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HUMAN RIGHTS update

TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

JANUARY 2001 VOLUME VI NUMBER 1

Enforcing Loyalty

Beijing's obsession with stability and control in Tibet was the predominant theme of the year 2000. China remains one of the few nations in the world which institutionalises human rights abuses and sustains an unacceptable degree of surveillance over —and restriction upon — its people. Within this, there is a total disregard of the basic civil and political freedoms such as those of speech and assembly.

The year saw Beijing reinforcing old regulations and imposing new restrictive measures in Tibet to consolidate its control. Heightened restrictions were placed on religious and political activities: control over religious institutions became stricter, a ban was issued on the display of photographs of the Dalai Lama, and monitoring of Party cadres increased.

Conversely, it was also a year when Beijing made some desperate attempts to enhance its image on the international scene. High profile propaganda machinery—like the White Paper with a specific focus on Tibet—was used in an attempt to convince the world of alleged progress made in the field of human rights and preservation of Tibetan culture. China went as far as to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights on effecting human rights standards.

Since the mid-1990s, Beijing has lobbied intensively in the international arena to transform the "confrontational approach" adopted by many countries in their human rights relationship with China to a face saving bilateral dialogue. However, the serious deterioration in the human rights situation in both Tibet and China calls into question the efficacy of this new approach to human rights. The recent UK Parliamentary Report on China vouches for the futility of such a dialogue and urges the British government to toughen its line.

The principal area of repression in Tibet this year was on religious freedom. The entire Tibetan populace—without exception—suffered infringements on their right to freedom of religious belief. The authorities went as far as ransacking private homes of apolitical Tibetans during surprise checks for altars, Buddhist scriptures, and pictures of the Dalai Lama.

Intensification of the "patriotic re-education" campaign—aimed at indoctrinating the monastic population and the general populace against the Dalai Lama, his "Clique", and the whole foundation of Tibetan culture and religious tradition—was one of the overriding concerns of the year. "Work teams" were sent incessantly to even the most remote monasteries and nunneries to carry out this campaign. However, the imposition of "patriotic re-education" campaign did not undermine the faith of the Tibetans in the Dalai Lama. In fact, many have protested against it and as a consequence have either faced a prison sentence or expulsion from their institutions.

The year 2000 saw increasing paranoia on the part of the authorities with regard to the "communist loyalists" —party cadres and officials at all levels of the "TAR" government. This group of people were especially subjected to multiple and ongoing screenings to test their loyalty to the Communist party. Not only were they expected to be at the forefront in implementing orders, their private lives were encroached upon by close scrutiny and continuous vigilance.

In order to escape the Chinese atrocities and enjoy fundamental freedoms, thousands of Tibetans struggle across the Himalayas every year, even in the harshest winter months. The constant stream of refugees pouring out of Tibet to escape violent repression are confirming the multiple charges of flagrant disregard by Beijing for both ratified and signed international agreements, Chinese laws and the constitution itself. Of the approximately 2,660 Tibetans who have escaped into exile in the year 2000, there were 900 children below the age of 18, 507 women, 642 monks and nuns. These refugees are an ongoing source of information-gathering on the current situation in Tibet. Nevertheless, TCHRD believes that the information contained in this report is a fraction of the true picture of the situation in Tibet today.

Eliminating Political Dissent

TCHRD has documented 26 arrests during the year 2000. All of these arrests have been linked to political activities alleged as "endangering state security". With the revision of the Criminal Procedure Law (CPL), and the redefinition of the

charge "counter-revolutionary activities" to "endangering state security", Beijing has re-endorsed the continuing practice of arbitrary detention to crackdown on "subversive opinions". In most cases, Tibetans were detained either for participating in peaceful protests or for possessing pictures and audiotapes of the Dalai Lama.

Returnees from India also find themselves under close surveillance and control. They are seen as colluding with the "Dalai Clique" and indulging in "separatist activities". Renewed restrictions were imposed on them leading to the expulsion of 29 tour guides and the alleged detention of approximately 50 students returning from schools in India.

Torture is a prevalent occurrence in detention centres and prisons in Tibet, resulting in many serious physical and mental injuries, and deaths. Almost all the prisoners arrested have at some stage undergone severe physical abuse at the hands of either Public Security Bureau officers or prison guards—or often by both. A total of 37 political prisoners had their prison sentence extended, of which nine from Kandze had their sentence extended by five years.

Punitive measures were adopted to test the loyalty of Tibetan cadres to the Beijing regime. These actions included a ban on any religious display and withdrawing their children from schools administered by the Dalai Lama in India. "A freeze in promotion and transfer without hesitation" were stated as punishments for those cadres and government employees who failed to comply with the directive forcing Tibetans to bow to policies that not only affected them but their family members' lives and future as well.

Restricting Religious Freedom

Draconian campaigns aimed at annihilating the distinctive cultural and ethnic identity of the Tibetan race were initiated this year by the Beijing government. Close surveillance and control was exercised not only over the religious institutions, but also over the "cadre contingents" and the general populace. Because religion is central to Tibetan psyche, it is viewed as the root cause of "separatist activities" and instability in Tibet.

Raiding 18 houses of Tibetan members of the Lhasa-based Tibetan Opera Association in June 2000 in order to confiscate religious artefacts, altars, and statues is a clear indication of Beijing's interpretation of Tibetan nationalism as being intrinsically linked to its religious and cultural identity. Strict orders were also issued against the celebration of traditional Tibetan festivals, in particular the birthday celebration of the Dalai Lama.

Under the "Patriotic Re-education" campaign, "work teams" frequented the monasteries and nunneries to indoctrinate the monastic population. Long, drawn-out political classes have left no time for the study of Buddhist scriptures and prayer sessions. One of the core objectives of this campaign has been to combat the deep devotion of the Tibetan populace to the Dalai Lama and the influence of the "Dalai Clique".

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has recorded 862 monastic expulsions—including 147 nuns—in the year 2000 alone as a direct consequence of this "patriotic re-education" campaign. With this, the overall number of monks and nuns who have been expelled under the impact of the "patriotic re-education" campaign has now spiralled to 12,271. Nuns and monks comprise approximately 73 per cent of the known 451 political prisoners currently incarcerated in prisons in Tibet.

Cultivating Chinese Superiority

Tibetans continue to face unequal and unfair treatment in the fields of public representation, education, employment, housing, and health services. In addition, the deliberate policy of population transfer of Chinese into Tibet is contributing to further discrimination against Tibetans.

Refugee testimonies reveal a deep-seated racial prejudice among Chinese employers, which automatically categorises Tibetans as "incompetent and backward". It is a common pattern in the employment sector for Tibetans to automatically occupy the lower positions and Chinese the higher posts. As such, many Tibetans have reported the only method of obtaining employment is through bribery and *guanxi* (connections with officials). Widespread wage discrimination is common, with Tibetans receiving salaries that are half, and sometimes even less than their Chinese counterparts for the same job.

The structure and funding of the education system in Tibet today is highly discriminatory, with government expenditure largely concentrated on developing schools in areas with high populations of Chinese settlers. Some rural Tibetans have been forced to finance and construct educational institutions at their own expense. Tibetan parents and children report having to pay extortionate fees and miscellaneous expenses inapplicable to Chinese students, despite claims by the Chinese central government that primary education is free.

Tibetans continue to face large-scale discrimination in housing. Discriminatory allocation procedures ensure that Chinese immigrants are either guaranteed housing on arrival in Tibet or are put at the top of the waiting list. To make room for the new Chinese arrivals, huge numbers of Tibetan families have faced eviction from—and demolition of—their traditional residences. Those relocated were often given no compensation and forced to pay exorbitant rents, often after extended waiting periods.

Communist control penetrates every level of society and Tibetans enjoy no more political freedom of expression today than it did during the dark days of the Cultural Revolution. While there are a number of Tibetans holding positions of authority within this system, they constitute only a

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

Nun confined in incommunicado detention for 22 months

Jamdron is a 26-year-old nun from Phenpo Gyabrag Nunnery in Phenpo Lhundrup County. She is the youngest child in her family. They are farmers by occupation.

On 13 February 1995, Jamdron, along with 14 nuns left for Lhasa to stage a pro-independence demonstration. In June 1995 the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced the nuns and Jamdron received a seven-year imprisonment.

On 30 July 1995, Jamdron was amongst the 62 nuns who first occupied the new rukhag # 3 of Drapchi Prison. While in prison, in 1996, Jamdron's mother passed away and she became an orphan having lost her father as a child. Jamdron could not see her mother before she died.

On 10 February 1997, during the Tibetan New Year (it was the first new year celebration for the nuns in the new rukhag), prison officials at Drapchi ordered the nuns to perform patriotic Chinese songs. Three nuns were ordered to sing a song in praise of Mao. While these three nuns were singing, Jamdron and Nyima from amongst the other inmates started singing Tibetan freedom songs, in high pitched voices drowning the other three. The two nuns were immediately taken to the prison office and severely interrogated. The nuns faced harsh beatings after which they were at once transferred to the solitary confinement cells. Soon after the nuns were placed in solitary confinement, the remaining nuns except for the three initial nuns refused to eat unless Jamdron and Nyima were released from their cells. The nuns also feared that the two nuns might face sentence extensions. On the fifth day of the hunger strike, the nuns resumed eating after repeated instructions to eat and insinuation that some of their grievances might be addressed.

Jamdron and Nyima remained in solitary cells until December 1998, for almost two years. This is one of the worst kind of punishment meted out to any political prisoner.

Following her release from the solitary cell, Jamdron was kept in cell # 7 of new rukhag # 3 along with other nuns who had also spent time in solitary cells due to their participation in the Drapchi Protest in May 1998.

Nyima was released from prison in March 1999 after she completed her prison sentence of five years. Jamdron continues to serve her sentence. Fellow inmates have observed that she developed a permanent bent in her back. Since her release, she is believed to have lost her appetite and suffer from multiple health problems.

Former Drapchi inmates are concerned that her prolonged detention in solitary confinement cell might have affected her mental equilibrium.

token representation, and do not actually possess any real or effective power-making decisions. Most of the time the appointments act merely as legitimising agents for the Party, or function to give the appearance that Tibetans are contributing to running their own country.

Controlling Women and Children

Refugee testimonies prove that many Tibetan women are suffering permanent disabilities and deaths from involuntary and inferior procedures of sterilisation and contraception. Poor health-care facilities, low quality medications, and unskilled medical practitioners lead to low levels of care and hygiene in hospitals. Huge fines are levied for disobedience to the birth control policies and extra children are denied the basic rights to status, healthcare and food.

Women, particularly nuns, continue to face repression for fighting for the right to pursue their religious beliefs within the system. Many are expelled from their nunneries and prevented from undertaking any religious activities and others are faced with lengthy prison sentences. A disproportionate number of Tibetans suffering imprisonment for political or religious beliefs are nuns.

Tibetan children are at the receiving end of an increasingly discriminatory educational system. Not only does the school curriculum lack Tibetan content; but the medium of instruction is Chinese in most schools. Additionally, high fees and prohibitive distances are preventing students from accessing the limited facilities available. With the implementation of age limits on religious institutions, children are also denied monastic education despite their interest in pursuing it.

Tibetan women are doubly disadvantaged when it comes to employment. Many young girls trying to find genuine employment end up in the flourishing trade of prostitution in the urban centres. Prostitution—and the inherent diseases involved—is of serious and growing concern in Tibet.

Impoverishing Tibetans

It is reported that over 70 per cent of Tibetans residing in the "TAR" are living below the poverty line. Issues of poverty and basic survival dominate the daily structure of life in Tibetan areas. A major proportion of the population faces problems of food shortages, access to health care, education, employment and housing.

Beijing makes constant claims about the improvements that have been made in terms of "development" in Tibet. In the name of development, government incentives are provided to a large number of Chinese to settle in Tibet. Their presence threaten the livelihood of the Tibetan people and is central to the government's integration of the Tibetan economy into the Chinese economy. Chinese settlers have come to dominate the Tibetan economy, and today they own virtually all the businesses in Tibet. The cost inflicted by five decades of Chinese rule has left the issue of "development" a tainted and controversial subject.

In contradiction to Beijing's official statements that no taxes have been collected from Tibetan farmers and nomads, in almost every single interview conducted by the TCHRD, Tibetan farmers and nomads specifically mentioned being subjected to excessive taxes. The taxation policy covers almost every aspect of subsistence — ranging from taxes on human life, animals, crops, grass, animal skins and education. Thus, while there exists a right to subsist, the means to do so are severely impaired. There is a distinct absence of any accountability or provision for appeal against what are in most cases harsh, unfair and discriminatory taxes.

Furthermore, unemployment and under-employment remain serious concerns in Tibet. Many Tibetans from farming and nomad families consider themselves employed in the sense that they help to look after the family animals or undertake lowly-paid construction or forestry work, despite their aspirations to other occupations. Their ability to access employment opportunities is seriously impaired by the inequalities deliberately designed into the system. This rural under-employment is all the more acute when it is placed in the context of China's planned urbanisation.

Recommendations

TCHRD urges international bodies to undertake to ensure that China ratifies the ICCPR and the ICESCR and takes immediate steps to incorporate the norms laid down in the two covenants within their national legislation and initiate implementation of the same.

TCHRD urges the Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia to visit Tibet and examine the effects of the Chinese Government's policies on education, employment, public representation, health and education, which discriminates against Tibetan people.

TCHRD demands that the Chinese government clarify and define the scope and extent of the term "endangering state security" in it's Criminal Procedural Law, which in its present ambiguous form is utilised to suppress multiple legitimised rights, including the right to freedom of speech and expression.

TCHRD strongly demands the release of all political prisoners held by the Chinese government, including those arrested for exercising their right to freedom of speech and expression.

TCHRD demands the immediate and permanent removal of the baton from every member of all branches of security personnel. The electric-shock baton frequently used by police and prison personnel in a brutal and degrading manner has been employed particularly in the gender-specific torture of female

prisoners.

Contravening all international norms pertaining to the rights of the child, the Chinese government has detained Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, since May 1995. TCHRD demands the immediate release of this youngest prisoner of conscience in the world.

Unofficial sanction of prostitution in Tibetan regions is encouraging growth and is a contradiction of practices implemented in the PRC. TCHRD demands that the Chinese government ensures that prostitution in Tibet is curbed by strictly implementing the laws which deem prostitution illegal.

Tibetans are subject to a harsh and discriminatory unofficial taxation policy. TCHRD urges the Chinese government to lay down a transparent taxation policy, especially in rural Tibet, to ensure a realistic system and a cessation of the misuse of power by the local authorities.

Based on the policies within Memorandum of Understanding that China signed with the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in 2000, TCHRD urges the Chinese government to organise human rights educational programmes for government officials, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police and prison officials, universities and teachers.

TCHRD urges the international bodies engaged in "bilateral dialogue" on human rights with the Chinese government to recognise that to date it has not yielded any positive results but has been consistently utilised to evade international scrutiny and liability. This unproductive process should be discontinued.

TCHRD calls for the Chinese government to immediately cease all practices of sending "work teams" to religious institutions, and to desist from all efforts to coerce the monastic population to conform to the policies propounded in the "patriotic re-education" sessions.

Mass detention after bomb blast

In January 2000, 25 monks from Guesa Monastery and some lay people were detained in connection with a bomb blast that occurred at the administrative block of Zakon County. Independence posters also appeared at some places at the same time. The detainees underwent heavy torture that caused severe swelling to their bodies. To subject the monks to further intimidation and insult, the police officers burnt a statue of chenrigsig (Avalokiteshwara). The monks were released after 10 days when authorities failed to acquire any information about the bombing incident.

Some of the names available of those 25 detained monks are Dawa Dorjee (21), Lobsang Gyatso (22), Lobnarong (late), Kalsang Thinlay (30), Kunga, Tashi Chophel, Drapa (24), Lob Dhagyal (22), Samten (36), Lob Kaden (29), Tsering Norbu (26), Bo Gyul (26), Wangchuk Dhagyal (33) and Sito (the lama of Guesa Monastery). The lay people detained in connection with the bombing incident are Jampa Sangpo (36), the headman of the area; Ten Thinlay (30), a private thangka painter; Lobsang Thinlay (30), thangka painter and sculptor; Gonpo Wangchuk; Bu ten (41) layman who normally stays at home; Yeshi Kelsang (22), layperson; Dotha (21), watch seller; and Lob Dhonyon, no particular work.

Information available indicates that of those arrested, Jampa Sangpo, Ten Thinlay and Lobsang Gyatso were detained for two weeks while Gonpo Wangchuk was detained for a month.

The monks were interrogated for the second time after their one-month detention. Armed policemen ransacked their rooms. Some were released on bail while those who had no association with officials ended up paying a bribe of 100-150 yuan to buy freedom.

The administrative block where the bomb went off was a one-storey building used as a meeting hall. Even though the hall was rocked around 10.00 p.m. (Chinese standard time), all people in the neighbourhood heard the explosion. Five to six Chinese officials who staffed the hall suffered no casualties but one portion of the hall was completely destroyed. On the same day, independence posters appeared on the gate of the meeting hall which read "May Tibet regain its freedom", "Chinese quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". The day after the incident, 20 policemen from the county came to assess the situation for it was the first ever incident to have occurred in the region.

The bombing site was completely prohibited to the public and the road leading to county was blocked for a week following the blast. The informant, however, saw the bombing site two days later when all the arrested monks were forced to look at it and accused of responsibility for the same. The floor of the affected building was cut deep, the walls made of strong wood and windowpanes were shattered and the cement floor destroyed beyond repair. The meeting hall, which had the capacity to house 50 people, had nothing of value.

Guesa Monastery is targetted with suspicion whenever any independence activities occurs in Zakong County and approximately five-six policemen would come from Degi County for investigation. On such occassions, the monastery has to incur all expenses of the policemen. They would remain until the situation has returned to normal.

As far as the informant knows, around 15-20 independence posters appeared in Zakon County between 1995 -2000. During one such incident in 1995, the county authorities prohibited the celebration of *Monlam* (great prayer) festival in the area. The informants are former monks of Guesa Monastery who left the monastery in August 2000 and stayed for three months in Lhasa They reached Nepal on 20 October 2000.

Nepotism rampant in Chinese educational system - A Teacher's View

Nyima Tsering, a 20 year-old teacher in a primary school in Gyalkon Township, Dartsedo County points out that "... as a Tibetan there are limited educational rights and my case is one of the examples." The entrance test for admission to a four-year course at Tibetan Studies School in Kandi (Dartsedo) is open to all aspiring teachers with a teaching experience of six years. But a candidate with good financial backup to grease the palm of those who are responsible for admission can gain entrance much quicker and easier.

Normally, parents bribe the concerned authorities for admission that ranges from 5000 to 10,000 yuan. Similarly, if the candidate is connected in some way to Lin Young, the head of the school's education counselors, then his admission is guaranteed.

However, Tsering did not have any of these "special advantages", save his academic calibre. He met with Ling Young to apply for entrance test and was permitted to do so. Although Tsering passed the entrance test he was not given placement due to lack of special "back up". Moreover, his parents could not afford the exorbitant bribe thus depriving him of the opportunity of a lifetime. Tsering was further told to apply for admission into Chinese section but he declined as he was interested in specialising in Tibetan studies. The university annually enrolls 90 students for both Chinese and Tibetan section and fees are as high as 3500 yuan per month.

In 1998, the Chinese government proclaimed that all Tibetans live in comfort with an annual income of 2000 yuan. As far as Tsering knows, there is not a single Tibetan family in the region whose annual income comes to 2000 yuan. Few special grants and scholarships were available for poor Tibetan students before 1998. A Tibetan student who joined Chinese class would be endowed with a certain amount towards total fees. Those Tibetan students who passed exams for higher studies could receive educational loan from the government to continue their studies as well. At present, the scene has completely changed. No such government assistance is provided on the pretext that Tibetans are self-reliant.

Tsering added wryly that it would be fitting to rename his province as Chinese Autonomous Region instead of Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, as Chinese held all the key official posts.

He claimed that Tibetans in their late fifties in his area have some knowledge of Tibetan language and culture, but those below 30 years are not able to utter a single Tibetan phrase and have lost their Tibetan identity. Tsering adds, "About 90 per cent of these Tibetan youths have already lost Tibetan identity. They are neither proper Chinese nor Tibetan proper. For a nation and its people, to lose the essence of one's culture and language is to lose everything." He concludes, "So, in my opinion, earlier the Chinese provided grants and scholarships to produce Tibetans with Chinese characteristics. As they seem to have accomplished this now, they don't support Tibetan students anymore." He strongly disagrees with Chinese notion of Buddhist religion as an obstacle to development.

Tsering was the only one among his brother and sisters to have received school education. It was a practice in Shana Dorji, Nachoe County, Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture that one of the three children in a family should be compulsorily sent to school or else the authorities would impose a fine. Tsering got the opportunity to attend Mohui Primary School and later he studied in Nachoe County Middle School for three years.

Upon finishing school, he was assigned as a teacher in a Chinese government-run primary school in Gyalkon Township, Dartsedo County. The school with 80 students has 11 teachers comprising mainly of Chinese. The school has classes up to the fourth level and divided into two sections of Tibetan and Chinese.

While he taught at the school from 1998 to 1999, he drew a monthly salary of 1100 yuan. At the end of 1998, there was a hike in the pay scale of teachers at his school and maybe it was a common salary increase to teachers in other schools as well. Each student was required to pay a fee of 200 yuan per semester. The school headmistress is a Chinese national by the name of Hai Sha.

Tsering stayed for two weeks in Lhasa in October 2000 and then came with 13 people assisted by a Tibetan guide to whom each escapee paid 500 yuan. The whole group arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 20 December 2000.

