his existing 10 year sentence.

Some prisoners from the New Unit #5 also had their sentences increased:

(1) Lobsang Gelek (27) formerly a monk from Khang Mar Monastery in Damshung County, was arrested in 1995. He received an additional five year sentence with his total sentence coming to 10 years.

(2) Lhasang (26) a monk from Gun Sar Monastery was arrested in 1995 and sentenced to five years had his term increased to 10 years.

(3) Pasang (28) formerly a monk from Phenpo Lhundup County, was arrested in 1995 and sentenced to six years had his term increased to 10 years.

(4) Yeshi Jinpa (27) formerly a monk from Sung Rabling in Lhoka Gong Kar County, was arrested in 1993 and sentenced to six years and his term was increased to 11 years.

(5) Kalsang Phuntsok (23) a monk from Nyithang Tashi Kang Monastery from Choe Shur County was arrested in 1994 and sentenced to six years his term was increased to 10 years.

(6) Khedup (32) formerly a monk from Gaden Monastery in Taktse county, was arrested in December 1995 and sentenced to five years in prison. He was severely beaten and placed in solitary confinement because of his involvement in the May 1st protest. He died due to excessive torture on October 28, 1998.

(7) Lobsang Choephel (25) a monk from Khang Mar Monastery hanged himself in the bathroom. He left a suicide note which read: " I committed suicide for the six million Tibetan people. I will never salute and bow under the Chinese flag. My friends, we will meet in our next lives."

On 4 May, 1998, prisoners carried out the body of Lobsang Choephel, and shouted "Free Tibet." Upon hearing the protest, inmates in the old unit started demonstrating, and began to break down the prison gates. The prison officials shot at the prisoners and one prisoner, Ngawang Sherab, suffered injury. The PAP officials came and clamped down on the protest.

Around 7pm the same evening, Phuntsok was interrogated but he denied any involvement in the incident. He was then forced to stand in a crucifix position, a block of wood was placed along his shoulders, and his arms and hands were tied to it. He was shut in another prison ward with all the windows closed. Five or six prison guards hit him mercilessly with electric batons and iron rods. When he fell unconscious, cold water was thrown on his face. Even after he was taken back to his cell, the torture continued: an electric baton was activated on his genitals and in his mouth. His condition then became so serious that they had to rush him to the army hospital. He was hospitalised for one and a half months.

On 1 July he confessed to being a participant in the protest and was again severely beaten, even his wounds were subjected to electric shocks. Unable to bear the torture, he atttempted suicide by swallowing four needles and broken glass on 23 July. Once again, he was rushed to the hospital, and operated on. He was discharged on 13 September.

During similar interrogations, Lobsang Wangchuk (29) a monk from Gaden Monastery was beaten to death and another monk, Ngawang Dorjee was hit by an iron rod and his skull was broken.

As a result of this incident, the following prisoners from the Old Unit had their prison terms increased:

(1) Ngawang Songrab(32) formerly a monk from Drepung Monastery in Phenpo Lhundup county who was arrested in 1991 and sentenced 10 years had his term increased by three and a half years.

(2) Tsering Phuntsok (34) from Lhasa and a former monk from Gaden Monastery was arrested in 1992 and sentenced to seven years. His term was increased by one and a half years.

(3) Ngawang Lungtok (29) a former monk from Gaden Monastery was arrested in 1992 and sentenced to 6 years. His term was also increased by one and a half years.

(4) Ngawang Dorjee (27) a monk from Gunsar Monastery in Phenpo Lhundup County, arrested in 1995 and sentenced to three years. His term was increased by three years

(5) Sonam Tsering (31)a monk from Ka Tsel Monastery in Medro Gungkar was arrested in 1996 and sentenced to eight years, had his prison term increased by two years.

(6) Bhungchu (29) a monk was arrested in 1995 and sentenced to five years, had his term increased by two years.

(7) Tsepal (23) a monk from Gun Sar Monastery was arrested in 1995 and sentenced to 15 years, had his term increased by another two and a half years.

Lobsang was released on 16 June 1999 after serving his full term of five years.

Monks forced to submit written opposition to the Dalai Lama

Monasteries in Keney County, Chap chap, 'TAR', Qinghai Province are being compelled by 'work teams' to submit written opposition letters against the Dalai Lama.