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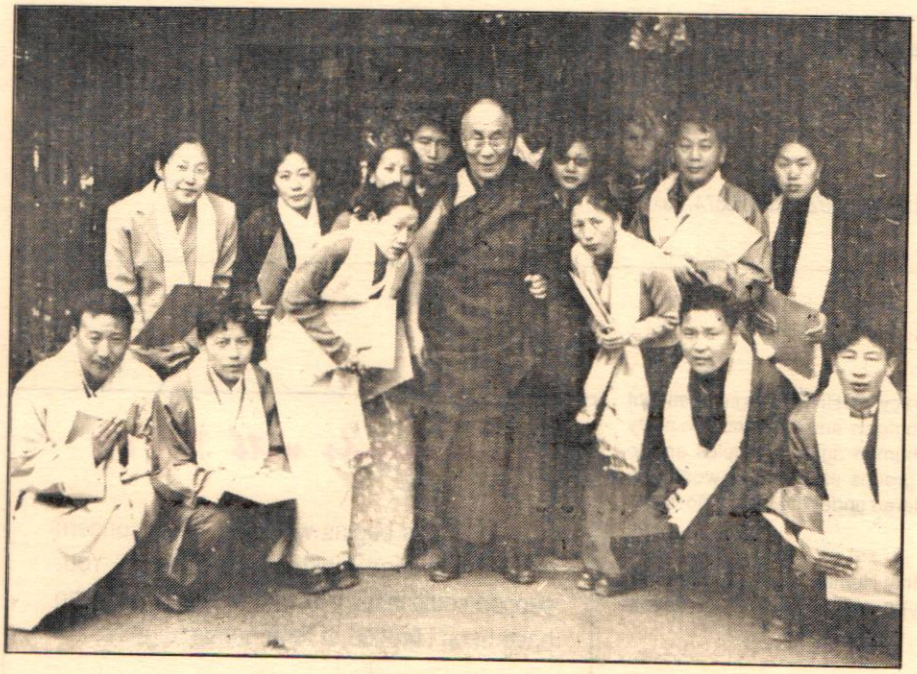
TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

Private audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama

On 3 January 2001, the staff members and volunteers of TCHRD received a private audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness released the Centre's Annual Report "Enforcing Loyalty" of the year 2001. He provided the Centre with suggestions and recommendations on its' activities.

We would like to welcome Tenzin Wangpo, Kalsang Topgyal, Hannelore Strumm, Andrew Haas, Terri Spigelmyer, Tyler Haas, Katlyn Haas, Kelsey Haas and Mike Scotts as our new members.



Press Conference

Two press conferences were held on 6 January 2001 in relation to the release of "Enforcing Loyalty", the Annual Report for 2000. Simultaneous to the Tibetan press conference in the Lhakpa Tsering Hall in DIIR, at the Coffee House in Kachayri, Dharamsala, a press conference in English was held for the local newspaper agencies.

The Tibetan conference was addressed by Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Lobsang Tsering and Jampel Monlam. Approximately 10 personnel representing various media in the Tibetan community attended the conference which lasted for 45 minutes.

The conference in English was addressed by Youdon Aukatsang and Tenzin Chokey which was attended by 12 Indian newspaper agencies.

There was wide coverage of the release on both radio and print.

New TCHRD members

Signature Petition submitted to Chinese Embassy

The Centre submitted 1090 collected signatures to the Chinese Embassy in Delhi. This Signature Campaign is a petition to the Chinese government demanding the release of prominent politican prisoners such as Tanak Jigme Sangpo, Phuntsok Nyidron, Ngawang Choephel, Ngawang Phulchung and Ngawang Sangdrol.

Signatures represented approximately 40 different nationals visiting Dharamsala.

Lecture on human rights and democracy

Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director gave a talk on human rights and democracy to a group of children recently arrived from Tibet . The talk took place in lower TCV School and the questions raised by children largely dwelled on democracy in exile community.

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E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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.

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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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS *update*

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Life is not a prison sentence - Five detained Tibetans lose their lives

The deaths of five Tibetans at the hands of Chinese officials have been reported to TCHRD in the month of February 2001. Every instance involved severe maltreatment of detained or sentenced Tibetans that directly resulted in their deaths. This sudden increase in fatalities is presenting a frightening picture, as three of these deaths occurred within only a four month period, between October 2000 and February 2001. The other two occurred only a few months prior to that, in January and June 2000. Tibetan prisoners, whether in custody or following sentencing, have always existed in a precarious environment where survival is not guaranteed. This rise in deaths as a direct result of torture and deliberate brutality is but another cruel statement by the Chinese authorities relating to their opinion and attitude towards the people they regard as inferior and irrelevant.

Monk dies prior to sentencing

According to information received by TCHRD, Lobsang Sherab of Sera Monastery, who was detained for a second time for alleged involvement in political activities, died after his release on 20 October 2000 . His death was a result of the severe torture he endured during his period of detention.

Lobsang Sherab was a monk of Sera Monastery when PSB officers detained him in October 1999, under suspicion of involvement in pro-independence activities. He was detained in the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre, during which time he suffered intensive torture resulting in a fractured leg. He also suffered head injuries. His condition was so critical that he had to be released before sentencing, which is a regular feature for most detainees who suffer from extreme torture while detained under suspicion. On 24 November that same year, Sherab was released from detention.

By the time he was released, Sherab had developed a permanent limp. Despite treatment at the Lhasa Tibetan Medical Institute his condition deteriorated drastically. On 20 October 2000, Lobsang passed away in Lhasa. He was 30 years old at the time. During the sky burial, it was discovered that he had suffered a brain hemorrhage.

Lobsang Sherab had earlier spent three years in Trisam Prison. Otherwise known as Norbu, Lobsang was originally from Lhoka Region. In 1986 he joined Sera Monastery and taught scriptures from 1992. When "work team" members came in 1996 to Sera Monastery, they took down all the pictures of the Dalai Lama as part of the "patriotic re-education" campaign. Lobsang exhibited his vehement opposition to the campaign by closing the main prayer hall for three days. No immediate action was taken against him at that time for fear of antagonising the entire Sera Monastery population.

However, on 7 August 1996, Lobsang was taken away by "work team" and PSB officials. He was detained in the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre for four months, after which he was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre. He was sentenced for three years in the Trisam Prison and following the completion of his term, was released on 7 August 1999.

Doubts surround nuns' sudden death in prison

28-year-old Tibetan nun Ngawang Lochoe, died in Drapchi Prison on 5 February 2001, just one year prior to completion of her 10-year prison sentence. Ngawang Lochoe was arrested along with five other nuns, all from Nyen Nunnery, for taking part in a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa on 14 May 1992. They were charged with "instigating counter-revolutionary activities and propaganda" and Lochoe was sentenced to five years' imprisonment at the age of 19. For seven months before her

sentencing, Lochoe and the nuns suffered brutal interrogations and inhumane treatment at the Gutsa Detention Centre. Three of the nuns are still incarcerated in Drapchi Prison while two were presumably released in 1998.

In Drapchi Prison, Lochoe and 13 other nuns were involved in recording songs and messages to their families and friends on a smuggled tape recorder in June 1993. When prison authorities discovered their clandestine activity, the nuns were given additional prison sentences. Lochoe's sentence was extended by five years, bringing her total sentence to 10 years. Two weeks prior to her death in January 2001, prison officials prevented a family member from seeing Lochoe during a prison visit. Lochoe died immediately after prison officials transferred her to the police hospital near Drapchi Prison on 5 February. Lochoe's relatives were informed the same day that she was not well and had been admitted to hospital. Upon reaching the hospital, the relatives were shown the dead body of Lochoe. They were not informed of the cause of death.

Fellow nun political prisoners, who made their journey to exile last year, said that, "Unless Lochoe met with some misfortune, it is not likely that she would die a sudden death. She was a healthy woman with no history of prolonged illness while in Prison."

"Lochoe's sudden death is highly questionable. Preventing her relatives from seeing her and providing medication only at the last minute, indicates deliberate foul play in the Chinese authorities' treatment of Tibetan political prisoners," commented Lobsang Nyandak, executive director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. "We keep receiving information about untimely demises of political prisoners in Tibet. China has totally failed to uphold the provisions of the UN Convention Against Torture to which it is a signatory. As of now, a total of 72 Tibetan political prisoners have died directly as a result of torture since China ratified the Convention."

Ngawang Lochoe was from Nyen Nunnery in Toelung Dechen County in Lhasa Municipality.

Of the 451 known Tibetan political prisoners held in various Chinese prisons in Tibet, approximately 200 are held in Drapchi Prison, including 32 female political prisoners out of whom 29 are nuns.

Since 1987, 13 nuns have reportedly died while in custody or shortly after release due to torture in prisons.

Relatives Recover Corpse of a Tibetan Monk

In mid February, a Tibetan exile returnee's body was recovered by his relatives from near the Nyari Detention Centre in Shigatse. 27-year-old Saru Dawa, a monk of Kirti Monastery, had been arrested at the Chinese border in Dram on 20 November 2000, while returning to Tibet to see his ailing mother.

Immediately upon receiving information regarding the arrest of Saru Dawa, his relatives made numerous enquiries at various places and police stations near the border. Since all those arrested at the border are detained in Nyari Detention Centre in Shigatse, the relatives approached the prison authorities there. The authorities initially denied holding any person by the name of Dawa. However, after obtaining money from the relatives, a prison official acknowledged that Dawa had been detained at this Detention Centre but had subsequently committed suicide.

On February 15, the relatives were taken to the location near the prison complex where Dawa's body was buried. The officials exhumed the body, without letting the relatives touch it. The corpse did not smell foul, and, by their request, it was cremated the same day in front of the relatives.

Dawa's relatives were informed that he had committed a serious crime. They were shown a picture of Dawa with the Dalai Lama, and some books published in the exile community. One prison official was reportedly quoted as saying that Dawa was physically not well when he first came to the Detention Centre, and despite medical care his health failed to improve. His poor health, coupled with the serious crime he had committed, was supposedly too much for Dawa to endure, and he finally committed suicide on 9 January 2001.

A fellow Kirti monk testified that Dawa had been carrying a bag full of books, but that they were all purely religious texts and none were of a political nature.

Dawa was born in Saru Township, Dzoge County, Ngaba Prefecture, Sichuan Province in 1974. At the age of 13 he joined Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Tibet. In 1992, he escaped to India and joined Kirti Monastery in Dharamsala. After studying in the monastery for eight years, he started his journey to Tibet in November 2000, after receiving the news of his mother's ill health.

Protest in prison leads to hightened maltreatment

A former political prisoner, who arrived in Nepal this week, reported the death of another political prisoner. Penpa, a 40-year old from Tsang Shalu died in early 2000, just one month after he was released on medical parole. Penpa, who had been serving a three-year sentence in Trisam Prison, was just six months away from the completion of his prison term. Upon his release, Penpa visited several doctors and hospitals in Lhasa and Phenpo Lhundrup County but never recovered from his illness. In actual fact, his condition deteriorated further, and he finally passed away three days after he had returned to his native place in Tsang. At the time of sky burial, family members discovered that a lung had collapsed and was stuck to his ribs.

Penpa suffered intensive beatings when he was initially apprehended by the National Security Bureau (Ch: An Quan Ting) for his alleged involvement in a flag hoisting incident. A few months prior to his arrest, on 14 May 1997, the forbidden Tibetan national flag was hoisted on the top of the Jokhang Temple. Penpa was denied the medical attention that he required at that time, and when his health condition deteriorated further, the authorities were compelled to release him

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

Six years in Ngapa Prison

Pasang Dorjee, 41, comes from a farming background in Wosang Village, Dantho Township in Kandze Prefecture, Sichuan Province. His mother died when he was a mere child and he was brought up by his father and elder siblings. Pasang attended the Dantho township school from the age of eight until he was 12 years old.

In 1978, Pasang was one of the first monks to join and help commence the renovation of the Kandze Monastery. However, Pasang had reportedly involved himself in political activities since 1995, including the distribution of pro- independence leaflets, mainly protesting the appointment of the Chinese Panchen Lama reincarnation. Consequently, in April 1996, Pasang and his friend, Norbu Damdul, were summoned to the Kandze PSB Detention Centre. Norbu presented himself as demanded and was detained in custody immediately. Pasang, however, was involved in a prayer offering and ignored the summons. The next day approximately 15 police officials arrived at the monastery and took him away. The following day officials ransacked Pasang's house, searching for evidence.

Once in custody, Pasang was detained with the non-political prisoners, in a completely separate area to Norbu, and the two had no means of contact. Twenty days later Pasang was transferred to the same unit as Norbu, but they were still kept in separate areas. It was not until 10 months later, after the trial, that the two friends were finally reunited. On 22 October 1996 the Kandze Intermediate People's Court sentenced Pasang to six years' imprisonment with a further three years' deprivation of political rights. During the period of detention before sentencing Pasang was subjected to multiple beatings and all visits were prohibited.

Pasang and Norbu were transferred to the Ngaba Prison on 23 February 1997 and finally met after a 10-month segregation. For the first two months in rukhag #4 (the 4th unit of the prison) the two monks and their two fellow political prisoners, one of who was Trulku Ka Bukye, shared their place of detainment with non-political prisoners. The criminal prisoners were treated differently to the political prisoners, including the reasons for and type of punishments. The non-political prisoners are placed in manual labour, working as labourers, carpet weavers and vegetable gardeners, whereas the political inmates are prevented from leaving the compound at any stage.

After two months the political prisoners were transferred to rukhag #3, and when Norbu was released in late 1998, there were seven political prisoners still incarcerated there. All the political prisoners are subjected to an extreme exercise regime and intense political indoctrination. They were forced to memorise 15 pages of prison rules and guidelines, a task which Pasang failed to achieve. Consequently, he was so severely beaten that his whole leg became extremely swollen as a result.

Other difficulties were also experienced by the inmates. The Tibetan language is not used at all within the Kandze Prison by prison administrators. This creates problems for the Tibetan prisoners as they do not understand the language used by their jailers. Additionally, food rations were meagre and of extremely poor quality, contamination being quite common.

The Ngaba Prison in Kandze Prefecture holds approximately 600 inmates. During Norbu's two-year sentence he was allowed only one sole visit, and that was restricted to the ludicrous time limit of two minutes. Upon his release, Norbu attempted to visit Pasang but was prevented every time by the Chinese authorities. Pasang is not due to be released until October 2002.

on medical grounds.

A former Lhaden Tsulakhang monk, Penpa was detained for a year in 1989 for his participation in the 5 March 1989 demonstration in Lhasa. At that time as well, Penpa was reportedly singled out for harsh beatings due to his involvement in a protest against insufficient food at Outridu Prison (Lhasa Prison).

"With this information, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy has recorded five deaths of political prisoners in the year 2000 alone. Since the time of China's ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture in 1988, a total of 71 Tibetan political prisoners have died directly as a result of torture," said Lobsang Nyandak, executive director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

"These deaths are further evidence of the Chinese government's continuing blatant violations of fundamental human rights. We find it appalling that the international community has still failed to actively condemn the Chinese government," he added.

Bribes, cover-ups and finally death in custody

This successive information on deaths due to torture corroborates Amnesty International's (AI) recent findings in their report titled, " Torture - A Growing Scourge in China - Time for Action". According to AI, "torture in Tibet is particularly harsh during the early stages of custody and interrogation. Many report being beaten with whatever implement[s] a guard or interrogator can find at hand including gun-butts. Prisoners are often beaten around the head, or kicked in the stomach, lower back and genitals. Some, wearing metal helmets, have had their heads beaten against the walls. Kidney and liver ailments are common among prisoners as a result of kicking and beatings by prison guards aimed specifically at these sensitive organs."

A recent arrival from Kandze gave a detailed account of her husband's death while in custody. Pasang Dolma reached Dharamsala, India, in February 2001. She was married to Tsering Wangdrak for 15 years and has three children. Tsering was one of the protestors in the Kandze demonstration on 26 October 1999 in which approximately 3000 people participated. The people were protesting for the release of Geshe Sonam Phuntsok, who had been detained the night before by six officials from Kandze County. The Chinese officers filmed the protestors while simultaneously clamping down on them. Eventually police officers began to take the people from their homes who had escaped detention that day. This included Tsering, who had been in the forefront of the protest. At 10 am on 29 October, in a mass arrest in Goloe township, around eight minibuses and 40-45 police vehicles filled with policemen and PAP forces surrounded the area. The officers started ransacking each house. When they came to Tsering's, they took down the photos of the Dalai Lama and Geshe Sonam Phuntsok and smashed them on the floor. They then nandcuffed Tsering's hands behind his back and started kicking and hitting him with electric batons. Tsering and a few others were taken to Kandze police station where they were brutally beaten during interrogation. Tsering, in particular, was reportedly smashed face down on the ground and kicked on the head. Then the officers slashed his back with a bamboo stick and poured hot boiling water over it. They then whipped him with wire strings while simultaneously questioning him with, "Does Dalai Lama give you food? Does Geshe Sonam Phuntsok give you food? Are you happy now?" This went on for over a month. After two months, Tsering was sentenced to three years and eight months for his political activism and transferred to Ngapa Prison in Kandze Prefecture, Sichuan Province. Twenty eight days after her husband was sentenced, Pasang met her husband for the first time. She had to go through an arduous process in order to obtain permission, and even ended up having to pay a bribe of 1000 yuan to meet Tsering. Over two days she was allowed to see him twice.

While Tsering was still in prison, on 6 June 2000, a cell mate contacted Pasang and told her that Tsering was in a grave state. While she was on the way to meet him, another call came in the afternoon saying he had already passed away. It was four days later that she finally received a telegram from the prison, stating that Tsering was sick.

The names of some of the others detained at the same time as the deceased are:

1. Pasang, (who escaped to Lhasa after the protest and later died of a heart attack).
2. Pema Phuntsok, (farmer) was arrested on 29 October 1999, sentenced to three years and has been possibly taken to Bejiing.
3. Lobga, 49, (farmer) was arrested on 29 October 1999, sentenced to three years. Held in Ngapa Prison in Sichuan.
4. Wangdue, 48, (farmer) sentenced to three years in Ngapa Prison.
5. Phuntsok 21, sentenced to three years in Ngapa Prison.

In addition, Geshi Sonam Phuntsok after his two-month detention was sentenced to five years and taken to Dartsedo Prison in Kandze Prefecture.

Pasang was one of the participants in the protest at the time. She was working as an accountant for the local community. When authorities discovered her involvement, they fined her 500 yuan and publicly humiliated her. She was also beaten and kicked. The township leader, Lobsang Tsering punished her too, by ordering her to work for a month cleaning the toilets and other menial duties.

The people in her town were afraid of assisting her to collect the body, so as to be able to perform the last rites, for fear of antagonising the Chinese officials. Also, the prison was located some considerable distance from the town. No official death certificate was issued.

Pasang claims, "My husband was physically fit. I believe that his death was a direct result of torture he suffered in prison coupled with forced labour with insufficient food.

Lives at risk in the search for an education

Yangphel is a 44 year-old businessman from Jidon Village, Markham County in Chamdo Province. His son, Tsering Mejoy, attended school for three years at the Ponda Primary School in Jidon Village. The annual fees there were 800 yuan, and after three years Yangphel's son had not made any progress. He could not even write the Tibetan alphabet. Every year six students from his village are selected to be compulsorily sent to the village schools. Since the reputation of these schools is so poor, parents choose to keep their children at home to learn farming and herding. Therefore, the selection is done through a lottery system, and if the parents fail to send their children to the school, they are fined 1500 yuan. Yangphel's cousin withdrew his son from the school after he found out that the child was getting spoilt rather than receiving an adequate education. He paid 1500 yuan as a fine for the withdrawal.

Yangphel came to India and with a group consisting of himself and two children, sent by their parents with the Nepali guide to be admitted in a school in India. The children were Ngawang Phegyal, 13 years old, and his sister Tenzin Tsomo, 12 years old. After 15 days of walking, the four of them stopped on the way for lunch. However, when Tenzin Tsomo went to the river to fetch some water she fell in and was swept away by the strong current. Eventually when they realised that she was taking longer than she was supposed to, they discovered the mishap. But by then it was too late, and they could not find her body.

The group walked for a month and a half to reach Nepal.

Schools for the select

Tseten,a teacher in a primary school in Dhitoe County, recently fled into exile. According to Tseten, "there is a well established school in my county, but in this school there are only children of Chinese nationality, children of Tibetans who work under the Chinese, and children of rich Tibetan businessmen. There isn't a single child from a nomadic or farming background. They go to a different school, and after they complete primary school most of them cannot go for further studies as they have not learnt anything. Moreover, the teachers will say, "the nomad children are dumb, they won't learn anything". The teachers are all Chinese, and even if a nomad child did well in his/her exams the chances of getting a job is highly doubtful".

This is corroborated by Tashi from Agha Township, in Agha County, Kham Province. According to 24 year-old Tashi, "The Tibetans cannot afford to send their children to school. If there are 100 students, only two will come out with proper education but they will never get the government job unless they know somebody in the government, or have enough money to pay bribes. No one cares about educational qualifications or skills."

Chinese policy enforces poverty

Jaring, 24, is a painter from Nyenko Namo Village, Hokon Township, Darlag County. Originally from a nomadic family, Jaring maintains that the nomads in Nyenko suffer poor living conditions, and he attributes this to the Chinese governments' policy toward the nomads.

"The grassland is divided among the nomads so mutual assistance no longer exists in the community. Each nomad is independent, and all community work is now conducted at the command of the local authorities, who levy a fine for every small thing. For example, recently during the construction of a bridge and road, one member from each family within the locality was required to work without payment. For failing to attend, the authorities would confiscate a dri (female Yak) as fine."

"In addition, nomads traditionally live in tents of dried yak skin, however, recently the Chinese have forced us to buy canvas tents which we find exorbitantly expensive and redundant. Also, on top of the usual taxes, each family must annually sell the local government five sheep, one yak and one dri. Normally each sheep brings a market price of 400 yuan but the government pays us only 70 yuan, which is not even the market price of the animal's skin".

On religious repression

""Patriotic re-education campaigns started in Hokon Monastery and Sarong Monastery last year. There are lots of rules and regulations to be studied by the monks, which they feel are just a waste of time and interfere with their regular prayers. At every "re-education" session, monks are forced to denounce the Dalai Lama. The monks are ordered to participate in all civil construction projects and other local government projects."

Last year, a meeting was held in Golog Prefecture with Chinese representatives from six counties: Machen, Matoe, Chigdril, Pema, Gade and Darlag County. The gist of the meeting, according to the informant, was that " even a single monk is a burden to the people and the community, and hence we [the authorities] will restrict the numbers of monks, and children are not allowed to become monks until 18 years old."

On environment destruction around his area

"For more than 15 years fishing was carried out extensively in Jaring Tso(lake), Nagring Tso and Toring Tso in Matoe County, and the fish were transported to Ziling in Qinghai Province to be sold. Now the fish stocks are almost exhausted. In the past when Tibetan locals complained about massive over-fishing, Chinese fishermen produced written permission from the government to fish, leaving the local Tibetans powerless. 400 - 500 Chinese fishermen anually visited the site for fishing.