Jamyang Gendun, a 24 year old monk from Tholey Monastery in Gonshong village, Keney County, witnessed one such visit of the 'work team' in his monastery. During the 20 day stay in the monastery, the officials threatened to expel those monks who did not complete the written opposition within the stipulated time. 20 monks out of 70 who refused to proceed with the instructions were expelled and the officials kept a personal dossier on each of them. Neither were they allowed to enter the monastery, nor were they allowed to wear robes.

Jamyang was among the 20 who refused to submit to the 'work teams' orders. After two months' stay at home, he fled to India.

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TCHRD Branch Staff back from official visit to Japan



Gaden Tashi, second from left with members of the House of Representatives in Japan

With the invitation from Amnesty International (Japan), our staff Gaden Tashi was in Japan from October 14 to November 20 to participate in Amnesty International's global campaign against torture. During this visit, he covered Sapporo city in the north to Tokoshima in the South of Japan. Besides numerous other venues, he spoke to students at two Universities.

He also visited the Chinese Embassy along with an Indonesian and a Burmese student and presented a petition from AI. Among the dignitaries met were Mr Tsutomu Hata (former Prime Minister and current member of the House of Representatives), Mr Ryuichi Doi (current Deputy Prime Minister), and Ms Keiko Chiba (member of the House of Represtentives).

Human Rights Talk by TCHRD staff

On November 20, Tenzin Chokey, English Researcher, addressed a group of American Law students on human rights situation in Tibet at the DIIR Lhakpa Tsering Hall. The group represented law students from all over the United States.

Forthcoming Events

- Annual Workshop on Human Rights and Democracy, January 20-24, 2001
- A three day Seminar on *Racism in Asia: Causes, Situations and Remedies* in May 2001

TCHRD hosted US Congressional staff delegation

TCHRD organized a reception for US congressional staff delegation along with other prominent Tibetan NGOs. The congressional staff comprised of staff from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, staff of Representative Jeffords, staff of Representative David Dreer, Staff of Congressman Rothman and Staff from International Republican Institute.

TCHRD members of the month

We heartily welcome the following new members to our Membership Circle:

Passang Norbu; Reed Albert; Jampa Phuntsok; Sonam Yangzom; Konchok Chodon; Lobsang Tsering; Sined ni Ghairbhith;Tezin Choetop; Dawa; Anne Donaghy; Veronica Leo; Paul Stewart; and Nirmal Xavier.

TCHRD is now 135 members strong. Thanks to you all!

TCHRD's LATEST REPORT

Racial Discrimination in Tibet is a latest publication of the TCHRD. This report takes a look at discrimination practices in the spheres of employment, health, housing, education and political representation within Tibet.

This report is available on TCHRD's website: www.tchrd.org. For printed copies, please write to us. TCHRD Members will receive copy free of cost upon request only.

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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) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 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) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Tales of Terror: *Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • TCHRD *Review* (2000) • Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet (2000).

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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Monk beaten to death for independence posters

Choephel, a monk of Litha Monastery in Kandze County, was beaten to death by police on 6 February 1995, for having distributed Free Tibet leaflets in all the prominent areas in Litha Township, including Police Station and around the township administrative blocks.

On 3 February 1995, Choephel dispersed leaflets proclaiming slogans such as "Free Tibet", "China forcefully occupied Tibet", and "Chinese quit Tibet". He was arrested the following day after his handwriting was identified.

Eyewitnesses that the informant spoke to saw Choephel after the arrest being thrown into and taken out of police van like a sack. He was beaten so severely that his swollen face and body were hardly recognisable. Later, relatives were asked to claim the body of the deceased. The police offered no explanation for his death and the family members dared not ask anything about it. Choephel was in his early twenties and had also been a good artist. He came from a family which included his mother and several other brothers.

In order to prevent independence-related activities, a police barracks has been established in Litha Monastery which keeps a strict 24-hour vigilance over the monks. Between 20-30 policemen were stationed in the monastery.

It took three months for informant, Thinlay Dawa, to reach Nepal from his home town in Litha Township. He brought along with him five children and teenagers from families and relatives in Litha who wanted him to take them to be enrolled in schools and monasteries in India. He came in a group of 25 via Dram, and wishes to rejoin Drepung Monastery in South India.

Thinlay Dawa originally joined Drepung Losel Ling Monastery in South India soon after his first escape from Tibet in 1985, and stayed there for 14 years. Upon his return to Tibet in 1999, Dawa was detained at Dram and imprisoned in Shigatse Prison along with his two companions

Dawa recalled, "There were 12 of us returning to Tibet. All of us were detained in a small house. We were not permitted to go outside to the toilet and the room was stinking of human waste - the conditions were unbearable. The seven days' detention was like hell for us." At one stage they were without water for three days, and they were eventually released after one and half months.

Thinlay and the other returnees from India continued on to Lhasa but were once again detained, this time in Nyari Detention Centre, in Shigatse Prefecture, for seven days. They found restrictions just as strict when they finally reached Lhasa and had to hide most of the time behind locked doors. Thinlay eventually reached his native village in July 1999, where he stayed for just over a year before starting his return trek to India in September 2000.

Personal attendants of Sonam Phuntsok subjected to severe maltreatment

Thinley Dolma, from Kandze County, reported on the monstrous treatment meted out to Agya Tsering and Sonam Choephel (aka Shodhrug) the personal attendants of Sonam Phuntsok in 1999.

According to Dolma, the attendants endured harsh beatings during their detention. Sonam Phuntsok and his two attendants were arrested on 24 October 1999, under suspicion for political activities.

"Sonam Choephel and Agya Tsering were singled out for cruel treatment and beatings following their detention in Kandze Detention Centre. Sonam Choephel suffered dislocation of both his arms and his face was brutally battered. He also suffered damage to his neck. As for Agya Tsering, prison authorities threw boiling hot water on his back, resulting in severe blisters."

Prison authorities released the two after one month and ten days' detention. Sonam Phuntsok, however, is still detatined in a prison in Dartsedo County, Kandze "TAP".

For more details on the arrest of Sonam Phuntsok, please refer to our November 1999 Human Rights Update.

Three minors testify on the educational drawbacks in Tibet

Sangchu County

Panchen Dorjee is a 17-year-old boy who hails from Sangchu County, Gucha Township in Gansu Province. He is the eldest son of five siblings, including him. Although his family subsist by farming, Dorjee never worked on the farm as a young child.

At the age of seven, Dorjee joined Sangchu County Tibetan Primary School and studied there for six years, where there were about 600 students. His younger sisters were also studying at the same school. Ninety percent of the students were Tibetan and the remaining were Chinese. They had to pay 200 yuan per semester, resulting in an annual cost of 400 yuan. They study six subjects and Dorjee attended as a day scholar.

Later Dorjee joined the middle school where there were 800 students. In this school 85 percent of the students were Tibetan and most of the teachers were also Tibetans. There they are taught six subjects, including Tibetan, Chinese and Mathematics. However, they teach mostly Chinese, though Dorjee enjoyed learning Tibetan the most.

In this school, the students are strictly instructed not to practice any form of Tibetan religious ceremonies, however some of the students practice secretly. Every month, Chinese authorities came to the school and gave speeches regarding the Chinese religious practices.

The Tibetan students are majorly discriminated against compared to the Chinese students. One example was how children of the Chinese staff were given an extra ten minutes during examinations.

Dorjee was promoted to a high school and where he studied for one year. In that school they studied more of the Tibetan language. Most of the student's parents were farmers and they had to pay 700 to 800 yuan annually as fees. Additional fees were imposed for books. He left the high school after one year because his parents could not afford the exorbitant fees for their three children. Moreover, his parents were not financially in a position to manage all these expenses.

In Dorjee's town the government launched a two-child policy. A third child would result in a fine of 1000 yuan. Other major restrictions on the village are the bans on photographs of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama. The people are prohibited from possession and display of these photographs.

One of his neighbours, Tenzin, a monk of Amdo Labrang Monastery, was arrested at the age of 18 for pasting posters of Free Tibet and generating awareness of the Tibetan Freedom protest. He was put in County Prison for 10 months and released on bail. Not permitted to stay in Amdo, Tenzin is currently residing in Lhasa.