However, when I visited there in 1999, I saw that there were less Chinese, as the availability of fish had decreased, and the lakes were also shrinking. Noticing the potential danger, the Chinese authorities recently put a stop to this indiscriminate fishing, and took immediate measures to prohibit further fishing in this area. They have now shifted the fishing area to other lakes, such as Ganla Tso and Wangtsa Tso in Matoe County. The locals consider these lakes very sacred and should be not be exploited, but, as usual, the locals' protests are in vain.

At Nanto, in Darlag County, the Chinese mined gold for two years during 1996-1997. Reportedly, Nanto has a rich source of natural resources. There is not a single motorable road to Nanto, so the Chinese have geared up to build a road to assist in the exploitation of the area.

Also, in Qinghai there is a salt field, which is considered the largest salt field in the area. The Chinese have been mining it and have set up a factory where no one is allowed to enter.

Jaring left his native place in November 2000 and reached Dharamsala in February 2001.

Chilli fires and electric shocks force confession

"Work team" members came to Norbu Damdul's monastery in 1995 insisting that the monks recognise the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama. Kandze Monastery has witnessed several acts of defiance towards the implementation of Chinese policies over the last few years.

Norbu also could not accept these conditions so he deliberately avoided attending the "work team's" political sessions. In December 1995 Norbu put up posters reading "Free Tibet", "Chinese quit Tibet" and "Tibetans do not believe in the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama" in Kandze Monastery, and at some major cross roads in Kandze County.

Four months later, in April 1996, a dozen monks from the Kandze Monastery were called to the police station for interrogation in connection with the murder of a monk in the monastery. When the interrogation was completed, Norbu was asked to stay back after all the other monks had left. Initially the policemen made inquiries regarding the murder, but then he was interrogated as to whether he had ever put up independence posters or been involved in anti-Chinese propaganda. Norbu denied every charge made against him and was detained for ten days at the police station.

At the time of detention, the police tortured him severely, and he was stripped naked save for his underpants. Hung upside down from the ceiling by his feet, the police made a fire underneath him and threw chilli powder into it. As the fumes billowed up it was unbearably painful for him and he was choking. At another time, a policeman made him go down on to his hands and knees and sat on his back, riding him like a horse. They also spat in his face and sometimes gave him electric shocks while his hands were handcuffed behind his back. The authorities abused him for his involvement. The officers also told him that except for him, the other Tibetans did not have a problem accepting Chinese rule.

Norbu was vomiting blood from the beatings he had received and it compelled him to eventually confess to his involvement. During his ten-day detention, he was not given sufficient food and was detained with a criminal prisoner. The authorities insisted that Norbu had "accomplices" and was adamant to find them out. They tried all means to get him to reveal other names, including allurement through monetary gains.

When the authorities failed to squeeze any information out of Norbu, they detained him for a further eight months, after which he was tried and the court sentenced him to three years' imprisonment. He was imprisoned at Ngapa Prison, in Sichuan Province, where in 3800 prisoners were incarcerated for various charges. There were approximately 12 political prisoners.

The most difficult problem Norbu faced in the prison was insufficient food. He never received enough food throughout his time in prison. He recalls that the food provided to the prisoners was worse than that given to a pig. Meat was a rare feature in the diet, and when it was provided it was rotten. Unlike criminal prisoners, his parents and relatives were not allowed to visit him or provide him food parcels as he was a political prisoner.

When prisoners fell ill, they were not taken to see a doctor for days. When sick, they were given the same medicines irrespective of whether they were suffering a headache or stomach pain. The prisoners were not allowed to speak in Tibetan but forced to speak in Chinese, being told that it was a Chinese Prison.

Norbu was released on 1 April 1999 after serving his prison term. After his release he was not allowed to return to the monastery and he was prohibited from wearing monks' robes, as his monastery was not willing to take the risk of readmitting him. For a year he stayed at home, doing some self-study and no particular work.

Norbu says that, "His Holiness the Dalai Lama is doing so much for Tibet, if I could do a little service for him, then death means nothing to me". He has no plans of going back to Tibet until the situation there changes.

From Lhasa Norbu traveled to Dram, hiding in a laden truck. From there he found a guide, paying 2000 yuan, and walked over mountain tracks to avoid police check posts. Norbu arrived on 1 January 2001 at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal.

He would like to join the Sera Monastery in South India.

Norbu Damdul, 28 years old, is a monk and a former political prisoner from Yu Sang Village, Dotho Township, Kandze County. He arrived in Dharamsala on 10 January 2001.

Norbu is from a farming family of six members, and at the age of 16 become a monk and joined Kandze Monastery to pursue spiritual studies.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

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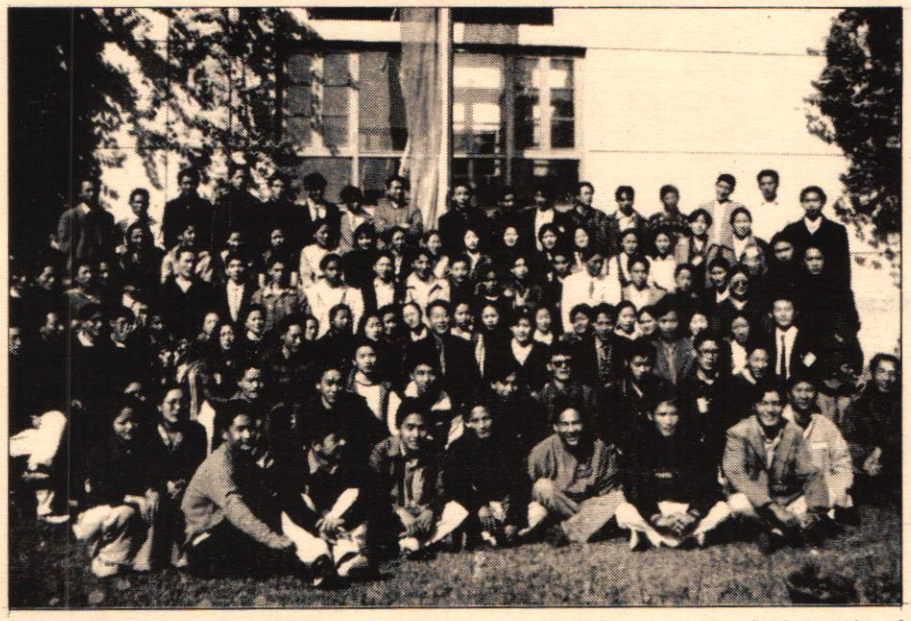
Fourth Workshop in Delhi



The Centre organised its Fourth Workshop on Human Rights and Democracy in SOS Tibetan Youth Hostel, Rohini, New Delhi from 20-24 January 2001. 120 enthusiastic participants from more than 16 regions attended the workshop.

Among the resource persons were Kalon Tempa Tsering (Dept. of Home), Mr. Thupten Lungrig (Vice Chairman, ATPD), Prof. Dawa Norbu (JNU), Mr. Ravi Nair (Executive Director, SAHRDC), Mr Thupten Samphel (General Secretary, DIIR), Mrs. Tsering Tsomo (Executive Director, TPPRC), Suhas Chakma (Deputy Director, SAHRDC), Mr. Lobsang Nyandak (Executive Director, TCHRD) and Ms. Youdon Aukatsang (Senior Program Officer, TCHRD). Mr. Gaden Tashi, a TCHRD staff member based in Kathmandu, Nepal, also gave a moving personal account as a former political prisoner in Tibet.

Students were exposed to wide range of topics and concepts, such as the principles of human rights and democracy, United Nations human rights mechanisms, Tibet at the UN, future vision of Tibet, role of media, role of Tibetan parliamentarians, and the structure of Tibetan democracy. These were conveyed through various means including role-plays, simulation exercises, debates, group discussions and video screenings. Students were particularly enthused by the simulation exercise relating to the role of Tibetan Parliamentarians, and also the debate on the China resolution at the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

In addition to holding an evaluation session on the workshop, this year TCHRD also conducted a survey on the participation of Tibetan youth in elections, where it was discovered that only 50 per cent of the participants exercise their voting rights. Some of the most common reasons given for not voting were the clash of polling dates with University examinations, not possessing the Green book, the unavailability of polling facilities in their area, and a general lack of information available on the elections and on a candidate's background.

Verified by the enthusiastic response from all the participants, the five-day workshop proved to be a great success, achieving its educational aims in an enjoyable and informative manner. The extent of the value of the event was revealed by a student from University of Mumbai in his comment, "this workshop brought together youngsters from different background to one forum. There were a lot of exchange of ideas which should happen but does not happen anywhere else."

Tehran Conference

The Senior Programme Officer, Ms. Youdon Aukatsang attended the NGO Forum "Asian Preparatory Committee Meeting on UN World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance" from 17-21 February in Tehran, Iran.

Ms. Aukatsang accomplished the inclusion of "People under Foreign Occupation" as a separate category in the NGO Draft Declaration, where the situation of the Tibetan people was described as an area of great concern. She also successfully lobbied to include "state policies implementing population transfer aimed at altering demographic patterns in a particular region further intensifying the discrimination suffered by the local population".

Ms. Aukatsang met with the Chinese delegation during the governmental meeting and handed them the Centre's reports. She also met with several delegates from Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal, Malaysia and the Phillipines including the French Ambassador. The issue of accreditation for TCHRD was raised at an NGO meeting with the High Commissioner Ms. Mary Robinson.

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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.

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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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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A Writer arrested

In August 2000, the Gansu National Security Office arrested Jinpa Gyaltso, a 24-year-old writer, for having distributed an abridged life story of martyr Thupten Ngodup, the autobiography of the Dalai Lama entitled "My Land and My People" and some speeches of the Dalai Lama. When Gyaltso refused to disclose anything hewas detained for 15 days and then released. After three days he was re-arrested and released again on 29 August, after which he immediately made good his escape.

In another incident in August 1996, Gyaltso and two other friends, Kalsang Drapa and Lobdon, were arbitrarily arrested and severely beaten on suspicions of having been linked to the distribution of independence pamphlets in Labrang Monastery. At that time, four of Gyaltso's front teeth were broken. Lobdon who was sentenced to two years' imprisonment escaped to India after his release.

Gyaltso became monk of Lhachab Monastery at the age of 12 and joined Gansu Buddhist Studies School (Nangten Lobling) at 17 years of age. After his graduation four years later, he took up writing and did not return to his monastery. So far, he has published 200 articles in various leading Chinese administered magazines including essays, poems and short stories.

According to Gyaltso, his themes and topics are "meaningless". He said any given topic could not go against Party principles and ideologies of the Communist government. He added that there is a need for conducive environment and freedom to produce any well written essay or quality writing but in occupied Tibet, there is very little chance for his creativity to flourish. Gyaltso had been an editor for a privately-run magazine "Guku Choepo" (a bunch of flowers) for five years. Although self-financed, the authorities withdrew the latest edition of the magazine issued last year mainly because it contained political stories.

He classified writers of present Tibet into three general categories. The first one, he says, are those who appease and eulogise the Chinese Communist Party to gain self-acclaim and social status. This group consists of Tibetan cadres and government employees who mainly deal with themes of the progress and development that the Party has brought into Tibet. These writers also write anniversary poems on significant occasions for the Party each year.

The second category consists of writers who are patriots with political understanding. They write critical essays and satirical poems aimed at social reform. Such writings are rarely published in any of the Tibetan magazines. The Public Security Bureau always look out for such elements in their writing and document them. The several times that Gyaltso was taken to Security Office, he found personal profiles and resumes compiled by PSB of himself and some of his writer friends.

The third group, narrow in their outlook, has no specific philosophy. They waver according to particular/given circumstances. Such writers write mainly to get published in various magazines. The Chinese government does not pay much attention to these writers of new generation who are in their budding stage.

In general, these three types of writers are under direct pressure of the communist government. In other words, Tibetan writers have absolutely no freedom of expression and it is difficult for them to produce well-written work with a Tibetan touch. Even if someone writes a meaningful article which has political elements, there is no way in which it can be presented to the eyes of readers. As long as Tibet remains under Chinese occupation, Tibetan literature will never go shoulder to shoulder with world literature but rather remain far behind the international standard.

He further elaborated that as a young Tibetan writer, he represented the voice of all Tibetans in Tibet. However, he felt like a "masked Tibetan" for they had no freedom to express their Tibetan identity. Given the freedom of expression, Tibetan literature has immense potential to influence world literature, for years of torture and repression coupled with strong culture can provide ideal settings and material for writing. However, whatever writings are published in any of the magazines today are not true representations of Tibetan literature.

Originally from Hoka Gyal Village, Sangchu County, Gansu Province, Gyaltso escaped into exile and reached Nepal on 25 December 2000.

Sentenced to nine years for poster incident

Nyima Dhakpa fled to Lhasa after he pasted pro-independence posters on the gates of a Memorial Garden in Tawu County district at the end of 1999.

The posters carried slogans like "Free Tibet", "Tibetans in Tibet have no freedom", "Tibet is not a part of China" and was signed at the end with his name. The County PSB officials who started investigation the very next day arrested and detained another Nyima Dhakpa from the same monastery.

This incident led to the flight of Dhakpa, while the one under police custody was released after 15 days' detention when the officers realised their mistake. Tawu County Police finally arrested Dhakpa in May 2000 from a village nearby Lhasa after having recieved information about his hide-out. He was beaten severely during detention at Tawu County Detention Centre, and his family members were not allowed to visit him.

On 5 October 2000, the County Court sentenced Dhakpa to nine years' imprisonment on charges of propaganda and incitement against the masses. It was only in December that his family members were allowed to pass him food although personal visits were still not permitted. Normally, a prisoner would be transferred to a prison after sentencing but in Nyima's case, he continues to be detained at Tawu County Detention Centre.

Dhakpa is a 27-year-old former monk of Tawu Nyitso Monastery, Sichuan Province, Kandze Prefecture. He went to a primary school for three years and spent one year in County Middle School. Until his admission in Tawu Nyitso Monastery in 1989, Dhakpa engaged himself in farming. After one year stay at the monastery, he fled to India in 1990 and stayed for three years in South India. In 1994, Dhakpa returned to his monastery in Tibet where he stayed until his arrest in 2000.

A Tibetan communist member defects

Wangtse, a full-fledged communist member since 1997, escaped into exile after he made derogatory statements against China's restrictive religious policies in Tibet that threaten the survival of the very foundation of Tibetan Buddhism.

In June 2000, Wangtse raised his voice against the ban on pilgrimages, recitation of mantras, restrictions on Tibetan cadres to pursue religious practice, and above all the ongoing patriotic "re-education" campaign in the monasteries of his area in 1999. A colleague told him that the Chinese authorities subsequently arranged a meeting to assess his loyalty to the Party and his alleged critical statements.

Though many Tibetans resent the prohibitive religious orders, very few dissenting voices could be heard as everyone plays safe and treads cautiously when it comes to "fishing in troubled water". For fear of being arrested by the local police who were after him, Wangtse left Tibet in August 2000.

Wangtse's family does not know of his escape and moreover, he has no information as to what has happened to his family after his escape. Since 1959, Wangtse's family has suffered from Chinese persecution and even lost several family members during the infamous Cultural Revolution. In 1970, he started work at People's Commune and then held the post of treasurer in a "Rukhag" (group or team) from 1972 until 1980. With the dissolution of "Rukhag" and its replacement by "Drongtso" (village), Wangtse became the headman of his village in Nachoe, Korong Township, from 1980-1984. In addition to all these, he was also a representative at Local Level People's Representative Meeting, as well as a security leader whose job was to maintain discipline for the monks at Boring Monastery. From 1984, he worked as a leader to approximately 5000 people at the Town Level Administration.

Having worked for the Chinese government for almost 24 years, he was entitled to good quality living facilities and a monthly salary of 1500 yuan. Wangtse refutes Party's high claims of complete equity between the Chinese communist party members and the Tibetan communist party members by comparing the difference to that of sky and the terra firma. Chinese members are far more valued by the Party.

Wangtse reached Nepal on 15 February 2001 and has no intention of moving back to Tibet as it might lead to his arrest. As a parting shot, he said, "I am not so politically-knowledgeable but I was sincere in all respects in my work. I have always been waiting for Tibet to get freedom and I want to see the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the exile Tibetan brothers to Tibet."

Escape to avoid arrest for independence posters

For fear of arrest for having distributed hand written independence slogans, two monks of Kandze Monastery recently escaped to India. They arrived in Lhasa around 4 October 2000 where they stayed for one month. Their families knew that they had to escape in order to avoid arrest.

From Lhasa, they went to Dram using a business identity card, and from there paid two guides 3000 yuan to take them to Boudha in Kathmandu. They arrived

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

19

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

Consecutive imprisonment for political activities

Samdup, otherwise known as Thinlay Choendhen, was born in 1966, and is originally from Phenpo Lhundrup County, east of Lhasa. He attended primary school for five years. Samdup's parents are farmers by occupation. As he had an uncle who was a monk in Drepung Monastery, Samdup decided to become a monk as well.

On 9 September 1992, Samdup and a group of other monks from his monastery initiated a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa. They shouted slogans such as, "Free TIbet", "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" and "China quit Tibet". They were detained that same day and held in Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Centre. After eight months detention, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced the detainees. Samdup was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and all of them were transferred to Drapchi Prison in May 1993.

In April 1995, Samdup was released. However, he was prohibited from rejoining the monastery.

Every released prisoners face limited job prospects as they are not allowed to resume their previous job nor are they allowed to avail themselves of new jobs. To eke out a living, Samdup worked as a caretaker at a Buddhist scripture printing press.

In April 1998, a friend gave Samdup political leaflets to distribute which contained independence messages. He took them to the circumambulation area near Sera Monastery and distributed the pamphlets.

On 19 June 1998, he was detained for the second time by the Lhasa PSB officers on suspicion for having distributed political literatures. Samdup was held in "Tibet Autonomous Region" PSB Detention Centre. Following his detention, officers ransacked his house and although they did not find anything, they were still apprehended. Three of Samdup's friends were also implicated.

All four detainees were interrogated several times, during which time they endured severe torture and beatings. They were detained under these conditions for a year and a half. As Samdup had repeatedly engaged in political activities, it was considered a very serious crime.

Normally within six months the court decides the sentences whereas for the four detainees, they were detained for as long as a year and a half. During this long period, family visits were not allowed at all.

Finally on 6 January 2000, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Samdup to four years' imprisonment under article 103, 25, 66, 56 of the Chinese Law. He was denied political rights for a further three years. Following his sentence, Samdup was transferred to Drapchi Prison where he currently remains incarcerated.

at Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 14 December 2000.

The two monks - Sonam Choeda (21) and Dorjee Sonam (19), for nearly a month hand wrote slogans such as "Long Live the Dalai Lama", "Tibet is Free" and "Long Live Free Tibet" on ten notebooks bought from different shops . On 28 September 2000, they distributed these slogans by tearing out pages from the notebooks in strategic areas - at the crossroad of Kandze County called 'Shiz Long kong', in a grocery market, and near the gate of newly built hotel named Gue Ling Kou. They also bought one meter of white cloth and spent a whole night hand drawing the Tibetan flag at home, which was ultimately hoisted on Jasong Bridge.

Following their pro-independence activities , the two monks returned to the monastery and stayed for one week. The Chinese, suspecting the Kandze monks as culprits, came to the monastery to individually check the handwriting of all the monks. Fearing that their handwriting would be discovered, Choeda and Sonam made good their escape. Now they want to join Sera Monastery in South India.

Choeda is from a farming family of seven members. He became monk of Kandze Monastery at the age of 12. The monastery currently houses 340 monks. Sonam, a farmer's son, became monk of Kandze Monastery at 17 years of age. These two monks were busy in their religious studies till circumstances forced them to flee.

The two informants claim to know five monks from Kandze Monastery who were arrested and imprisoned on charges of pro-independence activities in Kandze County:

- Tashi Nyima was arrested in 2000 (month not known) for distributing "Free Tibet" posters. He is currently serving a prison term (sentence unknown) in Kandze.

- Pasang was arrested and sentenced to nearly four and half year's imprisonment for distribution of posters proclaiming independence, supporting the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama, and calling on Tibetans also to support Gedhun Choeklyi Nyima. He is still serving his prison term but the informants have no information on when his prison term will be over.

- The arrest of Gonpo Lobdon took place one year ago for distribution of independence posters and for painting slogans on walls. His prison term is believed to be four years.

- Gyalwa Dhondup who was arrested along with Gonpo Lobdon, could not walk any longer as the lower part of his body has suffered severe damage from police beatings.

- Finally, Norbu was arrested for openly denouncing the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama. He was released in May 2000 after five months' imprisonment.

Barkhor protest led to eight arrests

September 12, 1991, witnessed eight monks of Drepung Monastery staging a protest near Barkhor Zetroe Restaurant in Lhasa. The monks shouted pro-independence slogans and carried a hand-drawn Tibetan national flag. Plain clothed policemen intercepted the protesting monks at Men-tse-khang (Medical Institute) and took them in a vehicle to Lhasa City PSB Office where they were detained for a night.

The next morning, the monks were transferred to PSB Detention Centre and underwent separate intensive interrogations to identify the "culprit" who drew the flag. Unable to bear the physical and mental torture inflicted, one of the monks accepted being responsibility. All eight monks however, were detained for five months.

In February 1992, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court passed sentences on the detainees . Ngawang Jigme, Ngawang Thuchen, Jordhen, Namgyal and Ngawang Dawa were sentenced to between two and four years' imprisonment. Choephel, Dawa and Tenzin were sentenced to "reform through labour" but were later released on bail as they were under-aged. The elder five monks were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

After release, Tenzin re-joined Drepung Monastery. The monks of the monastery refused to comply with the demands of "work team" who came for political indoctrination. In desperation, the officials summoned the parents of the monks and threatened them with expulsion and imprisonment. Tenzin voluntarily left the monastery and stayed at home in Lhasa attending to petty businesses. However, the police often came to question him about his political views, and this constant surveillance and interrogation compelled him to flee India.

Arrest at the Nepal border

Nepali police arrested Rinchen Dawa (22), Gyaltso (25), Tashi Dorjee (22) and Ashong (23) at Barabisi in September 2000. They were on their way from Jiri to Barabisi in a bus. When they refused to heed to the demands of policemen for money, all their belongings were confiscated and they were detained for a night at Barabisi.

The next morning, they were sent back to Dram where they were detained for 13 days. Next they were taken to Nyelam Detention Centre and detained for 26 days. The policemen provided them only a small amount of *Tsampa* (roasted barley flour) twice a day, and forced them to dig earth and cement the floors in various construction sites in the vicinity.