Dorjee left Amdo in October 2000 and arrived in Dharamsala in November 2000.

Sershul County

Jamyang Dolma, a 15-year-old, was born in Sershul County, Kandze "TAP", Sichuan Province. She hails from a nomadic family which consists of seven members. At the age of six, she attended a primary school, where she studied for six years. At that school, there were almost 60 Tibetan students, who were taught Chinese, Tibetan, Mathematics, Science, Politics and Horticulture, and did not have to pay any fees.

Jamyang later joined Sershul County Middle School for two years. There were approximately 700 students in the school out of which around 500 were Tibetans. In her class all 35 students were Tibetan. The majority of the teachers in this school were Tibetan but there were some Chinese as well. Jamyang had to pay approximately 180 to 190 yuan annually as school fees. This was in addition to the expenditures for books, uniforms and other miscellaneous items. Uniforms alone cost 150 yuan. Students were not allowed to observe Tibetan festivals in this school.

Jamyang's family suffered a huge loss during a snow storm in 1992 which claimed the lives of many of their livestock. The consequential financial hardship that her family suffered caused Jamyang to leave school as her parents could no longer afford the expenses of her schooling.

In August 2000, along with a group of 25 people from the same region, Jamyang made her first attempt to flee Tibet. Five among the group were children below 16 years of age, Jamyang being the eldest of them. The group left for Shigatse from Lhasa and continued on to Lhatse. On their way to Dhingri, the group encountered three military men (probably PAP), two of whom were Tibetan and one Chinese. As the three were grossly outnumbered they were powerless to do anything. The escapees threw stones at the Chinese police, who had no choice but to run away.

However, no sooner had they left when 30 policemen from Dhingri County arrived and arrested the group, taking them to Dhingri Police Station, where they were locked in cells. Detained for two days, they were then transferred to Nyari Detention Centre where they were detained for almost 25 days. While in Nyari, all of them, including the children, were beaten with sticks by the policemen. A monk named Thuptu received the worst beatings of all from the group.

In October 2000, Jamyang, along with her family members and some other friends, made a second attempt to flee Tibet. After walking for a month they reached Nepal in the following month, and finally reached Dharamsala on 17 December 2000.

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profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 91

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

Testimony of monk active in the Drapchi Prison Protest

Phuntsok Rigchog, lay name Migmar, is originally from Chusur County, Nyethang Township. Phuntsok is 30 years old and was a former Nyethang Tashi Gang monk. Phuntsok is the oldest son of a six-member family who subsist by farming. As a child, Phuntsok attended Mangtsuk School (a school financed and administered by local Tibetan inhabitants) in village # 5, after which he joined his parents on the farm. Phuntsok was also involved in small businesses for a while until he joined Tashi Gang Monastery in 1986. At the monastery he undertook the role of a storekeeper.

On 30 May 1994, along with five other monks, Phuntsok planned to stage a demonstration in Lhasa. That same day, they arrived in Lhasa, however, there were many security police on the Barkhor, so the group stayed overnight with a family and postponed their protest. The next morning, the six monks started a peaceful protest in front of the Jokhang Temple (Central Cathedral). They shouted slogans such as "Free Tibet", "China quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". Within five minutes, 12 Public Security Bureau officers, of whom 10 were dressed in plain clothes, took the monks away. The monks were immediately transported to the Gutsa Detention Centre.

After six months, in November 1994, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court passed their sentences. Phuntsok and Dorjee were sentenced to six years, Sonam Tsering to four years, Migmar Wangdue, Migmar and Pema Thinley to two years. By the end of November they were transferred to Drapchi Prison to the new rukhag # 5.

On 1 May 1998, during the prison protest in Drapchi, Phuntsok was singled out for punishment when authorities saw that he was one of the forerunners of the protest. As soon as the International Labour Day celebration was disrupted by the prisoners gathered in the courtyard, the protest was violently suppressed. Sixty political prisoners from the new rukhag # 5 were separated and taken back into their units while simultaneously being beaten. The prisoners were made to sit in front of the unit door and the authorities immediately separated out those who were seen as being prominently more active than the rest. These men were subjected to further harsh treatment and beatings. Five political prisoners were taken away to the solitary confinement cells.