Later, the officials moved them to Shigatse Police Station and detained there for 25 days. Dawa saw 28 other Tibetan detainees at the police station. Upon release, Dawa's companions returned to their native place in despair.

Dawa who left his native place on 3 January 2000, came to Lhasa and failed twice in his attempt to escape. In his third attempt, he came with a group of 26 people through Rongshan. When Nepal police arrested them at a place unknown to him, they were all sent to the

Immigration Department where Tibetan Reception Centre staff collected them.

The main reason for his escape is to seek an audience with the Dalai Lama. Originally from Village Two, Getse Township, Drokon County, Kandze, Dawa wants to join Namdoling Monastery in south India.

Pamphlet distribution, arrest and detention

On 21 October 1992, the night before the enthronement ceremony of one Lama, leaflets promoting "Free Tibet" and "Chinese Quit Tibet" were distributed in Ra Gyal Monastery in Machen County, Qinghai Province. A Tibetan flag was even displayed in the main prayer hall. Subsequent raids by Chinese police led to the arrest of 30-year-old Lobsang Dhargyal, who had a printing block in his room. The other two monks involved in pamphlet distribution were Lobsang Palden (30) and Yeshi Gyaltsen (30). Lobsang Dhargyal was sentenced to two year's imprisonment in Golog County Prison. His two accomplices escaped to India to avoid imprisonment. Upon his release, Lobsang Dhargyal also managed to flee Tibet.

Following the pamphlet distribution, Chinese authorities tightened security at the monastery with policemen guarding the entrance gates for the following month. A group of four to five township policemen would conduct frequent inspections of the monastery. Currently, non-uniformed security personnel stay at the monastery, who are equipped with listening devices that allow them to detect monks' conversations inside their rooms.

In July 2000, the security personnel arrested Gochol Dhargyal (31) and he was secretly removed from his room around midnight. His arrest was on charges of being a conspirator in Lobsang Dhargyal's escape and of subsequently receiving letters from him. He was detained for three days without anyone knowing about his whereabouts. Gochol Dhargyal was threatened upon release that revealing what had happened to him would result in life imprisonment.

Around 26 August 2000, Gedun Woeser (35), another monk at Ra Gyal Monastery, was at a Muslim Restaurant in Jinon Township when a man came and told him to go outside. Five to six security men then forced him into a car and took him to Golog County Detention Centre, where he was detained for two weeks. He was accused of having links with the "Dalai clique". Woeser runs a business for the monastery and has been to India three times, the second time in relation to the reincarnation of Ra Gyal Lama. During his detention Woeser's family was extremely worried, as they had no information about his whereabouts. The security personnel thoroughly ransacked his room in search of pamphlets and books from India and found a photo of the Dalai Lama and Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

Informant, Gen Dhargyal (29), is aware of four such incidents of disappearance from detentions, but says that most of the time the detained monks do not share their experiences for fear of reprisal and consequent harsher treatments from the Chinese officials.

During his 13 years' stay in Ra Gyal Monastery, there were around 500 monks. Except for the main hall, the monastery was completely reduced to rubble during the Cultural Revolution. When Dhargyal first joined the monastery in 1987, reconstruction was already underway with funds from the locals. Lama Tsorab, the head monk of the monastery, supervised the reconstruction work.

"Work teams" came to the monastery in 1995 and again in 1999. They conducted "patriotic re-education" sessions three times during the 1995 visit, when they tested every monk regarding their political allegiance. Those monks who failed to turn up for the classes were expelled. In 1999, the "work team" members, consisting of officials from the county, came to assess the result of the previous "re-education" sessions. The County Religious Committee enforced ban on the pictures of the Dalai Lama in the prayer hall. During surprise raids, monks hid many of the pictures behind thangkas and elsewhere.

Originally from Ra Gyal Village, Jingo Township, Machen County, Qinghai Province, Dhargyal comes from a nomad family of four members. He left his monastery on 21 July 2000 and arrived in Lhasa a week later with another monk named Yamphel, also from Ra Gyal Monastery.

After a week they left Lhasa in a group of 31 people, with an Amdo guide. After one night in Shigatse, they walked for 19 days around Shukumbu and were arrested in Jiri. They were sent to Immigration Office in Kathmandu and arrived at Reception Centre on 23 October 2000. Dhargyal wishes to seek audience with the Dalai Lama and then join Sera Monastery in South India.

Patriotic re-education in various monasteries

Tramtson Monastery

In the summer of 1998, three Tibetan "work team" members from the Religious Department of Nachoe Zhangchoe came to "re-educate" the monks of Tramtson Monastery. They held regular meetings for the monks and issued identity cards to only 40 monks out of the 60. There, opposition to the Dalai Lama constitutes one of the main components of the "re-education" campaign.

The Chinese authorities also launched "patriotic re-education" at Bon monasteries in Drachen County. Of the eight Bon monasteries in this county, namely Tsamgue Monastery, Pala Gue Monastery, Patsang Monastery, Longkar Gue Monastery, Lobum Gue Monastery, Gongru Gue Monastery, Antam Gue Monastery, Marang Gue Monastery, Lobum Gue Monastery is the largest of them. All these monasteries suffered total destruction during the Cultural Revolution. Reconstruction of Tsamtron Monastery was completed in 2000 with the help of donations from local people.

Youdron Phuntsok, 33-year-old former monk of Tramtson Monastery, left his native place in July 2000. With no educational background, Phuntsok became monk at the age of 19 years. He came to Nepal from Lhasa and reached Tibetan Reception Centre on 25 September 2000 with two other monks. They all want to seek audience with the Dalai Lama, go for pilgrimage in India and then return to Nepal where they plan to join a Bon Monastery.

Druka Monastery

Since 1998, "work team" members, in collaboration with local policemen, started coming to Druka Monastery in Nagwong County, Gansu Province, to "re-educate" the monks in their political allegiance and religious belief. They enforced an age limit of 18 years for the monks, thus leading to expulsion of 18 monks.

The monks are indoctrinated to denounce the Dalai Lama and to oppose the notion of Tibetan independence. Even photographs of the Dalai Lama are banned in the monastery and hence, the monks hide the photos during "work team" visits and put them back on display once they are gone. Compulsory attendance at "re-education" sessions are required and the policemen identify the absentee monks. The expelled monks below 18 years of age initially refused to leave the monastery but eventually went when police enforced the age bar. These expelled monks were compelled to attend local Chinese schools.

The informant, Choe Gyaltso, a former monk from Druka Monastery, stated that he could not remain in Tibet any longer. The only viable solution for him was to escape to India. Originally from Zero Village, Kalo Township, Nagwong County, Gansu Province, Gyaltso became monk at the age of 14 years. The monastery has a current strength of 80 monks.

Gyaltso also spoke on the prevalence of forced sterilisation in his locality. The Chinese government prohibits families from having more than two children and any extra births are fined. The informant knows of eight cases of forced sterilisation in his area. To illustrate one example, a 20-year-old daughter of Gyaltso's friend was forcefully sterilised in April 2000. The girl is married to a man called Pema Kyab, a farmer in the village, and they have two children.

Gylatso reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 4 December 2000. He wishes to seek audience with the Dalai Lama and then study Tibetan language. He wants to join Drepung Monastery in South India.

Gaden Monastery

Fighting ensued between the monks of Gaden Monastery and Chinese officials over a portrait of the Dalai Lama in 1996. Chinese officials ordered the removal of a large picture of the Dalai Lama that Ala Lobsang Drapa had hung up in the main hall of the monastery. Enraged with the order, the monks threw stones and even beat up some officers of Democratic Management Committee.

A few officials managed to escape and inform their superiors about the incident. By next morning, the People's Armed Police had encircled the monastery. They announced that those monks who had fled the monastery in the aftermath of the fighting incident would be regarded as expelled from the monastery. The escapee monks returned and after an investigation, the arrest of those monks who were responsible for the incident took place. Reports indicate that they were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment but the informant has no specific details on the matter. Some of the arrested monks were also reportedly released while some were not.

For the next six months, the Chinese officials held intensive "re-education" sessions for the monks and prohibited prayer meetings and other religious practices in the monastery. After the incident, "work team" members arrived at the monastery for three to four times a year and instructed the monks that possession of the cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama would henceforth be considered a very serious crime. The members also warned the monks against display of the Dalai Lama's photographs. Monks who refused to attend "re-education" classes were fined 15 yuan.

It was only in February 1997 when Thupten Choegyal, the informant, enrolled in the monastery that all the normal routines were resumed. The maximum number of monks allowed in Gaden Monastery is 500. As far as Choegyal knows, five regular monks with proper identity cards who were related to Tibetan cadres in some way were expelled from the monastery. However, the identities of the expelled monks are unknown.

Born in Tsalu Township, Village One, Chamdo, Choegyal belongs to a family of five members who are both nomads and farmers. No one in his family has any schooling. Thupten was a herdsman, and the family owns four mu of land. Initially a monk at Drayak Tsacho Monastery which had 50 monks, Choegyal left for Lhasa in 1993 and joined Gaden Monastery as a monk in the non-regular category. Non-regular monks can seek teachings but are denied of all the other privileges of regular monks. There were 15 such non-regular monks, who are charged three yuan a month as accommodation fee.

Choegyal along with the 15 non-regular monks were given a time limit of one month to acquire all the necessary documents that enables them to stay in the monastery. The procedure involved obtaining a red book and all other necessary documents from their respective townships and counties and even from Lhasa. Those monks who failed to acquire these documents within the stipulated time were told to return to their villages.

When Choegyal failed to meet all the conditions that would allow him to stay in the monastery, he escaped. In his hometown also, he found no scope for meaningful religious study in future. In Purang, he joined eight other monks from Markham in Kham Province. With a Sherpa guide, they walked for 20 days and reached a Nepali town via Purang Border. They reached the Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 5 November 2000.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin 23

International Conference

Lobsang Tsering, researcher at the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy attended a conference on Defense of Human Rights and Peace Culture: Field Unity and Diversity in Grenoble, France. The conference was organised by Grenoble based Amnesty International, School for Peace and Aid for Tibetan Students, which was held on 23 March, 2001 at House of Association. Approximately 100 people from different social background participated in this conference, including diplomats, members of Amnesty International, school for peace, Tibet Support Groups and college students. During the conference Lobsang met with Richard Cazenave, deputy president of parliamentary Friendship for Tibet.

The keynote speakers for the conference were Ms Innes Brill from Columbia, Laurant Kantu from Democratic Republic of Congo, Lobsang Tsering representing Tibet and Mr. Denzil Potgieter from South Africa. The speakers introduced their actions within a NGO or permanent Organisation. Each speaker talked about the present situation in their country and problem with the peace process. Although the problems in these countries were not same but some similarities in making a peace process within their countrie's militias or foreign powers were drawn.

On the 24 and 25th March, a seminar was organised at the School for Peace which attempted to bring a dialogue between countries inorder to bring about a better understanding of different problems where peace is the goal. During the seminar Laurant Kantu spoke about Congo and its process in peace by the new President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Innes Brill spoke about Columbia's peace process with the Paramilitaries and Lobsang Tsering talked about human rights in Tibet and Dalai Lama's non violence strategy for future Tibet. Mr. Denzil Potgieter, a commissioner for Truth and Reconciliation spoke on South Africa's peace process to fight against Apartheid.

During the round table session, the group discussed to form a network and its actions, guarantees, aims etc. At the end a network was formed within the group. The aim of the network is to support civil societies in its activity in development of human rights and peace by means of inter continental solidarity. The seminar was attended by members of the Amnesty International, Tibet Support Groups and Aid for Tibetan Students.

On the 27th Lobsang was invited by Radio Mont Aiguille for an interview. This is a radio station in Isere area of France.

New Staff

Mr. Ugyen Tsewang has been recruited as the new staff at the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy. He will replace Kalsang Topgyal who has been with the centre since its inception in 1996. Kalsang has left the Centre to pursue further studies in International Law under the Fulbright Programme.

Mr. Tsewang has a Masters degree in Economics and has been selected following an interview and entrance test conducted by the Centre on 30 March 2001. He will join the Centre from May 2001 as a Research Associate.

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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.

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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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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Prolonged detention for pamphleteering

On account of pamphleteering freedom-related leaflets, Bagdro alias Ngawang Kyonmey, endured prolonged detention and torture in two Chinese administered detention centres. After having been given 200 "Free Tibet" leaflets by a friend on 7 November 1998, Bagdro distributed them around strategic areas in and around Drepung Monastery, which ultimately led to his arrest.

Almost a week later, two local Tibetan policemen apprehended Bagdro and took him, in a convoy of five police cars, to the local police station. He persistently denied any knowledge and responsibility about the leaflet distribution when interrogated. Around mid-day the following day, Bagdro was taken to Lhasa Police Station where also he refused to divulge any information and pretended to be sick.

To extract information from Bagdro, the officers stripped off his robe near a water tap and forced his head under the running water. They banged his head mercilessly, punched his chest with heavy blows and banged him repeatedly against a wall. He was then locked up in a solitary confinement cell. When the interrogation continued throughout the next day, Bagdro told them to produce evidence for his alleged crimes, feigning innocence. His anguish further continued when he was made to stand naked save for his underwear. His hands were handcuffed in such a manner that his right arm was folded over his shoulder and the other arm was wrenched around his waist behind his back, which virtually incapacitated his bodily movements.

Unable to bear the torture anymore, Bagdro finally confessed to the crime. When the officers still insisted on knowing the person who handed him the leaflets, he lied that a stranger had given him the bag. His room in the monastery was ransacked, revealing a single photo of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima (the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama) and a collection of around 100 freedom pamphlets.

After two days detention at Lhasa, he was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre where he was held for 27 days and interrogated for a total of nine days. Ordered to disclose the name of others involved in the pamphlet distribution, he got beaten, slapped and kicked. He refused to provide any further information. Then, the police detained him in Samye Detention Centre for a period of one year and 11 months. On 18 November 2000, Bagdro was released but was forbidden to re-join his monastery. The police ordered him to report wherever he went which instilled a great sense of insecurity and suffocation in him.

Bagdro knew other political prisoners who were arrested on 16 June 1999 on the same ground of pamphlet distribution. On 6 January 2000, after almost seven months detention, they were finally sentenced to different years of imprisonment.Nyima Dolma, (ordained name Ngawang Dolma), from Garu Nunnery, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison. Samdup from Drepung Monastery was released in 1995 after involvement in a protest in1993. He was once again sentenced to four years' imprisonment for pamphlet distribution. Tashi Nyima (ordained name Jampal Rinzin), from Drepung Monastery, was sentenced to one year and five months on charges of the printing and distribution of independence leaflets.

At a meeting in Nagka Village of Dechen County, the headman announced an order from the Central government that the land belongs to the nation, and if any building stands on the government land then the owner has to move out without any compensation. It was announced that a second city in Dechen, with a planned railway link to Lhasa, would be built within two three years.

A monk at Drepung Monastery since 1989, he had only few month's education at a village school. As his family members needed him at home for work, Bagdro worked as a farmer before. His village, named Panpo, houses around 80 families and has no electricity.

Bagdro claims that he has a strong desire to continue with independence activities and found himself at a loose end when forbidden to re-join his monastery following release. He paid 500 yuan for a business permit and escaped with three other people further payment of 200 yuan to a guide. He reached Tibetan Centre on 18 February 2001.

26

Award-winning Tibetan teacher escapes

Yushul County authorities in Tibet selected Tsetan Dhondup to train for the Dean of Students' post at Beijing. A teacher by profession, he was the recipient of Outstanding Teacher's Award. It was only on his second attempt that Dhondup managed to successfully flee Tibet.

Dhondup had six years' formative education in Chinese-established Sumo Township Primary School that had only 17 students. There were twelve teachers in the school comprising of both Tibetan and Chinese nationals who drew a monthly salary of 800 yuan.He then studied in Yushul County Middle School No.1 for three years and paid 200 yuan for each semester. The main subjects taught in the school were Applied Politics, Chinese language and Tibetan language. At the school, which had 400 students and many Chinese teachers, around 20 percent of native Tibetans do not speak Tibetan at all. He graduated from the Middle School in July 1995.

He next enrolled in a Teacher Training Institute and studied for four years. Tibetan nationals constitute the majority of the total strength of 600-700 students, but only 20 per cent of them learn Tibetan language. Being a secondary subject, their knowledge of Tibetan language is superficially low. Two teachers, Tashi Norbu and Jamyang, who dared to appeal to the Education Councilors to make Tibetan an official language, were labelled "counter-revolutionaries". Upon completing his teacher training course, Dhondup taught Chinese language to around 40 students at Trisong County Primary School that had 220 students and 31 staff in total.

The informant gave his views on Guesa Choegyal from Guesa Monastery, Litha County, who holds a prominent position in the Chinese government. An ardent advocate of the Chinese Communist rule in Tibet, Choegyal once hoisted a Chinese flag at his monastery to demonstrate his unfailing loyalty. During a religious initiation ceremony conducted from 27 to 31 July 2000, he was alleged to have said, "The Dalai Lama is a threat to national security, Buddhism and general peace."

Choegyal further reiterated that he would continue to wage war against "splittist" activities of the Dalai Lama and made many pro-Chinese and anti-Dalai Lama statements. Fearing possible attack from the "Dalai Clique", the national security bodyguards offered him round the clock protection during the initiation. In connection with a poster pasting incident that time, local police arrested four monks whose identities are unknown.

Choegyal reportedly circulated hundreds of 'shugden' photos among the people claiming "May this prevail all over Tibet." The informant met Lui Sha Jui, a Chinese employee at Siling Religious Art and Artefact Production, who told that he reprinted 30,000 photos of 'shugden' at the request of Choegyal. Choegyal is reportedly very close to high Chinese officials and there were even some photos published of him shaking hands with the Chinese Premier Zhou Rongji in their monastery's annual magazine. Some people of Trisong County follow him and have total faith in him.

Originally from Rongtho Village, Sumo Township, Yushul County, Qinghai Province, 21-year-old Dhondup reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 26 November 2000. At Shigatse, Dhondup along with a huge group of 24 people were arrested for trying to flee Tibet. During their one-month detention, the police interrogated them and confiscated all their belongings. Dhondup then returned to Lhasa and tried to escape again-this time successfully.

Though well-settled in Tibet with a promising future, Dhondup chose to flee Tibet. He said he has a strong desire to offer service at Tibetan Goevrnment-in-exile through active participation in the Tibetan freedom struggle.

Traffic Officer's tale of woe

Twenty-five-year old Chepa, a traffic police by occupation, observes that Tibetans who are poor in Chinese language are discriminated in every field of work.

Discrimination comes mainly in the form of language bias and is rampant against Tibetans who are minority in the workforce. Tibetans are looked down upon as an inefficient group. Chepa explained, "The Chinese say that we are a minority and that we are given lots of privileges and opportunities. On the contrary, these claims are just propaganda. There is no freedom for Tibetan people inside Tibet."

His superiors who were mostly Chinese nationals used to supervise infringements and flouting of traffic rules. Most of the time, the officers embezzle the fines collected, by not issuing receipts. During his career as a traffic police officer, Chepa drew a monthly salary of 1200 yuan.

Chepa received formal education in Sachoe County Primary School for five years and then studied in Sachoe Middle School and afterwards joined Tso Teacher Training Institute where he studied Tibetan literature and grammar. Of the total strength of 1000 students in the institute, 40 students of Tibetan section are Tibetan and the rest are Chinese. With his graduation in 1996, he worked as traffic police officer for five years. His job involved fining bad drivers who break traffic rules and regulations.

Orphaned early in life, Chepa has six brothers and sisters in Tibet. He came via Dram along with seven other escapees and paid 1700 yuan to a Sherpa guide. They walked one whole day and night, caught a bus to Kathmandu and arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre on 17 January 2000.

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

27

Former PSB officer sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment

Dadul, a 33-year-old former PSB (Public Security Bureau) officer is originally from Lhasa City. At a very young age, he lost his father which put enormous responsibility on his widowed mother. His mother single-handedly brought up the family, consisting of Dadul and three other siblings, braving all odds and challenges.

Dadul got admission in Lhasa Primary School No. 1and studied there for five years. Then, he worked as a construction worker for some years. In 1985, he was recruited in a Chinese PSB Office, located in Kongpo Prefecture.

Two years after his recruitment, Dadul got embroiled in a major brawl that erupted between Chinese and Tibetan soldiers. It is said that Chinese and Tibetans were never on good terms. Amidst the fisticuffs, Dadul hit one Chinese soldier causing him severe injury.

The authorities subsequently arrested and confined him in a solitary cell for almost six months. Furthermore, he was suspended from his duty.

Back at his hometown, Dadul found it hard to find any job, as his involvement in the aforementioned imbroglio had supposedly marred his reputation. He remained idle for quite sometime.

The period of the late eighties and early nineties in Tibet witnessed the maximum number of protests and demonstrations for Tibetan independence and against Chinese Communist regime in Tibet. Inspired and enthused, Dadul along with few friends initiated a peaceful demonstration on 5 March 1989. They raised slogans such as "Tibet belongs to Tibetans", "Chinese quit Tibet" and "Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" at the circumambulation area near Barkhor.

The demonstration continued over the next two days. On 7 March at Tsomonling Street, a Chinese man came running towards the protestors. The irate mob, in their fury and inflamed nationalism, stoned the man to death.

Lhasa PSB officers arrested Dadul that very evening, implicating him in the death of the Chinese man. He was singled out and blamed solely for the death. Hence, he underwent intensive interrogation at the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre and was put on trial at Lhasa Intermediate People's Court.

In October 1989, the court sentenced Dadul to 16 years' imprisonment on charges of murder which was viewed as having been committed in direct opposition to the Cultural Revolution. Dadul and a few of his associates were transferred to Drapchi Prison in Lhasa in November that year where he presently remain incarcerated.

Dadul's suffering did not end with the imprisonment. In October 1994, he was kept in a solitary cell and forbidden to maintain contacts with his fellow prisoners on suspicion of alleged instigation. Moreover, the prison guards always have something to pick with him thus making his life an absolute hell.

Twelve years have passed since his arrest in 1989 and he can hope for freedom only in 2005.

Monks court arrest for the Dalai Lama's picture

Ban orders on the Dalai Lama's photo triggered mass protest and physical violence in Ganden Monastery. On 5 May 1996, ten "work team" officials from Lhasa Religious Department held meetings for the monks in political indoctrination and ordered against display and possession of the Dalai Lama's photographs.