On 4 May Phuntsok was taken out of the solitary cell and transferred to Lhasa PSB Detention Centre, and later to the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre. He was held there for a month, during which time Phuntsok suffered his worst prison maltreatment. He was subjected to intensive interrogation sessions and made to "confess" to his "active involvement" and "responsibility" for the protest.

In October 1998, the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court announced his sentence extension, along with the * other prisoners. This announcement was not made in the court but to them in their cells. Phuntsok received an additional four years' imprisonment, bringing his sentence to a total of ten years. The other five detainees from the original protest have all since been released.

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Kandze County

Yangchen Lhamo is a 14-year-old girl hailing from Kandze County "TAP" in Sichuan Province. She comes from a family of seven members. Her family owns a small field on which the entire family is dependent on, and Yangchen's father and elder brothers sometimes undertake additional work as labourers at construction sites.

At the age of seven years, Yangchen attended the Ngaba "TAP" Primary Day School. The school had about 300 Tibetan students with the eldest student being 15 years old. The school taught seven subjects, including four major subjects - Tibetan, Chinese, Mathematics and General Science. Chinese subjects however, were given more importance than Tibetan subjects. The students had to pay 90 yuan as annual fees with addtional expenses for books, pens and ink etc.

Every Monday morning the Chinese flag was hoisted and the children had to sing the Chinese National Anthem. The school also conducted weekly "patriotic re-education" sessions with the children.

After her primary education, Yangchen went to the Hong Yen Middle School in Kandze Township for one year, after which she had to leave as the fees rose with higher education. The annual fee there was 2000 yuan, and Yangchen's family could not afford these fees, as her family was quite large. Moreover, her mother was constantly bedridden from a long -term illness.

The school had about 500 students, including both Tibetans and Chinese. The main subjects taught there were Chinese and English, however, once again, Tibetan was not given as much importance as Chinese.

The Chinese population has increased considerably in Yangchen's locality. Chinese owned most of the shops and restaurants, and as a result the local Tibetans are forced out of business. Consequently, their children are withdrawn from school as they cannot afford the fees.

freedom slogans

Four monks were arrested for chanting pro-independence slogans during a religious ceremony on 11 May 1996. Acho, a former monk of Phugon Monastery who spearheaded the protest, was accused of placing the Dalai Lama's picture on the highest seat in the main prayer hall that day. The three other monks detained belong to Konpon Monastery.

During a religious ceremony in Phukon Monastery led by Khenpo Bara, Acho (aka Ngawang Thupten), brought a photo of the Dalai Lama from his room and placed it on the highest seat of the main prayer hall at around 11 am. An hour later he commenced beating a drum to summon the large crowd gathered there for the incense-burning ritual outside the monastery, while simultaneously shouting slogans like, "May Tibet regain freedom! Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". Three monks immediately joined in with him. They were Kunga (36), Urgen Dorjee (23) and Jamyang (50), who were all briefly detained and then released on bail.

Charged for their negligence in letting the protest happen, both Khenpo Bara and Shilong Rinpoche were released after two months detention with a bail payment of 4000 yuan each.

Acho, however, was detained for a further 15 days. He was told that the display of Dalai Lama's picture is a much more serious crime than killing a hundred men, and that his act had stained the reputation of the entire monastery and the community. He was finally released on bail, on a payment of 6000 yuan to the policemen.

Five to six Chinese officials from Sichoe County would regularly visit Phukon Monastery to conduct "patriotic re-education" sessions where the monks were forcibly taught to "love their motherland and to oppose Splittism". The monastery has a current strength of around 600 monks.

Acho joined Phugon Monastery when he was 13 years old. Originally from Arab Za Village, Arab Za Township, Sichoe County, Kandze "TAP", Acho reached [illegible] Reception Centre in Nepal on 2[illegible] November 2000.

Religious restrictions in Dhingri County

In February 2000, the Dhingri County People's Administration prohibited all farmers and nomads under its purview from possession and display of photographs of the Dalai Lama in their homes. The order to remove all Dalai Lama related articles was also issued at the same time.

In Paljor Gan Village, in Chuglok Township, the officials and heads of Dhingri County confiscated many photos of the Dalai Lama after a thorough search of each house was conducted. The 45 families of the village were threatened with legal punishment and imprisonment if found with the banned picture in the future.

Three years previously, in 1997, the Religious Committee of Dhingri and Shigatse issued a decree which called for a ban on admission of new monks in Songachoe Monastery, which has a current total of approximately 100 monks. Thirty monks left the monastery to reduce the numbers to the maximum set limit.

From 1993 to 1999, in Songachoe Monastery 10-day long "patriotic re-education" sessions were carried out annually. During these sessions, "work team" members forced each monk to accept the Chinese political stand. Photos of the Dalai Lama were also banned in the monastery.

Songachoe Monastery has a history of 450 years. Prior to 1959, there were approximately 150 monks. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), most of the valuable religious assets and artefacts of the monastery were looted, burnt or transported to China. Except for the main hall, all the other buildings of the

Under the leadership of some senior monks and with donations from the local populace, the reconstruction of Songachoe Monastery began in 1982.

Lobsang, a former monk of Songachoe Monastery, reached Kathmandu on 17 August 2000. He said, "My main reason for escaping into exile is to seek an audience with the Dalai Lama, and afterwards I plan to return."

Security Office in Sera Monastery

In 1996, under the supervision of Tenzin, Deputy Party Secretary for "TAR", Sera Monastery was subjected to "patriotic re-education" for four months. A political security office for Sera Monastery was established which called the monks for meetings every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Currently, there are 450 monks in the monastery with ID cards and another 200 visiting monks without ID cards.

The officials of the Security Office made the monks revise three books on "patriotic re-education" including the 'White Paper' and the monastery rules. At every meeting, the attendees were given a red ticket and those who failed to produce enough at the end of each month were not allowed to take part in any events of the monastery. Furthermore, they were called to the Security Office and interrogated as to why they failed to attend the meetings.

As early as 1989, the Chinese government installed a Security Office in Sera monastery with 18 staff members, all of whom were Tibetans. These officers were assigned the responsibility to prevent, or failing that, detect and terminate any untoward incidents such as freedom-related plans or meetings.

On 4 June 1998, the security men failed to notice on time a Tibetan flag found flying at the gate of the main prayer hall. Another flag was flown from the water Consequently, the head of the Security Office, Mr. Lhundup, was sacked from his post and was replaced by another Tibetan named Jaring. After Jaring's take-over vigilance was intensified and maintained day in and day out. Since then, no freedom-related incidents have been reported.

Lobsang Guegan (layname Pasang), from Drashue Village # 2, Dhargyal Township, Taktse County, became a monk of Sera Monastery in 1977. At that time, there were only 56 elderly monks. Between 1979 and 1986, 450 more monks were admitted in the monastery. Originally a cook and a caretaker, Guegan worked as a security person in the monastery from 1989 to 1993. He reached Nepal on 20 November 2000.

China town on Tibetan area

Lobsang Guegan also reported that in the winter of 1999, Chinese authorities began construction of a new building complex to house Chinese immigrants, on a large picnic reserve at Village #2, Taktse County. As per the region's ten-year development plan, resettlement of 100,000 (1lakh) Chinese civilians from China is underway. All the trees in the area have been cut down, and at present, the authorities have completed 500 new buildings. Anyone who hinders construction work in Taktse County is threatened with severe legal punishment.

This picnic reserve was originally built by monks expelled from Sera Monastery during the Cultural Revolution. These monks were summoned by the authorities to level the area and it was then fenced. With the implementation of liberalisation policy in 1980, all the sacked monks were readmitted to the monastery and the reserve area was equally divided between the 43 families of Karshue Village #2. During the past 20 years, the picnic reserve has been transformed into a big garden orchard where the local people grew various types of trees.

In the winter of 1999, five Chinese officials with authorisation from "TAR" villagers, and gave each family one duck. They announced their plans to develop a satellite town to facilitate better transport and communication between the towns and cities. Consequently, the picnic reserve of 650 mu of land (1 mu is equal to 67 square meters) was confiscated and the authorities used the land for their own benefit without any compensation to the villagers. However, it is alleged that some district leaders accepted bribes of 2000 yuan each for the people's land.