The monks vehemently protested against the orders of the "work team".Following day, the PSB officers arrested the monks and detained them for a period of three months in separate cells at Gutsa Detention Centre.

The detainees underwent severe torture and beatings at the hands of officials for almost one month. They were repeatedly slapped, kicked and forced to stand upside down against wall with only their head for support. Sagyal, the informant, was interrogated for seven days and sustained injuries from severe beatings. Sagyal recalls, "This position is so unbearable that it is better to suffer slaps and kicks than to be made to do that position for hours."

They were told that revelation of others involved would lessen their own charge and punishment. Unable to bear the inflicted tortures, Lobsang Palden, a monk, disclosed the name of another monk by the nickname of Pulupa who denied any involvement in the incident. Pulupa was later sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and he is presently incarcerated in Drapchi Prison.

The family members were not allowed to give food to the detainees during detention. Sagyal explained, "The food that the prison gave was just for mere survival. In the morning, the prisoners get a bowl of watery gruel for breakfast, and a steamed Momo (dumpling) in the afternoon. Dinner consists of half bowl of rice and little vegetable. Hunger is one of the most unbearable forms of torture in the detention centre."

After three months' detention, Sagyal and 11 other monks were sentenced to "reform through labour" for between one to two years' imprisonment. Nine monks were sentenced to two years' imprisonment including the informant. Of the remaining eight monks from the nine sentenced, Sonam Tenpa, Ngawang Kalsang, Tsering Badro, Phurbu Tsering, Badro and Penpa are from Meldrogonga whereas Tenzin Yeshi and Tsultrim Gyaltsen are from Tazi County. Tenzin Yeshi passed away upon release due to incessant torture during detention which had broken his spine. Three monks were sentenced to one-year imprisonment - Dapap and Tashi Dorjee from Tazi County and a monk whose name is not known to the informant.

All the 11 sentenced monks served their term in Toelung Trisam Prison where they did not suffer much beating and torture unless prison rules and regulations were broken. They did various kinds of manual labour like house construction and carried human excrement to the prison field. Some of the political prisoners in Toelung Trisam Prison such as Ngawang Tharchin (28 years), Ngawang Sangpo (34 years), Gyaltsen Yeshi (37 years) and Ngawang Lhundup (38 years) were former monks from Drepung Monastery. They were sentenced to two and three years' imprisonment each for raising strong objections to the Chinese policy of the Dalai Lama denunciation campaign. All of them have been released now.

Two monks namely Pulupa from Phenpo County and Badro (in his 30s) were both sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and are currently held in Drapchi Prison. Tenpa from Zonglakan Temple, Lhasa, was arrested in 1997 and sentenced to three years' "reform through labour" in Toelung Trisam Prison. The only charge against him was that he had allegedly helped political prisoners in jail through various means. He was released on medical parole after prolonged illness and later passed away in a hospital. Sagyal visited Tenpa in the hospital where he was told that the latter had been severely beaten in the prison. The informant firmly believes that Tenpa's death was a direct result of torture.

On 8 May 1998, Sagyal along with Penpa, Tsering Badro and Badro were released after having completed their full prison term of two years and two days. They were forbidden to re-join any monasteries. After release, Sagyal went to Topa, his hometown, and stayed there for nearly a year without doing any specific work.

His first escape attempt was in April 2000 with a group of 56 people. It was foiled when they were arrested in Toelung and sent back to Lhasa. After 15 days detention in Lhasa, the detainees were told to return to their native place within five days or else face re-arrest if found loitering in Lhasa. Sagyal then went to Konpo and helped his sister in the running of her shop.

In his second attempt to escape, Sagyal got a fake Chinese business card on payment of 500 yuan with which he came to Dram. At Dram, he paid 3300 yuan to two Sherpa guides and walked over Himalayan passes in six nights, disguised as a Nepali. He had to bribe the officials on the way who would otherwise have threatened him with being handed over to the police. He arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre on 28 January 2001 and wishes to join Sera Monastery in South India.

The informant, originally from Topa Village, Zongan County, Chamdo Prefecture, is 28 -year-old former monk from Ganden Monastery. He gave his reasons for escape in the following words, "In Tibet, I am not allowed to join any monastery after release. I was just whiling away my time and loitering around with nothing much to do. I escaped into exile so that I can get into a proper monastery. He further added, "The will of the Tibetan people is still very strong."

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Three arrested under suspicion

In March 2001, PSB (Public Security Bureau) officers detained three Tibetans in Lhasa under suspicion of involvement in political activities.

In the beginning of March, Anyu from Lhubhug Township, Lhasa, was detained by PSB officers. It is not known where she is currently being held. According to the information recieved, two other suspects from nearby Lhasa were also held.

Anyu is 47 years old. She was hit by a Chinese military truck when she was a small child thus forcing her to have her leg amputated.She was working as a tailor at her home.

Chinese authorities continue to detain Tibetans under suspicion, arbitrarily and for unknown periods of time.

Official vandalism in Gyalpa Monastery

On 28 March 1997, Chinese police ransacked Gyalpa Monastery, located in Tawu County. They smashed windowpanes of the surrounding buildings and took away all the valuable assets. Lama Thupten Paljor was jailed for attempting to stop the vandalism.The monks were further warned with the dire consequence of demolition of the monastery if they resorted to any kind of resistance and disobedience.

Chinese policemen that came in three vehicles actually came to search for a criminal. On 10 April 1999, around 200 armed policemen surrounded the monastery. Three innocent lay people - a man, a woman and a 15-year-old girl - were arrested for no apparent reason. They were severely tortured and charged 3000 yuan each for food expenses incurred during their one-month detention in a detention centre.

Bans were imposed on portraits of the Dalai Lama. Chinese officers conduct frequent checks for the banned photos and even interfere in the search for any reincarnate lama thus politicising the issue. The monks were told to recognise the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama and to denounce the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama.

Dorjee Gyaltsen, the informant, stated that in words the Chinese claim to give religious freedom to all Tibetans, but in reality it is the opposite. Monks from other parts of Tibet particularly the eastern side are forbidden to join the three seats of monasteries i.e. Sera, Ganden and Drepung. The authorities have set a limit of 18 years and children of Tibetan cadres are not allowed to become monks. After the Karmapa's defection in late 1999, religious hermits are no longer permitted to live in caves for meditation.

Moreover, the local people attribute drought and scant rainfall in the area to excess exploitation of natural resources which has had dire repercussions. In a place called Garlong in Barchon Village, Palyon County, Kandze, the Chinese are gearing up to tap mineral resources such as gold and silver. A highway has been built between Garlong and Palyon County to facilitate mining.

Originally from Naten Village, Tawu County, Kandze, Gyaltsen arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre on 9 December 2000 via Kongpola with a group of 22 people. He was a former monk from Gyalpa Monastery. Each escapee paid 1300 yuan to a guide. Now, Dorjee wants to go to Sera Monastery in South India to pursue spiritual studies.

Whole nomad family escapes into exile

A nomad family consisting of nine members fled Tibet for a better future and opportunity in the exile diaspora, and also to seek audience with the Dalai Lama.

They sold every possession they had in Tibet for a total sum of 10,000 yuan and secretly moved towards Lhasa where they stayed in a guesthouse described as "lodge for the poor" for 15 days. The guesthouse, devoid of lodging facilities such as bed clothing and others, charged a meagre sum of only two yuan per night.

The informant, his wife (46 years) and his mother (80 years) travelled on a Chinese passport whereas four of the six children made the treacherous journey. All the escapees were reunited at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu. The two remaining children - both girls - were left in Lhasa to be escorted at a later date, to Nepal.

To obtain a Chinese passport, Choedhar gave a female yak (which cost approx. 1000 yuan), 40 gyama of butter and two other animals. Additionally, he paid 300 yuan as bribe in order to procure the passport. At various police checkpoints on the way from Tibet to Nepal, Choedhar and his family were forced to part with 255 yuan and 130 yuan at two different places. Even with passports, Chinese police asked lots of question on the way. The family arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 6 January 2001.

Choedhar, the informant, had a very poor nomadic background and recalled that he used to beg when he was six years old. He had around 30 livestocks including sheep, yak and dri (female yak). The animal tax that they paid comes to 400-500 yuan in a year. The other tax levied is family tax, charged according to the number of family members. Tenpa states, "Interest is charged for non-payment of annual taxes. Some are able to pay while others are not."

There are 120 family members in his village. The policy of three children per family is very much prevalent in his area and any extra child is fined with 1800 yuan, sometimes leading to confiscation of land and property. It is marked on the family ration card that extra children are not entitled to any allowance.

Tenpa Choedhar, a 40 year-old semi nomad was born in Lithang, Kandze County.

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Tibetan editor makes freedom dash

A young Tibetan editor opted for a life in exile under the leadership of the Dalai Lama, jettisoning a lucrative job at the China Tibet Cultural Research Centre in Beijing, his place of work for eight years.

Since 2000, Rinchen Dhondup worked at the Centre only on a part time basis and attended classes at Beijing Foreigners University. Due to increasing number of friends that he acquired at the university of various nationalities, the Centre viewed his activities with suspicion and no longer trusted him.

In early 2001, Dhondup returned to his home in Chabcha, Amdo, for the 'losar' (Tibetan New Year) celebration and with a business travel permit that he obtained in Lhasa, he arrived at Nepal on 25 March 2001 through Dram border.

The Research Centre, founded in early 1985, with a core objective to research Tibetan culture, history and Buddhism, brings out four issues of a magazine entitled 'Chinese Tibetan Culture' in both Chinese and Tibetan languages every year. Exempted from tax payment, the Centre's expenses are incurred from a 1 million-yuan subsidy provided by Beijing Central Government, in addition to income generated by book sales. The basic salary of a staff member ranges from 1200 to 2000 yuan per month. The Centre employs 108 staff and only 20 are Chinese nationals. The Centre's Director, Dorjee Tseten, is a well-known scholar, fluent in both Tibetan and Chinese language. He had specialised in Tibetan Culture and History.

Since it's establishment, the Centre has published more than 100 books on Tibet-related research. All Tibetan scholars of the Centre have passed high-level research degrees yet their outlook and input in research works are totally communist in nature. Despite in-depth knowledge on Tibetan history, their articles contain eulogies for the Chinese regime in Tibet and critique on the so-called "splittist" activities of the Dalai Lama, and such articles earn them handsome rewards of either salary increase or job promotion. Contributions from outside writers are published so long as the articles are devoid of any political angle, which could be anything from Tibetan independence to pro-Dalai Lama statements. Anything remotely political leads to immediate replacement by Chinese propaganda works.

A special researcher in the office proofreads all articles to check for political elements. Then, a Chief Researcher edits anything he believes is apolitical. Tenzin, the "TAR" Deputy Secretary, gives a stamp of approval before the magazine goes into final print. The magazine edit is a long procedure as every line is carefully looked into for hidden meanings. For instance, the writers are forbidden to mention "Before, when Tibet was free". Rather to please the top-notch officials, they are compelled to talk about the unity of Tibet and China.

Staff personnel have unhindered access to the Internet in the Centre. While surfing different sites for research purposes, Dhondup came to know the opinions which the outside people and organizations have about Tibet and the Dalai Lama. The Centre's library has a good collection of old documents on Tibet, dating as far back as pre-1959. Worried that people might steal or make copies of the documents, a librarian-in-charge monitors staff activities and oversees which documents are being used by them for research.

Careful consideration has gone into the naming of the Centre. They believed that China Tibet Cultural Research Centre would show China and Tibet as two different countries with distinct cultures. From the year 2000, the Centre was renamed as China Cultural Research Centre by deleting "Tibet", in the belief that people would consider Tibet's culture as a part of China's culture.

The director of Lhasa Mentsekhang (Tibetan Medical) University and Factory, Troru Tsenam, authored two books on Grammar. As soon as he finished research in 1996, the books were sent to the Centre. It was only two years later when the books got published that the Chinese government withdrew further distribution, simply on the ground that the book's conclusion contained an underlying political message. A few months later, a new conclusion was added and now the reprinted book is available in all leading bookstores.

Dungkar Lobsang Thinlay, a Professor at Tibet University and one of the greatest scholars in post-Cultural Revolution Tibet, worked on a dictionary of Tibetan History for fifteen years. The dictionary contained a list of Tibetan books and scriptures, their current state and background histories. It also included detailed histories of all monasteries, founding members, monastic strength, number of statues inside the monasteries, and the consequences of the Cultural Revolution. The Professor was able to provide detailed information in his research work as he had studied at different universities in Beijing and other prefectures. He sent one of his students to the Centre in 1997 with two boxes of documents related to his dictionary, for publication.

The informant, Dhondhup, was assigned to feed the documents into the computer, which he did in complete secrecy. His job involved feeding Tibetan articles and books into the computer and editing them. While he was doing the work, nobody was allowed to come into his office nor was he allowed to take even one page of the research outside the office. Even if he did not understand a word, as was the case sometimes with the Professor's handwriting, he was forbidden to ask another person. The draft documents were all written in pencil.

A researcher who went through the document closely to check for any political elements edited nearly two-third of the entire book. It was the Professor's wish to write three books but Dhondup thinks now there is not enough materials even for two books. The Professor is now no more. In early 2001, his student went to Beijing to make inquiries about the progress made regarding publication of the dictionary. Dhondup does not know the fate of the dictionary for it has not yet been published.

The informant was born in Chasang Village, Chabcha Town, Gonghor County, Tsolho "TAP", Qinghai Province. After 12 years of study in Chinese and Tibetan language at the primary and middle school of his local area, he joined Tashi Thegchenling Monastery. For almost a decade since then, he had intensive study on Buddhist Philosophy. In 1995, he was invited to work at the Centre.

TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

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TCHRD commemorates Panchen Lama's birthday

25 April 2001 marked the 12th birth anniversary of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama. The Centre undertook a couple of interesting projects on that day to commemorate as well as to campaign for the unconditional release of the abducted child.

Two information booths were set up, one at the main temple and another one at Mcleod Ganj where few selected reports of the Centre were distributed free of cost. A petition card for the immediate release of the Panchen Lama addressed to Ms. Mary Robinson, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, was prepared for the people to sign. Alongside, a chart titled "Say Anything Squares for the Panchen Lama" was kept for the people to write pledges, thoughts and feelings for the Panchen Lama. At the temple, two new ventures were undertaken this year - the quilt-making and the toy project.

For the quilt making, people were expected to bring a piece of cloth measuring 8X6 inches, make designs of any kind and stitch it as a symbolic gesture of united effort. The quilt-making project will be open till April 2002. Therefore, TCHRD welcomes more contributions and effort towards the project from interested individuals.

Three toys with attached tags calling for the release of the Panchen Lama and our e-mail address for further information, were given away to potentially enthusiastic travellers who we expect to pass the toys on to other tourists in other countries thereby spreading the message.

The art collection from Tibetan children highlighting the deteriorating human rights condition in general and more particularly that of the Panchen Lama was also exhibited.

57th Human Rights Commission

Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of the TCHRD, attended the 57th United Nations Commission on Human Rights at Geneva, from 4 to 21 April 2001.

Mr. Nyandak made an oral intervention on the rights of Tibetan children in Tibet. Besides, he was invited to make presentation on the religious freedom in Tibet at a briefing on "Religious Freedom in Asia". There were speakers from China, Vietnam, and Burma. Mr. Nyandak also attended the Asia-Pacific NGO Briefing by Australian and New Zealand delegations. He also attended briefings of the Special Rapporteurs on Torture, Arbritary and Summary Execution, and Religious Intolerance.

Mr. Nyandak met with various government delegations to lobby on the China Resolution.

United Nations once again failed to condemn China on its deteriorating human rights condition. Twenty-three members voted in favour of China's No-Action Motion against the US Resolution, 17 against and 12 abstention with one absent.

Educational Talk Series

As part of the Centre's objective, staff members of TCHRD took classes on the concepts of human rights and democracy at Upper TCV School, Dharamsala for three consecutive days in the month of April.

The staff members visited classes from VIII to IX and taught the basics of the United Nations and its mechanisms and the Tibetan democratic set up. The Students exhibited keen interest and enthusiasm to learn which the staff members found extremely rewarding.

Similar talk series will be held in various other schools around the vicinity of Dharamsala in the future.

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Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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China unleashes "Strike Hard" campaign in Tibet

Initiated by President Jiang Zemin, China re-launched "Strike Hard" campaign to "curb rising criminal offenses," beginning April 2001 for two years. The official statements justify the campaign as a "long-term endeavour to achieve the ultimate goal of improving China's public order situation in the future".

At a work meeting on social stability in Tibet, held in the first week of May 2001, specific rules and regulations were issued to all level of courts in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR) to carry out the campaign further and more forcefully among the common populace. The minutes of the meeting, published in Tibet Daily on 8 May 2001, stipulated that the "Strike Hard" scheme considers threat to the nation's stability, manslaughter, robbery, arms related crimes and theft as main offences.

It further proposes to crackdown heavily on drug trafficking, smuggling activities, mafiatic crimes, financial scams and guiding people illegally across foreign countries. Local Party Committees, under its supervision, are to strike relentlessly against activities that seriously threaten "social stability".

The May meeting imposed restraining order on guides who help refugees seek their freedom across the treacherous Himalayan Mountain. "This would seriously hamper not only the flow of refugees but also the wee bit of information on human rights abuses that they managed to share with the outside world. The restriction will gradually muffle the voice of the Tibetans inside Tibet from being heard," stated Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

The principal area of concern for the Tibetans originates essentially from the fact that the campaign takes a different form and focus in Tibet. For the Tibetans, the "Strike Hard" campaign has always had serious human rights implications. There have been numerous cases of arrests and detentions, torture and long-term imprisonment, for mere expression of support for Tibetan independence and the Dalai Lama which the authorities view as "endangering state security" affecting stability of the nation. Such incidences have more of a political connotation than that of a criminal angle thereby camouflaging the real intent of the campaign.

In China, the campaign focuses primarily on criminal activities of varying nature. Conversely, the need to safeguard stability and to oppose separatist activities is given topmost priority under the "Strike hard" drive in Tibet. Hence, one campaign has twofold objectives, with one officially recognised throughout and the other targeting those who advocate Tibet's independence.

Similarly, the ongoing "patriotic education" in Tibet's religious institutions since 1996 demonstrates identical mission to suppress patriotic sentiments and outburst, and to mould the monastic community along the Party's communist line. The campaign, besides being a serious infringement on the rights of the Tibetan monks and nuns in terms of their belief, practice and allegiance, has resulted in many arrests and expulsions.

TCHRD records indicate the total expulsion of 12,271 clergy including 1,876 nuns in connection with the "patriotic education" campaign. In the year 2000 alone, 862 expulsions reportedly took place in various monasteries and nunneries, of these 147 were nuns. Almost one-third of the current total of 451 political prisoners behind bars in Tibet are monks and nuns, and almost all these arrest have direct or indirect link to the so-called stability factor or independence related activism.

The first "Strike Hard" or anti-crime drive was launched in China in 1983, as a result of growing concern about a perceived rise in the then crime rates. Another "Strike Hard" drive launched in 1990-1 was designed to curb common crimes such as murder and robbery throughout China. Similar campaign launched officially in April 1996 was the most wide-ranging and

the third of its kind.

Official Chinese media report series of implementation of the current "Strike Hard" campaign in Tibetan areas outside the "TAR". Tsongon Province (Ch: Qinghai) Police Department released reports of extensive examination in the region that resulted in mass arrests within weeks of the launch of new "strike hard" campaign. By 19 April 2001, force of 9841 policemen and 383 PSB officers conducted investigation into a total of 5948 rented houses, guestrooms, street shops, bars and barbershops in Tsongon area, and found 12,3462 lawbreakers, and arrested 494 criminals. In Golmud City, the law enforcing bodies busted six mafia groups, arrested several gang members and seized potentially dangerous weapons from them.

An eminent Abbot faces danger of arrest and closure of his Institute

According to reliable sources, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, the chief abbot of Larung Ngarig Nangten Institute, faces danger of arrest from the Chinese authorities. Furthermore, an order released this year calls for the closure of his Institute.

Taking into consideration the burgeoning strength of the Institute, the Chinese government has issued an order in 2001 dictating the students to return to their native places. Khenpo explained that the students have come of their own accord and hence, it seems inappropriate to ask them to move out.

Besides which, a notice was also circulated amongst the authorities at various county and provincial level to appoint three officials each to bring back students whose origin of place falls within their jurisdiction. With the released order, expulsion of students from the Institute seems imminent. No further information is available on the current status of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok.

Located in Sertha County, Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, the Institute has a conglomeration of more than 10,000 ordained and lay students who come specifically to seek teachings from Khenpo. His audience consists of both Tibetan and Chinese from different provinces and counties of Tibet and the People's Republic of China.

Since the inception of the Institute in 1980, Khenpo has been giving teachings on a wide range of subjects including the Sutra, Tantra and Tibetan language. Touring widely all over India, Nepal, Bhutan, U.S., England, France, Canada, Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong, he has guided scores of people into the Buddhist path to liberation and enlightenment.

(For background information, see September 2000 Human Rights Update issue).

Two Tibetans arrested on espionage charges

Chinese police arrested two Tibetans on charges of "espionage and separatism". The story first revealed by Xinhua, the official Chinese media, reported Cendan Gyatso (Tsetan Gyatso) caught in July 2000 has been sentenced to eight years' imprisonment while the case of Tyugi (Topgyal) whose arrest took place May 2001 is still pending.

Xinhua further said that the "stated mission of one was to set himself ablaze" in Lhasa as an act of protest against the Chinese rule and that of the other was to "videotape the whole self-immolation incident". They both were supposedly spies for the Dalai Lama and specifically "trained by guards in the Dalai Lama's government"

The Tibetan government-in-exile has strongly denied the allegations on the ground that self-immolating act is against the basic Buddhist principle of non-violence, and calls the spy story a baseless accusation and just another method of the Dalai Lama denunciation campaign. Furthermore, the exile government and other monitoring agencies question the timing of the story revelation in the wake of China's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the so-called liberation of Tibet in May.

It is a well-known fact that Tibetan exile returnees face greater risk of being charged with illicit "espionage activities for the western forces and the Dalai clique". Their "suspicious activities" result in heavy prison sentences with the official stamp of "endangering state security" legalising the imposed punishment.

Ngawang Choephel's case is one such classic example. He is serving 18 years behind bars in Chengdu Prison for having entered Tibet to do research on Tibetan music. One of his earlier prison mates, Ngawang Jungney, was also accused of being a "spy for the Tibetan government-in-exile" when he visited Tibet to undertake study on Tibetan language. He is currently serving a nine-year sentence in Drapchi Prison.

Since the authencity of the espionage charges are yet to be established, the arrest and subsequent sentencing puts a big question on the legitimacy of Chinese judiciary. It is not uncommon for Tibetans to be arbitrarily arrested on mere suspicion of involvement in political activities such as posting incident, peaceful protest and possession of the Dalai Lama's portrait.

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 35

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

Incarcerated for political activism

Tsering Phuntsok was born in Lhasa Kyire in the year 1963. He is a former monk of Ganden Monastery, located in the east of Lhasa. Phuntsok studied in a local primary school for few years. At a very young age, he got admission into Ganden monastery.

On 20 March 1992, Phuntsok with a group of 13 monks from different monasteries initiated a peaceful independence demonstration near Jokhang Temple in Lhasa. Except for two monks, all the other 11 monks are from Ganden Monastery. The names of some of his companions are Lobsang Lungtok, Jampel Gedun, Lobsang Yeshi, Lobsang Legshe, Tsultrim Dhonden, Jamyang, Lobsang Tenzin, Dawa (1), Dawa (2) , Tenzin Phuntsok, Sonam Bagdro, Lobsang Jampa and Thupten Kunphel.

The demonstration gradually gathered momentum with the participation of almost 250 people. The protesters carried Tibetan national flags and shouted pro-independence and anti-Chinese slogans .

Within minutes, both plainclothes and uniformed Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers swooped down on the protesters. The monks were beaten mercilessly and scores of arrest took place. Consequently, they were all detained in Lhasa Public Detention Centre.

Around August 1992, Lhasa Intermediate Peoples' Court passed sentences on the detainees. Tsering Phuntsok was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Lobsang Jampa was sentenced to eight years; Lobsang Lungtok was sentenced to seven years; Tenzin Phuntsok was sentenced to six years; Lobsang Yeshi and Lobsang Legshe were both sentenced to five years' imprisonment; and Tsultrim Dhonden was sentenced to four year's imprisonment. All the seven monks were later transferred to Drapchi Prison by 1992 end.

In May 1998, a huge protest flared up on the ground of Drapchi Prison just before a flag-raising ceremony. Initiated by prisoners of new rukhag (unit) who were taken to the ground that day, even the prisoners of old rukhag joined in from their respective prison cells. Phuntsok was also one of the participants in the protest.

In the ensuing commotion that followed, prison guards and PSB officers beat the protestors and gave different punishments depending on the degree of their participation. Some were put in solitary confinement cells whereas sentences of some prisoners were extended.

Phuntsok was severely beaten and hit hard on his head which caused excessive bleeding. He fell down unconscious thereafter. Phuntsok became weak after the incident and his health condition deteriorated to a great extent. That very same day, he was taken to the prison hospital for medication.

To extract detailed information regarding the protest incident, the prison authorities transferred Phuntsok and some fellow prisoners to Gutsa Detention Centre for a brief period. After few months of rigorous interrogation sessions, they were once again returned to Drapchi Prison.

Owing to his participation in the protest, Phuntsok's sentence was extended by one and half years more, making his sentence a total of eight and half years now. He is currently incarcerated in Drapchi Prison.

Monastic school changed into a regular one

The Chinese authorities closed down a monastic school in Kirti Monastery in 1990, stressing the need to "educate under-aged" monks in a regular school. The main subjects taught in the school were grammar, history, astrology and mathematics.

With the intervention of the officials of the County Religious Department, the school was re-opened and its rules and regulations brought in line with other regular government schools. Even the original name of Tibetan Grammar School was converted to Lhamo Primary School.

Currently, the re-established school has 200 students and several teachers including a monk teacher. The monk student totals almost 100 and they need not pay school fee whereas children with pastoral backgrounds have to pay. The entire school syllabus is based on the standard Chinese school text. The original school was built with funds raised by local people and contributions from the monastery. The government did not provide any financial aid towards the construction.

Armed with a citizen's right paper and a recommendation letter from the Religious Department, Kunchok Sonam managed to get admission into Drepung Monastery in late 1996,having left Kirti Monastery. There are currently 620 full-time monks and 110 part-timer in Drepung Monastery.

A Democratic Management Committee (DMC) was set up in the monastery in 1998 to curb political activism and also to examine what sort of prayers the monks recite. All the proceeds from the monastery's restaurant, shops and ticket sale to visitors go to the DMC, who overlooks the entire financial aspect of the monastery.

A chant master called Thopchu la was demoted in 1996, and replaced by another monk when he was found reciting the Dalai Lama's long-life prayer. The authorities made further announcement that prayers in favour of the Dalai Lama and "independent Tibet" were henceforth banned.

In 1999, a Security Office was set up with 14 officials whose main job was to look after the security matters of the monastery. They monitor every activities of the monks - whether the monks listen to foreign radio broadcast or engage in any anti-Chinese activities such as putting up "Free Tibet" posters.

Kunchok Sonam, 27, was born in Dzoge County, Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. He reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 29 March 2001.

Tsang Monastery in early 2000

Namsal, a 17-year-old former monk from Tsang Monastery, reached India on 3 May 2001. Located in Rebkong County (Ch:Tongren), Malho "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture", Qinghai Province, Tsang Monastery has a total strength of 1000 monks at present.

In the beginning of 2000, "work team" members from the county level came to the monastery and held a large meeting for the monks whereby they imposed restriction on the pictures of the Dalai Lama. Orders were issued that the monks were to remove the pictures voluntarily. The monks however, disobeyed and displayed the pictures.

The officials took classes on laws and policies of the Chinese communist government and continuously urge the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama. Since 1999, monks below the age of 18 years have been ordered to leave their monastic education and to join a regular government school. The officials visit the monastery once or twice a year.

The escapees and exile returnees come under close surveillance by the authorities. Exile returnees are expelled from their monasteries in Tibet and fined 5000-6000 yuan. However, if one pays the fine voluntarily, the county police issues a document which saves them from going on a legal trial. Despite restrictions and surveillances, around 170 monks from the monastery have escaped to India so far.

Namsal reported that each monk from his monastery pays house tax of 100 yuan per year. The authorities claim that the site on which the monastery stand belongs to the government and hence, the monks are taxed.

Namsal left his native place in February 2001 and came to Lhasa where he stayed for two months. He was arrested for the first time just on the outskirt of Lhasa while attempting to escape. He was not jailed that time. On his second escape attempt, he was arrested at Toelung and detained for two days at National Security Detention Centre. Soon after release, he paid a guide 1400 yuan and tried to escape along with nine people. They were however, arrested at Toelung once again and later managed to get away from the Chinese police on payment of 400 yuan per person.

The escapees came via Shakongpo and arrived at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 3 May 2001. His main reason for flight into exile is to first seek an audience with the Dalai Lama and then to join Sera Monastery to pursue his monastic studies.

Enforced plantation deprives local livelihood

The authorities of Ngaba County, Sichuan Province, forced the local farmers to grow plants and trees on their fields with the official explanation that it prevents flood in the area. The enforcement, which came in the aftermath of Drichu flood of 1998, have had adverse repercussions.

Craters were dug up in the fields, and plants and grasses were forcefully grown in abundance. Lobsang,16, from Ragzi Village, Ngaba County, Sichuan

Continued on Page 7

Life Imprisonment for protest against the Dalai Lama's denunciation

Outraged by a pro-Chinese Tibetan Lama's indictment of the Dalai Lama, a monk named Labwe pasted protest posters, which reportedly led to his life imprisonment sentence. He is currently alleged to be held in Satsang Kul Prison in Jyekundo (ch:Yushu) "TAP". (The Centre awaits more confimed infomation on the sentence).

Demo Kongsar, a Lama; from Yushu "TAP", Qinghai Province, is closely identified with the Chinese government, and he wields a degree of economic and social power in the region. Being the foremost critic of Sertha Monastery established by eminent Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, Demo Kongsar maintains that the monastery contains anti-Chinese elements and that it should be closed down altogether.

At one time, thousands of people gathered to hear the preaching of Demo Kongsar when he conducted an initiation ceremony in the summer of 2000, to mark the installation of a huge Jetsokhangpa (head of the Gelugpa sect) statue in Dritoe County. The informant believes that the whole ceremony which had official approval was just a piece of propaganda orchestrated by the authorities to give pretence of freedom of religion in Tibet.

For the thousands gathered at his ceremony, there are many more Tibetans who are critical of Demo Kongsar's anti-Dalai Lama statements. Labwe was one amongst them. He pasted posters calling Kongsar to end his critical remarks. His posters read, "Stop your denunciation of the Dalai Lama or you will face your death and be bombed". Soon after, the police force of Shichoe County, Sichuan Province, launched a massive manhunt to find the culprit, which eventually led to the arrest of Labwe.

Initially imprisoned in Yushu "TAP" Detention Centre, Labwe underwent rigorous interrogation as to where he hid the explosives. As a matter of fact, he never did possess any explosives nor did he pose real threat. Labwe was detained for several months after which he was given a sentence of one-year imprisonment. Demo Kongsar appealed to various concerned courts in Shichoe County and argued that Labwe's "crime" deserved a sentence of greater severity so as to set an example to the masses. Later, the High Court of Sichuan Province took up the case appeal and Labwe was sentenced to life imprisonment. Born in Shichoe County, Labwe is a 29- year- old former monk from Belwa Monastery.

Karma Thupten, the informant, was born to a farming family in Kyalchu Village, Ragtoe Township, Jyekundo County, Qinghai Province. He attended township primary school and studied Maths, Chinese and Tibetan language. Later, he sought admission into Drugpa Kargyul Monastery where he studied for six years.

Drugpa Kargyul Monastery has three highly respected senior Lama, namely Sonam Gon, Thopchoe, and Dropka, who travel widely in the various Tibetan regions to give teachings. These three Lamas were not given official recognition when in 1998, all the leading Lamas were given the official stamp of recognition. It is also reported that they were banned to travel to any other regions to preach.

In the summer of 1998, "work team" officials arrived at the monastery to "re-educate" the monks. Out of 120 monks, only 20 monks were singled out as being permitted by the Chinese government to stay in the monastery. Nevertheless, the unregistered monks continue to stay in the monastery, leaving only when they receive advance message on the arrival of the "work teams". The senior Lamas permitted these monks to stay and enjoy equal opportunities with the officially registered monks despite disapproval of their presence by the "work team" who come once in every three months.

At the end of 1998, Thupten left his monastery and joined Sertha Monastery. He left his native place in March 2001 for Lhasa and reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 9 April 2001.

A retake on student life

Shedu, a 38-year-old Amdo man, had eleven years education in a Chinese administered school. He reported that even highly qualified Tibetans need to fulfil certain criteria to secure a foothold in the job market. One requires good financial backup from the family, influential contact with higher authorities and the ability to grease the palm of concerned officials.

Shedu reported that schools emphasize more on collection of high fee rather than giving importance to the students' education. Chinese government give least priority to the Tibetan education as such, and even the lessons in Tibetan language are all translated from Chinese.

Eventhough chances of pursuing education became slender with the tragedy that struck his family while Shedu was in the Middle School, the elder brother managed to provide fees for both Shedu and his younger brother. Upon completion of high school, Shedu passed an entrance test for a Veterinary course for which he was required to pay an exorbitant fee of four thousand yuan per year.Since his family could not afford the high fees, his ambition of doing university education remained just a dream.

He further said discrimination is rampant in the employment sector. Tibetan graduates, if employed, would be assigned to the remotest rural areas. Whereas Chinese graduates are given employment in cities and towns thereby providing them with ample opportunities for self-development and access to a sea of opportunities to experience and explore new avenues.

Shedu had a strong desire to escape to India where he can avail himself of a true Tibetan education and serve the Tibetan community in the future. He managed to flee sucessfully on his third escape attempt and arrived in exile in Kathmandu on 10 May 2001 via Dram.

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TCHRD wins accreditation to the World Conference Against Racism

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) and International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) won official accreditation to the World Conference Against Racism scheduled to take place in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 2 September 2001. China suffered a humiliating defeat in two separate votes at the Second Preparatory Committee (Second Prepcom) Meeting of the Third UN World Conference Against Racism in Geneva.

The vote was cast on 22 May 2001 by 189 member-countries of the United Nations and four observer members viz. Switzerland, Holy See, Cook Islands and Niue. TCHRD was supported by 44 votes against 37 with 31 abstentions, and ICT got 46 votes in favour, 37 against and 29 abstentions. The decision in favour of the two Tibetan NGOs were reached after the Second Prepcom failed to reach a consensus agreement amongst governments on the accreditation issue of six NGOs from Asia.

"China's defeat today signals an opinion amongst member countries of the United Nations that the World Conference Against Racism is an appropriate forum for the two Tibetan NGOs to be given accreditation. We consider this a major victory for the Tibetan people," said Tsering Jampa, Director of the ICT-Europe who observed the voting. She further added, "There can be little doubt in the international community that Tibetans face enormous discrimination in their occupied homeland, and this vote will ensure them a place beside other persecuted peoples at this United Nations racism conference in South Africa."

Although China and its regular allies in the United Nations launched an intensive campaign to deny official accreditation to the two Tibetan NGOs, Bejing failed to get votes from many countries in Europe, Latin America and Africa. "This vote against China is a vote in support of the principle that the broadest number of NGOs should be accredited to this UN Conference to ensure their full participation", said Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

Apart from the two Tibetan NGOs, China had also objected to New-York based Human Rights in China's accreditation application. In the case of this NGO, China was able to muster enough votes to deny accreditation to Human Rights in China. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy and the International Campaign for Tibet applaud all the countries, particularly the European Union and the United States of America, who supported this crucial UN vote.

Reebok Human Rights Award nomination

TCHRD nominates Ngawang Sangdrol for the prestigious Reebok Human Rights Award in 2001.

Sangdrol, a 24 year-old former nun from Garu Nunnery, is the longest serving female political prisoner of Tibet at present. She is serving a total of 21 years imprisonment in Drapchi Prison for exercising her right to freedom of expression.

Established in 1988, the Award honours young people from the United States and around the world who have, often against great odds, made significant contributions to the cause of human rights.

Ven. Lobsang Jinpa and Ven. Phuntsok Nyidron, both political prisoners of Tibet, are former recipients of Reebok Human Rights Award.

Brochure on Kalon Tripa election

The forthcoming election of Kalon Tripa (the Chief Cabinet Minister) through the mandate of people's vote is a major step in the Tibetan Democracy. .

Taking into consideration the significance of people's participation, the Centre prepared a brochure in Tibetan language which was widely distributed among various departments, offices, monasteries, schools and settlements in and around Dharamsala to generate awareness and inspire involvement of the masses.

WCAR-2001 Asia Pacific NGOs Conference

Ms.Youdon Aukatsang, Senior Programme Officer, and Mr. Dorjee Damdul, Field Officer in Kathmandu, from TCHRD participated in the WCAR-2001 Asia Pacific NGOs Networking Meeting held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 27-29 April 2001.

The conference primarily worked on filling the gaps of Asia Pacific NGOs Teheran Declaration drafted during the Teheran Conference in February 2001, and coming out with a Kathmandu Programme of Action. The conference also provided space for specific resolutions from NGOs.

After intensive lobbying from the Tibetan delegation, a separate workshop on People under Foreign Occupation was set up.Representatives from Aceh Sumatera, West Papua, Palestine and Tibet participated in the workshop.Papua, Palestine and Tibet.

In the preamble of the declaration, Tibetans have been mentioned along with Palestine and several other people's struggle for self-determination. The main body of the declaration contains several specific mention on Tibet under the sections of religious intolerance, refugees and People under foreign occupation.

Human Rights in China (HRC) and TCHRD presented a specific resolution on the non-accreditation of three NGOs namely International Campaign for Tibet, HRC and TCHRD to the World Conference on Racism.

Ms. Aukatsang was nominated to the WCAR Asia Pacific NGO Coordinating Committee along with 24 other members. Besides working on the logistics of the NGO conferences leading up to the World Conference on Racism to be held in Durban, South Africa this August, this Committee will also be involved in taking decision on funding and scholarships to the World conference.

TCHRD members

The membership list of TCHRD totals 316, as of May 2001, excluding those members whose membership expires this year.

The Centre welcomes renewals and new entries so long as the membership rules and responsibilities are fulfilled. (See inbox at the back page for more details)

Farewell to a TCHRD staff

The Centre bids adieu to one of it's oldest staff members, Mr. Kalsang Topgyal a.k.a. Kaltop la, who left for the United States this month, for a two-years' study under Fulbright Scholarship Programme on Human Rights and International Law.

Since the establishment of the Centre in 1996, Kaltop la has worked for TCHRD with utmost dedication and enthusiasm. He served the Centre in various capacities of Field Officer and UN Personnel.

Continued from Page 4

Province, claims that it is a big strain on the farmers as this imposition enfeeble the farmers to go on their usual yartsa gunbu (medicinal plant) collection and hunting spree, the two other sources of earning for them.

The dissenting voice of the farmers against the imposition was crushed down with the deployment of more police force in the area. They were further threatened with dire consequences for non-conformity to the official order. Earlier, the farmers yield surplus production from their lands but now they do not even have sufficient product even to survive. Their living standard has impoverished to a great extent. Lobsang lamented, "The Chinese government might starve the minorities with such unreasonable enforcement."

Another escapee, Duzi, from Bamang Village, Bamany Township, Golok "TAP", reported widespread practice of similar enforced plantation in his area. The ultimate aim of this practice is widely held to be eventual tourist attraction. No one can predict the eventual outcome of this plantation drive, but for the moment it has a very negative impact on the farmers in terms of creating food shortage. The disobedient farmers are liable to face legal punishment.

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Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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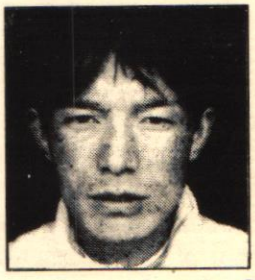
Sonam Choephel comes out of hiding



Sonam Choephel, one of the two trusted aides of Geshe Sonam Phuntsok, successfully managed to evade arrest from the Chinese authorities for almost two years and finally reached Dharamsala on 12 March 2001. Upon his arrival, Choephel provided detailed information to TCHRD concerning Geshe Sonam Phuntsok's arrest, 1999 Kandze demonstration and subsequent arrest and sentencing.

Following the arrest of Geshe Sonam Phuntsok, a prominent religious figure from Kandze County, in October 1999, approximately 3,000 protestors took to the streets demanding for his release. Scores of arrests and detentions took place at that time. Since that time, the Chinese authorities have launched a massive search operation to nab Choephel for his alleged involvement in political activities. He somehow went undercover and his whereabouts remained unknown for a long time till his recent flight into India.

In his own capacity, Choephel had undertaken many freedom activities deemed as "endangering state security" by the Chinese authorities. After his return from India visit in 1996, he showed several videocassettes and distributed pamphlets on the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Government-In-Exile in 20 villages of Kandze County at different points of time. Due to the overwhelming public support that he received, Choephel managed to remain elusive to entrapments laid by the local officers on many occasions. An informant forewarned Choephel about his imminent arrest on the eve of Geshe's arrest and he made good his escape. Had he known about Geshe's arrest beforehand, he would have somehow made arrangements to thwart the arrest plan.

On 25 October 1999, 20 PSB officers came searching for Choephel in his house. They ransacked the entire house but could not find him. They threatened his family with death penalty for Choephel if they fail to produce him immediately. Tsering, Choephel's brother, was beaten very badly with electric batons and other hard objects from the house. Tsering was also thrown mercilessly against the wall several times which caused excessive bleeding. Finally he lost consciousness and was bedridden for almost two weeks. For months thereafter, he could not even open his swollen eyes.

In a similar manner, the officials came to inquire about Chophel's whereabouts to his house and village about 13 times. The officers resorted to every method such as beating, detention and imprisonment of his brother, friends, the village head and villagers in order to extract information about Choephel. The authorities confiscated most of the belongings of Choephel's family worth around 50,000 yuan and told the family that Chophel had used the amount in propagating his "splittist activities". Even now, his family, friends, villagers and associates are frequently harassed, threatened and interrogated by the local officers.

Sonam Chophel was born in 1977 in Molsang Village, Khonlon Township, Kandze County. At the age of 10, he studied in a local primary school and later studied Buddhism for two years at Dhargyeling Monastery in his area. In 1991, he attended Middle School in Kandze Nangten Lobling where Geshe Sonam Phuntsok was working as a teacher. On Geshe's advice, he attended Mechanical and Electronic Course in Kandze for three years and completed successfully by topping the exam which included entries from as many as 18 counties. Later, he did most of the mechanical and electrical works of Dhargyeling Monastery and also helped the common public immensely through his newly-learned skill. He assisted Geshe in both his social and spiritual works. Gradually, he became the most trusted follower and ardent student of Geshe.

The threat of prison sentence or even death penalty never once daunted Choephel who was always ready to face any consequences. Even now, he has no qualms about what he has done and the ordeal of harassment and torture that his family members undergo because of him. He said that he never loved his family less but he has always loved his nation more. Since his hiding, he has never met nor contacted his family members. He lamented, "I remember my family members everyday when I go to bed. Thoughts of their sufferings bring tears into my eyes. But I am satisfied that I am not caught and killed. Otherwise, my desire to work for my country will remain incapacitated. I do not fear death but only want to work more." He further said, "Any amount of sacrifice is not big enough for one's nation". ◆

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Geshe Sonam Phuntsok in Tsangtung Prison

Since his arrest in October 1999, the whereabouts and condition of Geshe Sonam Phuntsok has remained unclear. According to Sonam Choephel, (who features in the front page of this issue of Human Rights Update) Kandze "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" People's Court sentenced Geshe Sonam Phuntsok to five years' imprisonment in Tsangtung Prison located in Tsangtung Village,Dhartong County, Dhatam City, Sichuan Province where he is currently incarcerated.

After Geshe's arrest on 25 October 1999, he was detained in Dartsedo Prison in Dartsedo County, Kandze "TAP" for almost one year and four months before the sentence pronouncement came in March 2001.

The main charges against Geshe Sonam Phuntsok were listed under four different categories. He was accused of 1)"inciting splittist activities among the masses" 2)"travelling to India on an illegal document procured from Lhasa, for seeking audience with the Dalai Lama and for taking photographs with him" 3) "illegally conducting religious ceremony on several occassions within Kandze County" 4)"for conducting long-life prayer ceremony for the Dalai Lama in Rongbatsang, Shisal Township".