Additionally, further government plans include the building of an international airport along a 30 km stretch of land along the Jichoe River, from Tsame Tsal, Taktse County to the area of Tsa Tu, that commenced in January 2000. This project has dire consequences for the local people as their land comes directly under this project plan, and all the trees previously planted there by the locals have already been removed.

Hounded for Independence Leaflets

On 19 June 2000 the ban on Dalai Lama photographs was reinforced in Songue Township, Kandze "TAP", which coincided with the timing of the Dalai Lama's visits to western countries.

Coincidentally, around the same time, a monk and two accomplices who widely circulated "Free Tibet" leaflets around some prominent places in Kandze County, fled to Lhasa with the police in hot pursuit.

In May 2000, Sonam Wangyal (30) of Khoma Monastery, Rinchen Gonpo (33) and Yeshi Dorjee (27), made approximately 1200 pro-independence leaflets with hand written slogans such as "Free Tibet" and "Down with Communist China." They also carved the same slogans onto woodblocks and printed around 18,000 leaflets in June 2000. Printing papers were bought from various shops to avoid suspicion. All leaflets were then widely distributed over the entire Kandze County, especially at prominent areas such as the Police Station and the gates of the Administation Block. Some

leaflets were pasted on walls whilst others were carried along the street with the gentle blow of the breeze.

The three men hid in the monastery for a week after the distribution of the leaflets. When police arrived at the monastery looking for them, they fled to the nearby hills. They then played a dangerous game of hide and seek with the police until they reached Lhasa. Even there, during their week-long stay, the fear of arrest hung largely over them, since eight policemen from Kandze County were constantly on the lookout for them there.

In Lhasa, Sonam Wangyal joined a group of 10 Amdo people, and they each paid 1300 yuan to to a Tibetan guide. The guide took them as far as Shar Bhumpa, where they were arrested by the Nepali police and taken to the Immigration Centre. Staff members of the Tibetan Reception Centre collected the group on 17 November 2000.

Sonam Wangyal entered Khoma Monastery at the age of 17, and there are currently 60 monks there.

Restrictions in Tsanag Village

Takbumgya, a 23-year-old nomad is from Tsanag Village, Gomang Township, Koenan County. He came from a family with seven members, including one elder sister who is married, and three younger brothers. When Takbumgya was young he went to his village primary school for six years. After which he left school as his parents could not afford the school fees. One of his younger brothers was also attending the same school. The annual school fees were 300 yuan, and the subjects taught were Chinese, Tibetan and Maths. There was no local middle school, the nearest being in Gomang Township.

As they were nomads, Takbumgya's family owned around 80 head of livestock, but their annual livestock tax was 3,500 yuan. There is no avoidance of these taxes for the villagers, even when faced with major difficulties. There was a man in his village named Doedar who had only 10 sheep, but had three family members: himself, his mother and his wife. He could not afford the taxes and consequently, the tax officer of Gomang Township searched his house and confiscated everything of value, including some animal skins. He was then arrested and taken to a prison in Koenan County. This happened in August 1998.

Normally, taxes have to be paid during the months of July and August. If someone failed to pay within the stipulated time, then they were forced to pay a fine of 100 yuan per 1000 yuan of unpaid tax.

Families in Takbumgya's village are allowed one child only, or a fine of 3000 yuan is levied for any extra children. There is also no place of worship in his village. If anyone wishes to make any religious offerings, they have to travel to Tharshul Monastery. The ban on photographs of the Dalai Lama and the minimum age limit policy of 18 years are enforced in this monastery.

In the village listening to 'Voice of America', and other news, is strictly prohibited. If anyone is discovered listening to these programmes, they would be arrested, but even so they do listen surreptitiously.

Takbumgya travelled by bus from Lhasa to Shigatse, but from there to Nepal he walked for approximately 21 days. Takbumgya finally reached Dharamsala on 16 December 2000 and would like to to attend school.

Three monks expelled from Lora Monastery

Lobsang Choezin is a 22-year-old from Lora Monastery in Noney Township, Markham County, Chamdo Prefecture. His parents are semi-nomads. He never attended school as there were none in or nearby his village. He joined the monastery at the age of 16. Lora Monastery was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and, from 1985, was reconstructed with donations from local Tibetans .