When he was granted five minutes to speak out in the courtroom after the sentencing, Geshe said "My arrest and court trial belies Chinese high claim of religious freedom in Tibet and it should be made known to the public".

Geshe is reportedly the only Tibetan prisoner in Tsangtung Prison. From Kandze, it takes four days by bus and further four days and night by train to reach the prison. Many Tibetans from Kandze tried to visit Geshe several times. But the prison authorities deny visitation rights to his relatives and even refuse to hand over the food they brought for Geshe.

To date, only Wangdi, a close relative of Geshe, was given permission to see Geshe for two minutes on 19 April 2001. The meeting transpired with the thick wall of glass partition due to which they could not speak to each other. Wangdi could hardly believe his eyes when he saw Geshe for the first time who reportedly looked very different and seemingly in a very poor health. He looked far older for his age. Wangdi noticed that Geshe was not standing erect and it looked as if his back-bone had broken permanently. There were visible marks of injury on his body. He could see that Geshe's left arm had no movement at all when he tried to fasten the belt.

Geshe Sonam Phuntsok is a popular figure and people in the region revere him as a great Buddhist pratictioner and scholar. He was able to excel in religious teaching even while Chinese authorities imposed stringent regulations curtailing all religious freedom in Tibet. He had taught Tibetan literature to about 70 monks from 35 different monasteries in the 1980s and also tutored monks from Dhargeyling Monastery on Tibetan grammar, Tibetan history and Buddhism for six years. He had also recorded the historical description of 13 monasteries in Kandze "TAP".

Due to his growing popularity and faith amongst the Tibetan people, Chinese authorities regard him as an element of threat to the stability of the nation. Sources within Tibet say that the authorities suspect him and his disciples of having "clandestine contact" with the Tibetan Government-In-Exile. ◆

Six years for watching Dalai Lama video

According to information received by TCHRD, Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials sentenced a Tibetan woman to six years' imprisonment after she was caught watching a video of the Dalai Lama at her home.

On 16 February 2001, Chinese PSB personnel barged into the room where Migmar along with her four friends were watching a video of the Dalai Lama. The officers confiscated the videotape and searched the house for more political evidences.

All five of them were immediately taken to "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR) PSB Detention Centre, located in the north of Lhasa City, where they underwent intensive interrogation sessions. Except for Migmar, her four companions were released after few days of detention on payment of 5000 yuan (US$ 600) each as fine. In May 2001, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Migmar to six years' imprisonment. She is likely to be transferred soon to Drapchi Prison, according to the informant.

Thirty seven-year-old Migmar, originally from Tselguthang, east of Lhasa is a communist member. Upon completion of her Middle School in 1989, Migmar went to China on three years' study programme. After graduation, Migmar returned to Lhasa and was working along with her husband in Lhasa Administrative Department of Post and Telecommunication Department until her detention.

Similar restriction on the portraits of the Dalai Lama was reported in Tingri County in Shigatse Prefecture in "TAR". In March 2001, the local police undertook several raids in Tibetan households in the county to confiscate the banned photos. To avert possible mass confiscation, a local Tibetan by the name of Kyiloe, with the help of two of his friends, collected almost 700 photos of the Dalai Lama from the anxiety-ridden villagers and hid them on his rooftop.

A month later, five to six policemen stormed into his house, confiscated the photographs and detained Kyiloe and his friends for five days in Tingri Detention Centre. The detainees were forewarned

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profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

Twelve years for political leaflet distribution

Sonam Dhondup (ordained name Lekshey Phuntsok) is a 31-year-old monk. He is originally from Khati Township, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Lhasa City. He studied in a local primary school for few years. Then he went for a small-time medical practitioner's training in his county for five years. Upon completion of his training course, Dhondup was assigned to work as a medical practitioner in Jangkha Township where he worked for almost a year. As Dhondup had a strong inclination to become a monk, he joined Nalanda Monastery, located in Phenpo County, in January 1992. Besides his spiritual studies, he worked as a caretaker of the monastery for one year.

Around May 1992, Dhondup along with Tashi Loyak(lay name), Lhakpa Wangyal(lay name) and Tsewang Sonam(lay name) secretly wrote and posted independence leaflets around strategic areas in his county. Once again in January 1993, Dhondup, along with his usual companions, made wooden block prints with the inscriptions of "Free Tibet" and "Tibet belongs to Tibetans" on it. They printed out many leaflets from the inscribed blocks and distributed them in complete secrecy.

On 22 February 1995, the county Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials arrested and detained a monk named Nyima Kelsang from Nalanda Monastery who was found hiding a Tibetan national flag in the folds of his robes. When Dhondup with two other monks visited Kelsang the next day, Dhondup was arrested on suspicion of involvement in political activities. Later, when the officers came to search his room for more political evidences, one of Dhondup's roommates and disciples named Norbu was severely beaten for having refused to hand over the room keys. In the ensuing commotion, the monks pelted the officers with stones who in turn opened fire on the protesting monks.

A week later, the People's Armed Police (PAP) and PSB officers returned to the monastery with Chinese "work team" members in three separate military trucks and went about arresting the monks. At that time, 33 monks from the monastery were arrested and 65 monks were expelled. Dhondup was detained for six days in Phenpo Lhundrup PSB Detention Centre. His three other companions were gradually arrested one by one.

In July 1995, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court formally sentenced Dhondup to 12 years' imprisonment and five years' deprivation of political rights. Tashi Loyak was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and two years' deprivation of political rights. Tsewang Sonam received four years' imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for two years whereas Lhakpa Wangyal was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Except for Dhondup, the other three have already been released.

The remaining 29 monks were sentenced to different years of imprisonment and transferred to different prisons like Drapchi Prison, Lhasa Prison and Trisam "Reform through Labour" Prison. Dhondup was imprisoned in Drapchi Prison.

Dhondup was one of the main participants in the Drapchi Prison Protest of 1 and 4 May 1998. He got beaten along with the other prisoners. In the indiscriminate police firing that followed the protest, Ngawang Sungrab, a political prisoner, was shot in the abdomen. Dhondup gave him the first-aid medical treatment. He is currently detained in Drapchi Prison. ◆

Events of Kandze Protest retold

Following is an account of Kandze protest in October 1999 as reported by Sonam Choephel who reached India on 12 March 2001.

On 25 October 1999 around 5 a.m., approximately 60 PSB officers came to arrest Geshe Sonam Phuntsok while he was in religious retreat at Wakhar Retreat Area, Kandze County. Within few minutes, Geshe was held at gunpoint. An eyewitness, a nun, saw Geshe being taken by two officers holding his arms on both side and one officer pointing a gun at his head from behind. He was barely clothed and was barefooted at the time of arrest.

Agya Tsering (ordained name Lama Lobsang) and Jampa Choezin (a.k.a. Jhamdik),the two other disciples of Geshe, were also arrested at the same time. They were both released after seven months' detention in Kandze Detention Centre. The three were arrested on grounds of suspicion for involvement in political activities.

As soon as the news of Geshe's arrest spread across the town like wildfire, approximately 3,000 peaceful protestors gathered and demonstrated in front of Rongbatsang sub-district office, demanding Geshe's immediate and unconditional release. The people, in retaliation, took into captivity 15 high-ranking officials including the Head and Deputy Head of Kandze County and some policemen. Despite threats of dire consequences and death penalty, the public stood undeterred and demanded the authorities to produce Geshe before them.

At last, the authorities relented and brought Geshe back at about 10 p.m. from Kandze Detention Centre. Overjoyed, the crowds whistled and wept when Geshe, handcuffed and heavily guarded, finally arrived at the demonstration spot. Geshe then advised the public and said the following words, "I am truly encouraged by your overwhelming support. Without coming to the conclusion of the charge for which I am arrested, there is no possibility for my release. Therefore, I have to go back to the detention centre for further investigation and trial. I, therefore, appeal to you all to stop the demonstration. Do not worry about me". The crowd gradually dispersed only to assemble the next day for Geshe' court hearing. They later released the Chinese officials but held the 10 policemen.

By 9 a.m. the next day, approximately 10,000 and more people from two different counties and 10 adjoining sub-districts gathered in front of the Court where Geshe was brought for a closed trial. They shouted slogans like "Release Geshe Sonam Phuntsok" , "Geshe is innocent", "Geshe has no history of political involvement" and "Geshe is the benefactor of the poor – he can never be guilty of any crime". About 600 PSB and PAP officers guarding the court threw teargas shells and even fired indiscriminately to quell the excited mob. However, no one sustained serious injury at that time.

During that time, the Central Chinese Government has issued direct order to the local officials to shoot the demonstrators. However, the Head of Kandze County, refrained from shooting as it seemed from the general mood of the crowd that they would not withdraw at any cost. Instead, the policemen beat the demonstrators with sticks, electric batons, and rifle butts that caused injuries to hundreds of people. Exactly 20 people were hospitalised and nearly 100 people were detained in Kandze Detention Centre the same day.

The detainees underwent severe torture in the detention centre. Besides the use of electric batons to torture the detainees, the other methods employed were throwing hot water on the body, twisting and lacerating the body with the use of pliers, and forcibly placing the hands and other parts of body on electric heaters. In this way, many of the detainees were permanently disabled. Some of the people were released after being detained for one to seven months with the imposition of fines ranging from 500 to 5000 yuan.

From 27 October to 3 November 1999, authorities of Kandze imposed curfew in the whole county and cut off telephone lines for three months. In the meantime, series of nabbing operation of those involved in the demonstration were started in Kandze and in other sub-districts as well.The police officers conducted extensive and forcible raids into numerous houses and some got beaten in the process.

Out of almost 100 arrests that took place in the aftermath of Kandze protest, Choephel knew 16 people from different villages in Kandze County who were sentenced to varying degree of imprisonment. They are:

1. Lobsang Jampa alias Loga (approx.40 years), is the head of Dhakpakha Village. Arrested on 10 November 1999, he was sentenced to three years in Menyang Prison located in Sichuan Province.

2. Chemi Tsering alias A-Tsula (55), a local government employee from Rego Village, was arrested on 21 December 1999. He is reportedly to be in detention at Kandze Detention Centre since his arrest in 1999.

3. Jampa Sonam (layname Jhosar) is a 26-year-old farmer from Sadhu Village. He was arrested on 8 November 1999 and sentenced to two and half years' imprisonment in Menyang Prison.

4. Forty-year-old Khando Choezom (layname Ani Khalu) is a former nun of Nyagil Nunnery in Nyagil Village. Originally from Dhulingo Village, she was arrested on 15 November 1999 and sentenced to six years' imprisonment in Kandze Prison.

5. Talu Wangyal (approx.25), a farmer from Shusaer Village, was sentenced to two and half years' imprisonment in Menyang Prison after his arrest on 31 October 1999.

6. Pema Phuntsok (approx. 39,) the head of Mongsangna Village, was arrested on 31 October 1999 and sentenced to two and half years in Menyang Prison.

7. A 22-year-old Phuntsok from Dura

Village was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Menyang Prison after his arrest on 3 November 1999.

8. Wangdi (45), a businessman from Bushu Village, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Menyang Prison after his arrest on 26 November 1999.

9. Sonam Yeshi (32), a local government employee, is originally from Ronbazon Village. After his arrest on 31 October 1999, he was sentenced to six years' imprisonment in Xinduiqio Prison, Sichuan Province.

10. Pema Kunsang (22), a monk from Shusaer Village, recieved four years' imprisonment sentence in Xinduiqio Prison.He is a former monk of Bhegan Monastery in Rongbatsang Village.

11. Chime Gyaltsen (33,) a farmer from Shusaer Village, was given four and half years' sentence after his arrest on 31 October 1999.

12. Tenzin Dakpa (approx. 26), is a farmer from Yartse Village. Arrested on 3 November 1999, he was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in Xinduiqio Prison.

13. Jampa Wangtso (33) is a nun from Gurthang Village. After her arrest in mid December, she recieved five years' sentence in Kandze Prison.

14. Thupten Choencho (approx.66), a farmer is originally from Rego Village. He was sentenced to six years' imprisonment in Kandze Prison.

15. Kelsang Phuntsok alias Karpang, (approx.30)is a farmer from Shurtsekha Village. After his arrest on 30 October 1999, he was sentenced to five years in Xinduiqio Prison

16. Dawa Gyamtso a.k.a. Danam, is a 29-year-old farmer from Jawar Village.. He was arrested on 30 October 1999 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment in Xinduiqio Prison.

Choephel reported that the investigation and arrest of those involved in the protest is still being carried out by the local authorities.

He further claimed that prior to the 1999 Kandze upheaval, Kandze County was reputed for its "loyalty" to the Chinese government based on the neutral history of political activitism in the area. It had even been applauded and awarded by the Chinese authorities from amongst the 18 odd counties in Sichuan Province. ◆

Prison torture blinds political prisoner

A nun from Chubsang Nunnery became blind after having endured severe forms of ill-treatment and torture in Drapchi Prison during her six-year imprisonment. Upon her release on 1 February 2001, Sangmo was constantly complaining of headache and often loses her mental equilibrium. Despite financial constraints, her relatives and family members did all they could with her medical treatment in Lhasa but to no avail. By March 2001, her eye- sight deteriorated and she finally became blind.

Twenty-five-year-old nun, Sangmo, is originally from Meldrogungkar County in Lhasa Municipality. When she was 19 years old, she initiated a peaceful demonstration in Barkhor on 2 February 1995 with a group of five nuns. They shouted independence slogans and called for "Free Tibet". Within half an hour, Lhasa PSB officer arrested and severely beat the protestors. They were transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre and detained for four months.

In June 1995, Lhasa Supreme People's Procurate and Lhasa Intermediate People's Court subsequently held a closed trial. According to the court verdict, Sangmo was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and accused of being the "principal culprit and leader of the crime". She was further deprived of political rights for two years. She was transferred to Drapchi Prison.

Sangmo was placed in the new third *rukhag* (unit) of Drapchi Prison and underwent forced and intensive military-like training like other prisoners. Sangmo particularly suffered serious bully and harassment by the Chinese prison guards. On 1 May 1998, during the protest in Drapchi, Sangmo also endured beatings and punishment. Due to excessive prison beatings and torture, her health condition worsened which finally led to her blindness.

The other five nuns detained along with Sangmo are Lobsang Wangmo (31) from Phenpo Lhundrup County, and Penpa (27) from Meldro Gungkar County, who both received five years' prison sentence and one year deprivation of political rights. Ngawang Yandrol (30) from Gyantse County (in Shigatse), Pema (22) and Phuntsok Sonam (28) both from Chusul County, were all sentenced to four years' imprisonment and one year deprivation of political rights. After sentencing, they were all transferred to Drapchi Prison within a short duration. ◆

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before release that each of them would have to pay 5000 yuan as fine within a week or face life imprisonment sentence. However, three of them managed to escape into exile.

These cases of arrest and detention contradicts Chinese high claim of unrestricted religious freedom in Tibet. Meng Deli, the Director of the "TAR" Department of Justice, made a statement in May 2001 that "nobody was put into jail for the so-called reason of hanging the portrait of the Dalai Lama"

However, from the many arrests and detentions that the Tibetans have faced over the years, almost all have direct or indirect links to the issue of the Dalai Lama, be it for possessing his photos, videotapes and audiotapes or the failure to denounce him. Last year, 450 Tibetans in Lhasa were fined with 500 yuan each for having displayed the Dalai Lama's pictures in their homes. The Chinese government chooses to identify reverence for the Dalai Lama with that of "separatist activities" and therefore, employ and explore various strategies to strengthen the Dalai Lama denunciation campaign. ◆

Asian Regional Consultation in Dharamsala on World Conference Against Racism

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) and South Asian Human Rights and Documentation Centre (SAHRDC) jointly organised the Asian Regional Consultation on the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) in Dharamsala from 15-17 June 2001. Twenty-four NGO participants representing eight Asian countries attended the conference.

The main objective of the conference was to share and understand issues of racism, racial discrimination, other related intolerance at a regional level; learn to effectively use the existing local, national and international mechanisms to address the existing issues; and work together to combat these issues. The Conference focused broadly on the theme of the WCAR: Causes and Sources of Racism, Victims of Racism, and Redress and Compensatory measures.

Since majority of the participants are attending the WCAR in Durban this September, due attention was also given to examine the WCAR processes in preparation for the World Conference. The organisers had prepared in advance a draft declaration based on the government draft declaration. Since many critical issues of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the Asian region were not addressed in the government draft declaration, it also did not find adequate reference in our previously drafted declaration. As such, the need was felt to come up with a new declaration which would reflect all the aspirations and concerns of the Asian region as voiced by the Asian NGO participants. The previously worked on document was retained as a lobby document.

For the opening session, members of the local Tibetan press and several Tibetan dignitaries were invited. The keynote speaker for the session was Mr. T.C. Tethong, Minister of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, after which the special message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the participants was read out. On behalf of the organisers, Mr. Lobsang Nyandak, Executive Director of TCHRD, welcomed all the participants.

During a special audience by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness inquired into the composition of the participants and the agenda of the conference. Mr. Lobsang Nyandak briefed His Holiness on the agenda of the conference and introduced all the participants.

Another highlight of the day was the visit of the Ambassador and the First Secretary of the European Union(EU)to India. The Ambassador gave a brief overview on the projects of the European Union specifically in India, Nepal and Bhutan. This was a great opportunity for the participants to question EU's stand on the various issues affecting their countries.

Mr. Ravi Nair, Executive Director of SAHRDC, dwelled on the United Nations effort to combat racism and gave a brief history of the previous two World Conferences on Racism. Mr. R.V Pillai, a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), briefed the participants on the workings of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The participants were also acquainted with the National Human Rights Institutions and given the NGO perspectives on National and International mechanisms.

Intensive discussion on country specific situation also took place. Among the presenters were NGO representatives from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, China, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Burma and Bhutan. They highlighted issues of racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance in their own country of residence or origin. Ms. Katherine Southwick, a researcher at SAHRDC, gave a special presentation on East Turkestan.

A previously drafted declaration was opened for discussion by the organisers. Many participants expressed concerns that the document does not reflect the true aspirations of the Asian NGOs working to combat racism, racial discrimination and related intolerance in their region. Upon much deliberation, it was unanimously agreed upon to keep this document as a lobby document for the World Conference against Racism in South Africa.

A drafting committee comprising of four participants worked on Dharamsala Draft Declaration. The participants reviewed this in detail. The group endorsed the document in principle. The organisers incorporated all the changes and agreed to distribute the final draft declaration by email to the participants.

The participants were also briefed on the necessary preparation for the World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa, such as producing alternative reports on country papers prepared by the governments.

The participants enjoyed a colourful programme at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts followed by a farewell dinner. At the dinner, respected members of the Tibetan community including the Supreme Justice Commissioner, Cabinet Ministers, Parliament Chair and Vice Chair and Election Commissioners were present.

Earlier this May TCHRD and International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) won accreditation to the WCAR to be held in Durban this August, when China was defeated in two separate votes during the Second Preparatory Committee Meeting in Geneva. ◆

TCHRD Publications

Tibetan Annual Report 2001

The Centre brought out a Tibetan translation of the 2001 Annual Report titled "Enforcing Loyalty". This comprehensive report provides an overview of the human rights situation in Tibet under the Chinese rule and highlights areas such as political repression, religious repression, denial of women and child's right, racial discrimination and subsistence right.

The report is being distributed widely to schools and institutions around the Tibetan communities.

Prison Diary

TCHRD published "Prison Diary", an autobiography by a former Tibetan political prisoner. The Chief Kalon, Mr. Sonam Topgyal, inaugurated the book release and the Centre's Executive Director, Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, pledged to publish not less than one book a year written by former political prisoners describing their prison experiences.

Dolkar Kyab from Amdo was jailed in Kansu Province Prison no. 2 for three years (1995-1998) on account of political activities. The book details his involvement in political activities, prison life and life thereafter, official maltreatment which sheds light on the denial of basic human rights by the Chinese government in every aspect of Tibetan life. ◆

Awareness Programme

Educational Talk Series

As a part of the educational activities, Mr. Lobsang Tsering and Ms. Tenzin Chokey, both researchers at the Centre, took classes on human rights and democracy for two consecutive days in Lower TCV School, Dharamsala. They dealt mainly with the United Nations and its various mechanism, current human rights situation in Tibet, democratic concept and Tibetan democracy in particular.

The talks were well received and the students raised many pertinent questions. TCHRD staff members already undertook similar talk series in the Upper TCV School in April 2001.

American Law Students

Youdon Aukatsang, the senior programme officer and Jampa Monlam, the field officer spoke to a group of American Law Graduates from various universities in America on 27 June 2001. Youdon spoke on the current human rights situation in Tibet and also dwelled on the case of Tibet in the United Nations.

Jampa Monlam, a former political prisoner gave a personal account of his prison experiences.

After the session, the group involved in an interesting discussion followed by many questions. ◆

TCHRD members

By June 2001, TCHRD's membership strength has spiralled to 406 from 360. We apologise for the inability to insert all the new member's names due to lack of space.

Send in your entries for new membership. Interested old members should send in their renewal application either through snail mail or e-mail.

For more details, see membership inbox on page 8.

Thank you. ◆

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Dalai Lama's photo banned, exile students' kins fined

A recent arrival from Tibet reported that ban imposition on the Dalai Lama's photos has become strict and vehement in Tingri (Ch:Dhingri) County, "Tibet Autonomous Region", since the year 2000. Moreover, increased restrictions on sending children to schools run by the exile government is resulting in heavy fines for the parents in the same county.

Around March 2001, several Chinese policemen conducted extensive raids on every Tibetan household in Tingri County for photos of the Dalai Lama after a gap of 20 days each. The raid operation created panic amongst the villagers and some of them ran away to hide in the nearby hills. In the ensuing furore, the banned photos were in danger of being dumped everywhere and given least care. Kyiloe had about five photos of the Dalai Lama himself. Hence, Kyiloe and his two friends – Dasang and Pasang – collected about 700 photos from the villagers. They built a small altar on his rooftop and lit butter lamps in front of the photos.

One afternoon in April 2001, five to six policemen raided Kyiloe's house, confiscated all the photos and detained him with his two companions. While they were transported to Tingri County Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Centre, all three of them were beaten, slapped and shocked with electric batons, and Pasang was bleeding from his mouth. They were individually put in a cell handcuffed and feet manacled and detained for five days.