In 1998, there were 115 monks at Lora Monastery, and in July an eight-member "work team" from Markham County visited the monastery for the first time. During their two-month stay at the monastery, regular "patriotic re-education" sessions were held and a total ban was imposed on photographs of the Dalai Lama . The "work team" members forced the monks to thumbprint letters of opposition to the Dalai Lama, set a limit of 100 monks in the monastery,and expelled three monks for not attending a session. Furthermore, 100 monks were issued with ID cards. Twelve monks voluntarily returned to their own homes during the presence of the "work team", returning to the monastery only upon their departure.

In February 1999, a 14-member "work team" re-visited the monastery and stayed there for another two weeks. The five Tibetan and nine Chinese members conducted "patriotic education" sessions, and after that regular meetings and inspections were held in the monastery.

In October, Choezin fled from Lhasa, and reached Dharamsala on 14 December 2000, joining the other 26 monks from Lora monastery already in exile.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy would like to wish all our members and readers a very Happy New Year and a bright and joyous start to the new millenium.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin 95

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy released three new reports in December titled "Prisoners of Tibet: Profiles of Current Political Prisoners", "Impoverishing Tibetans: China's Flawed Economic Policy in Tibet" and "Tibetan Lives under Torture: Profiles of Deceased Political Prisoners".



Prisoners of Tibet includes profiles of current political prisoners serving prison sentences of five years or more. At the time of compilation of this report there were approximately 500 known Tibetan political prisoners in Chinese administered prisons in Tibet, out of which 233 are known to be serving five years and above.

The report is designed to be used as an informative literature and reference material on political prisoners on Tibet. Often little information is available about political prisoners, due to the difficulty that surrounds the ability to acquire information following their arrest. Monitoring information on political prisoners is difficult due to the isolation of political prisoners, the secrecy surrounding political trials, and the lack of response from the Chinese authorities. Information for this report was collected primarily from interviews with former political prisoners.

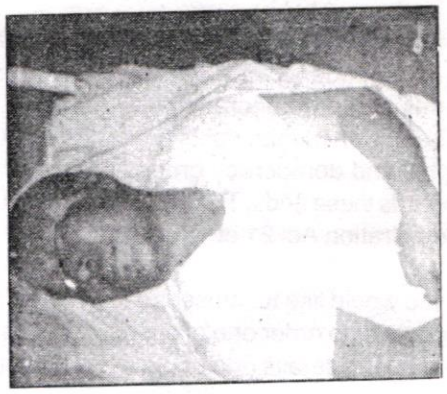
Impoverishing Tibetans examines subsistence issues and standard of living of the Tibetan people inside Tibet. This report seeks to analyse the claims of the Chinese government that Tibetans in Tibet have benefited from the development policies implemented by the Chinese authorities and contrast them where possible with independent statistics and figures, as well as with the oral testimonies of refugees who have come to India.

The report describes the devastating economic effects for Tibetans due to the population transfer of Chinese settlers into Tibet. Settlers, encouraged by government incentives, arrive in search of jobs in Tibet. Their presence threatens the livelihood of the Tibetan people. Chinese settlers have come to dominate the Tibetan economy, and they own virtually all the businesses in Tibet.

The report accounts numerous Tibetans having performed forced labour for various Chinese projects without receiving any remuneration. Even where workers are paid, often the amounts given are negligible and there are fines levied if they do not attend in any case. The report also dwells on unemployment, excessive taxation, food shortages and poverty.



Tibetan Lives under Torture: Profiles of Deceased Political Prisoners investigates the cases of 24 prominent political prisoners who died directly due to torture in prisons. Ever since China signed the UN Convention Against Torture in 1987, TCHRD has recorded deaths of 66 political prisoners due to inhumane treatment. A brief description of the other 42 deceased political prisoners is also brought out in the report. This Tibetan language report was also sourced via recently exiled political prisoners.



To request for printed copies of these reports please write to us. Members will receive free copies upon request only.

TCHRD members of the month

We welcome Warren Smith, Beckah Voight, Thupten Sherab, Prof. Ramesh Chandra, Tiwari, Prof. Krishna Nath, Ven. L.N. Shastri and Pema Tulotsang.

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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) • The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 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) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • Tales of Terror: *Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • TCHRD *Review* (2000) • Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet (2000).

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