During their detention, they underwent intensive interrogation as to why they displayed photographs of the Dalai Lama despite the ban orders. The officers beat, slapped and kicked the detainees and told them that they were lying every time they replied to their questions. Kyiloe recounted that unable to bear the torture inflicted during interrogation, he pleaded guilty and asked for forgiveness for the alleged wrongs that he had committed. They were poorly fed with left-over food during their detention period. Being the elder of the three, Kyiloe was interrogated and beaten more than the other two.

For possessing and collecting the Dalai Lama's photo, described as a "criminal act" by the local authorities, the detainees were ordered to pay a fine of 5000 yuan each to secure their freedom or else face life imprisonment. Three of them were released after five days' detention with an order to submit the fine amount within a week's time. Kyiloe claimed that since he had a house and land that could fetch approximately 10,000 yuan, the officers believed he would not run away.

Kyiloe and his friends had serious discussion after their release on their future moves. They decided to flee into exile as they couldn't afford the fines. On the night of 30 April 2001, the three left their native place and walked for 11 days via Kumbum Pass. They stayed for more than two weeks at Thupten Choeling Monastery, about four hours walk from Papulu domestic airport in Nepal, where Kyiloe's daughter has been staying under the care of some monks and nuns since spring 2000.

The informant's first escape was in the spring of 2000 when he brought his daughter across the border for education. He walked for 11 days carrying his three–year-old daughter on his back. He sought the help of his cousin brother who was paid 200 yuan. When they arrived at Thupten Choeling Monastery, Kyiloe was told that his daughter was too young to be accepted by the Tibetan Reception Centre in Dharamsala. Hence, Troshe Rinpoche, the head of the monastery, advised him to leave his daughter at the monastery, assured him that the nuns would take care of his daughter until she reaches the age of eight years. Kyiloe changed his initial plans and returned to his hometown with his cousin, leaving behind his daughter at the monastery.

Upon his return, Kyiloe was called to PSB Office around July 2000. The PSB officers interrogated him about his trip to Nepal and the whereabouts of his daughter. He related the difficulties of bringing up his daughter who is without a mother and told the officers that he kept her at Thupten Choeling Monastery in Nepal. The officers took down notes of everything he said and he was allowed to go.

Almost a fortnight later, five policemen from new Tingri County headed by Lhakpa Phuntsok called a meeting in old Tingri County. Approximately 40 parents who have sent their children either to India or Nepal attended the meeting. It was announced during the meeting that Tibetan officials who fail to bring back their children from India are liable to face either dismissal or demotion from their jobs, and face deprivation of pension and other benefits. These 40 odd parents were ordered to pay fines of 700 yuan for having sent their children to schools administered by the Tibetan Government-In-Exile within the stipulated time of one week.

The informant related that in order to raise the fine amount, some parents sold their domestic animals like cow whereas others performed manual labour. Kyiloe knew a man by the name of Galo who sold a cow. Kyiloe had to pay 1400 yuan to the PSB officers for both himself and his daughter. The parents were further told that disobedience to the restrictive orders would be considered a gross violation of national policy or crime as serious as murder.

Kyiloe attributes his wife's untimely death to non-availability of proper medication in old Tingri County. There is only one army hospital in his area, which gives preferential treatment to the Chinese-speaking Tibetans and charges exorbitant medical fee. The discrimination invariably falls on the poor Tibetans and non-Chinese speaking Tibetans. Most serious patients have to go to new Tingri County for medical treatment, which is about 60 kms away. Kyiloe's wife passed away after giving birth to a baby girl before the doctor could be called from new Tingri County. Even the baby did not survive and died two days after her birth.

Originally from Tingri County, Shigatse Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Kyiloe was a nomad by occupation. He had a small teashop to eke out a living. He was separated from his family and lived with his wife. He, along with Dasang and Pasang, reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 6 June 2001. ◆

Visa restrictions for Tibetans visiting India

The Chinese government never issue visa for Tibetans in Tibet if the destination is revealed as India. It is much easier to secure travel documents for Nepal instead. One needs to however, go through the usual verification process by proving the authenticity of invitation letter and photocopy of the sponsor's Nepali passport.

Bukyi, a 25-year-old monk, told TCHRD that it took a long time for him to obtain visa. He resorted to bribing the officials in order to speed up the snail-paced visa procedure. The cost of visa has gone higher and therefore, it is not easy for ordinary Tibetans to apply these days. The actual procedure involves obtaining three papers from the police offices at three different levels of county, prefecture and province. This normally cost only 10 yuan each but Bukyi spent more money on bribing the concerned officials.

Bukyi knows an official (name withheld for security reasons) from the county Police Station who deals with visa issuance. When he requested the officer to grant him the necessary documents to obtain visa for India, the officer categorically stated that no visa is issued for going to India especially for monks. After much persuasion, the officer finally relented on the ground that Bukyi would have to get him a statue from Lhasa that cost 350 yuan. He also paid 300 yuan as an assurance that he would return to Tibet after the visit.

Bukyi then went to Jyekundo (Ch:Yushù) "TAP" Police Station with a paper from the county police station. The concerned official who is a Chinese national fluent in Tibetan language showed much reluctance in granting him the papers. After waiting patiently for four months, he bribed the official with presents of 30 gyama of butter (market price for each gyama of butter is 13 yuan), milk and a newly hand-knitted woollen pullover, all together worth approximately 700 yuan. Within two days, Bukyi was given the necessary papers on further payment of 700 yuan for which a receipt was issued.

The third step involved going to Xining Police Station in Qinghai Province. Bukyi went with the help of a Chinese-speaking relative where he got the proper visa valid for five years for travelling within a week to Nepal. The amount of 300 yuan was charged as visa fee. He thinks that had he bribed the concerned official in Jyekundo "TAP" Police Station at the outset, he would not have had to wait too long. In Lhasa, he went to Nepal Consulate and paid 250 yuan for visa verification. At Dram, after crossing the Friendship Bridge at Nepal-Tibet border on the Nepal side, Bukyi paid 200 NC to a security border police.

The informant being a former monk from Kana Monastery in Dzatoe County, he reported on the "work team" members' visit and "patriotic education" in his monastery. He became a monk at the age of 15 years.

Since the late 1980's, "work team" officials from Jyekundo Religious Department started visiting the monastery for political indoctrination. The frequency of the visit in the eighties was just once a year. However, the campaign gathered momentum from the late nineties when officials from 7 to 14 members would come once a month to "re-educate" the monks politically. At the longest, the "work team" members would stay for four months and the monastery had to bear all the expenses during their stay.

The "work team" imposed limitation of 30 monks at the monastery out of the current strength of 300. These 30 monks are officially allowed to stay in the monastery by acquiring a residential card. Bukyi was one of the 30 officially recognised monks who were permitted to stay in the monastery. He said that about 40-50 monks from Kana Monastery have escaped to India since the start of "patriotic education" in the monastery.

The officials also set an age-limit for the monks at 18 years at the time of seeking admission. The officials reasoned that the monks should not be a "parasite". Rather they should be self-reliant and not depend on the hard toils of the masses. The "work team" members maintained the ban orders on the Dalai Lama's photos.

Bukyi reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 1 June 2001. He decided to escape in order to acquire better spiritual study and practise in India. ◆

Language bias mars educational opportunities

Twenty -year-old Melha Yeshi reports that the school where she studied in Tibet has approximately 500 students, out of which 200 are Chinese. Since the age of seven, Yeshi studied in Zhangmo Middle School, the only school in her area. She fled Tibet this year to seek better educational opportunities.

Tashi Yangzom who escaped with Yeshi, elaborated that Chinese students are normally better than the Tibetans and gain admission into schools much easier. She attributes the cause to the use of Chinese medium of instruction, which puts Tibetan students at a disadvantageous position. Chinese students have a good base of language command as they were taught in Chinese medium from the beginning itself.

The fee for each semester in the school was 200 yuan, which was equally applicable to the Chinese students as well. The main subjects taught were Chinese, Tibetan, Maths, Geography and History. Except for Tibetan language, all other subjects were taught in Chinese. It is only in the Chinese section of the school that English language is taught.

Even the strength of Chinese teachers is more. They are all graduates from Beijing University and teach all the subjects except for Tibetan language. A teacher's monthly salary is around 1000 yuan.

Yeshi and Yangzom then came to Lhasa and sought admission in higher studies for Tibetan Medicine. They both passed the competitive exams successfully and enrolled in the institution for one and half years where the annual fee was 10,000 yuan. The institution had around 300 students including some Mongolians. Before completing the course, both Yeshi and Yangzom quit the institution unable to bear the exorbitant fee.

Both the girls bought business permit on payment of 350 yuan in Lhasa and came to Dram where they stayed for seven days. They arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 21 April 2001.◆

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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.

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Life imprisonment and heavy prison sentences for six Sog residents

Six Tibetans from Sog County were sentenced to varying prison terms ranging from seven years to life imprisonment for political activities. The Chinese authorities link them to the recurrent political and resistant activities that have been taking place in Sog County, Nagchu Tibet Autonomous Prefecture ("TAP"), since 1993. Except for two men, the rest of them are monks of Sog Tsendhen Monastery in Sog County and they are most likely to be transferred to Drapchi Prison.

According to information received by Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the six Tibetans; Sey Khedup (27), Tenzin Choewang (64), Tsering Lhagon (41), Yeshi Tenzin (33), Trakru Yeshi (45) and Gyurmey (29) were arrested in March 2000 on different dates and from different places. Nearly nine months later in mid-December, the detainees were brought for a public trial at Nagchu Intermediate People's Court. They were accused of supporting activities of the "Dalai splittist clique and carrying out activities endangering state security". The court produced independence posters, wooden block prints and cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama as evidences of the charges levied on them.

Sey Khedup received the harshest sentence of them all. It is probable that his attempt to claim sole responsibility of the entire charges brought against them, at the time of trial, may have earned him life imprisonment. Another likely reason could be his background of rendering carpentry work at the monastery and carvings on wooden block prints.

Yeshi Tenzin and Gyurmey were reportedly the first ones to be apprehended by policemen from Lhasa and Nagchu respectively during a holiday at the monastery and taken to Nagchu Detention Centre. The duo underwent intensive beatings and torture and were compelled to reveal the names of their "accomplices". Subsequently, Yeshi was sentenced to 15 years and Gyurmey to 10 years' imprisonment.

One day in March 2000, approximately seven men in masks arrived at Sog Tsendhen Monastery and arrested Tenzin Choewang from the main prayer hall and was taken to Nagchu Detention Centre. Choewang, who was the caretaker of the monastery, slept in the hall. The next day when people visited the hall for prayers, his clothes and belongings were found in complete disarray.

The officers ransacked his room and discovered cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama. There is fear surrounding Choewang's current health condition, as at the time of trial, he could not stand straight on his own. He had to be supported by two men from both sides. Choewang was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

When Nagchu policemen came to Tsering Lhagon's place, they discovered wooden block prints with carvings such as "Free Tibet", "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama", "Tibet belongs to Tibetans" and "Chinese quit Tibet". He was later sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment.

Trakru Yeshi, a staff at the Nagchu Hydro Power Station, was apparently taken during the day by policemen. His colleagues at work were strictly instructed against telling anyone about his arrest. Yeshi received seven years' imprisonment.

The systematic fashion in which the detainees were arrested is a clear indication that authorities have kept close vigil on their movements and activities with the tacit co-operation of one of the insiders from Sog Tsendhen Monastery. The monastery is notable for being the "breeding ground" for political activities and has thus been under strict surveillance where the monks are closely monitored and their freedom of movement restricted.

Reports indicate that other Sog residents were also detained and suffered severe interrogation around the time the six men were arrested. Thupten Tsering, the blacksmith of the monastery, was brought to Nagchu Detention Centre on the pretext that he was being taken to attend a meeting at the county. Tsering had earlier built a gate for the monastery, which the authorities believe was to impede the officials from entering unannounced. He reasoned that it was meant to keep stray dogs from entering in the night and

littering the place. While he was detained in Nagchu Detention Centre for four months, he was so brutally beaten that by the time he was released, his right arm became disabled.

Serpa Sichoe was in Lhasa at his niece's house undergoing medical treatment when he was arrested. He was released after few months of detention. In 2000, Sichoe travelled to Dram (Nepal-Tibet border) in order to meet his son in Nepal.

Namgyal Soepa was detained for approximately three months and was later prohibited from rejoining the monastery. He is not physically fit as he underwent harsh ill-treatment at the time of his detention.

Serpa Sichoe, earlier suspected of involvement in a bomb explosion incident of 1995 in Sog County was arrested in August 1997 along with Tenzin Choewang, Ngawang Geysar and Namgyal Soepa. Sichoe and Choewang were released after seven months while Namgyal Soepa was released after two months. Geysar was released after five weeks' detention but hardly spoke anything about his experiences thereafter. Geysar's current status is unknown. Since his release, no one, not even his family members has any knowledge about his whereabouts. ◆

8,500 clergy expelled, Chief Abbot under house arrest

In yet another assault on the religious sentiments of the Tibetan people, Chinese authorities expelled over 8,500 monks, nuns and lay people studying at Serthar Buddhist Institute in Karze "TAP". The Chief Abbot (Khenpo) of the Institute, Jigme Phuntsok, is held under house arrest and the Institutes' residential quarters were demolished. Six nuns have reportedly died following the repression.

On 18 April 2001, Chinese authorities issued a stern notice, ordering students at the Institute to return to their respective counties on the ground that the existing student population has exceeded the previously enforced ceiling of 1400.

"Chinese authorities' serious concern over the burgeoning religious population in Tibet is manifested in their campaigns to enforce limits in all large or small religious institutions throughout Tibet either by curbing new recruits or by mass expulsion", commented Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

No one is allowed to meet Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok. People were told that he is not keeping well. It is reported that Khenpo will soon be taken away to China when his health improves.

Several sources report that within 20 days i.e. from 20 May to 10 June 2001, six nuns have died following the expulsion order. Four of the nuns died due to extreme shock and two committed suicide by hanging themselves from a ceiling.

A force of 3,800 armies and policemen were deployed in and around the Institute to crush any possible protest. A reliable source reported that 100 People's Armed Police each from 18 counties under Karze "TAP" and 2,000 People's Liberation Army, were called in to control the situation.

Eyewitnesses confirmed demolition of the vacated quarters to prevent the expelled monks and nuns from returning to the Institute. One source reported that the demolition work began on 26 June and over 2,900 residential quarters, large and small, have been completely destroyed.

The officials from Beijing, who were summoned for the demolition and expulsions, have enforced a ceiling of 1,400 monks and nuns. Only those belonging to Serthar County were allowed to remain in the Institute provided they oppose the Dalai Lama. Others were forcibly returned to their respective counties.

Serthar Buddhist Institute, also known as Larung Gar, has the largest conglomeration of monks and nuns in Tibet. The Institute houses around 10,000 monks, nuns and lay people, including some 1,000 Chinese who came from across China, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia.

Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok established Serthar Buddhist Institute in 1980. The Institute was certified as an "academy" by the late Panchen Lama after securing official approval in 1987. This was the reason why the first wave of "Patriotic Education" did not really affect the religious life at the Institute. Moreover, there has been no report onpolitical or "splittist" activity at the Institute. ◆

A man beaten to death

Tseta Marong was beaten to death, and three others critically injured, after a myriad arrests of arbitrary nature took place in Thandong Township, Tengchen County, Chamdo Prefecture. The arrests came in the wake of a search operation following a bomb explosion incident in miners' residential area at Thandong Gold Mine on 11 July this year. Four Chinese gold miners were reportedly injured.

The mining operation in the area started in 1990's after a team of Research Scientists on mineral excavation visited Thandong Township where a mountain housed the gold ore. Since then, the local communities have shown concern towards the possible ecological disruption but were unable to voice their resentment over the project because of looming fear of harsh punishment.

The authorities suspected the bomb explosion to be an outcome of the public's opposition to the mining project. The investigation is being carried out vigorously to find the "culprits"

The PSB officers subject the local inhabitants and people from the nearby areas to frequent harassment and beatings. In the process, Tseta Marong died and three others (name unknown) were reportedly in a critical condition after having endured severe beatings. Furthermore, 16 Tibetans including ten monks of Tsamphung Monastery were kept in detention on suspicion, out of which 12 have reportedly been released. The monastery remains temporarily closed in the aftermath of the arrest. ◆

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

Nine years' sentence for independence slogans

Lobsang Gelek is originally from Dhamshung County in Lhasa. He is around 25 years of age. While he was young, he studied in a local primary school for few years and later became a monk of Khangmar Monastery.

On 10 April 1995, Gelek along with Lobsang Choephel, Sonam Choephel, Tenzin Choedak and Sangye Tenphel, all monks of Khangmar Monastery, initiated independence demonstration in Barkhor, the central street in Lhasa. Pro-independence and anti-China slogans such as "Tibet is independent", "Chinese Quit Tibet" were raised.

The Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials gradually overpowered the demonstrators and took them to Lhasa PSB Detention Centre, located in the south of Lhasa City. During their detention, the monks underwent intensive interrogation regarding motives behind their demonstration.

Around October of the same year, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced the monks to varying prison terms on charges of "counter-revolutionary activities". During that time, Gelek was sentenced to five years's imprisonment with two years' deprivation of political rights. After the sentence was passed, Gelek and his companions were transferred to Drapchi Prison.

With increased restrictions from the prison authorities, the prisoners were subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment and forced to undergo daily "exercise" sessions. One of Gelek's friend, Sangye Tenphel, died from excessive torture which caused chronic depression in the last days of his life.

On 1 May 1998, approximately 120 political prisoners and 600 criminal prisoners were gathered for flag-hoisting ceremony in the prison courtyard. All of a sudden, Kardar, a criminal prisoner and his friend, shouted "Tibet is independent" which led others present to join the protest. The prison guards and People's Armed Police (PAP)immediately rushed to control the situation. Many were beaten, solitarily confined and received sentence extensions.

Three days later on 4 May, approximately 36 male political prisoners, 30 female political prisoners and 300 criminal prisoners were taken to celebrate the occasion of Chinese Youth Day. The prisoners were lined up and surrounded on all sides by PAP and prison guards carrying electric batons, iron rods, ropes and rifles.

As soon as the flag was hoisted, Lobsang Gelek with his fist raised in the air shouted "Tibet is independent". The other prisoners followed suit and the situation became uncontrollable for sometime. The officials present fired gunshots indiscriminately and severely beat the prisoners. Many prisoners were kept in solitary confinement cells that time.

Gelek was beaten with sticks and labeled as the "instigator" of the protest. Later, along with few other prisoners, Gelek was transferred to "TAR" PSB Detention Centre where they were interrogated about the protest. In August of the same year, they were returned to Drapchi Prison.

In December 1998, as many as 27 prisoners received varying degrees of sentence extension depending on their particpation in the protest. Gelek's previous sentence of five years was prolonged by further four years, making his current sentence a total of nine years.◆

China strengthens anti-Dalai Lama campaign

Lhasa, the capital city of Chinese-occupied Tibet, witnessed renewed restrictions on the age-old traditional celebration of Trunglha Yarsol (the Dalai Lama's birthday) this year. The Chinese authorities, as a part of various checkrein measures, distributed official circulars "illegalising" Trunglha Yarsol, issued threats and arbitrarily arrested and detained Tibetans just two days prior to the actual celebration.

A circular titled "Strengthening Abolition of the Illegal Activities of Trunglha Yarsol Celebration and Protection of Social Stability" issued by the Chinese Government on 24 June 2001, applauds their success in curbing the earlier birthday celebrations and re-affirms their stand against such "illegal activities" in the fut e.

Hundreds of Tibetans from Lhasa Region alone were reportedly arrested on 4 July 2001, under the guise of "Strike Hard" campaign which was re-launched in April this year, and subsequently detained for a short duration. Majority of these Tibetans has had alleged political proclivity as opposed to "criminal offence" against which the campaign was targeted. "The arbitrary nature of their arrest clearly demonstrates not only the authorities' obsession to control any political activities that might arise during the birthday but also reveals how the Chinese Government tramples upon religious freedom of the Tibetans by smothering their faith and belief in their ancient religion", stated Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

The circular that makes high claim about guaranteeing normal religious activities and protecting religious freedom, also has a contradictory provision that categorically prohibits any individual or organisation from celebrating Trunglha Yarsol. Activities such as prayers, incense-burning ceremony, and throwing tsampa (roasted barley) during the birthday are considered as "illegal". It further stipulated that Department of Justice and Department of Public Security will impose punishment on those individuals found guilty of infringement of the said law according to the rules of People's Republic of China (PRC) Security Control Measure and Transportation Control Measure. Moreover, those who commit gross violation of the order would be severely dealt with according to PRC's Criminal Procedure Law.

Every year on 6 July, Tibetans in Lhasa congregate at Trunglha Village, Ngachen Township, Lhasa Metropolitan, and perform incense-burning ceremony and throw tsampa (roasted barley) in the air as part of the festivities to mark the occasion. As per information given by a recent arrival, Lhasa PSB officials kept close vigil on various picnic spots in the region this year. Approximately 16 Tibetan youth were fined with 500 yuan each, when they were found picnicking at Karma Kunsang Park, located in the south of Lhasa. The youth, who were on a five-day picnic, had no prior intention to celebrate Trunglha Yarsol. Their revelry was stopped mid-way nonetheless and no receipt was issued for the imposed fine.

The ban against the celebration became effective from 26 June 2000 when Lhasa Municipality Industrial and Commercial Bureau issued a circular titled "Concise Information About Lhasa City People's Government Abolition of the Illegal Celebration of Trunglha Yarsol". The circular censured Trunglha Yarsol as against the law and henceforth banned the observance of the occasion. It also accused the "Dalai clique" of "instigating disturbances in various parts of Tibet, relying on pretexts like the celebration of Trunglha Yarsol to split the motherland". The government offices and bodies circulated copies to all monasteries including the three major seats of Sera, Drepung and Gaden, various departments and schools, and regional party committees, and specifically prohibited Tibetan officials and party members from participating in the "illegal activities". Should any untoward incidents happen, heads of the respective offices were warned to hold responsibility.

The authorities at that time enforced restrictions on the movement of incoming Tibetans and subjected them to unwanted harassment as preventive measures against any potential activities deemed as "endangering state security". In August of the same year, not only did Tibetan residents of Lhasa give a strong riposte to the circular but defy the official orders by taking up activities for birthday celebration for the subsequent years.

China's Tibet policy, more particularly that of the Dalai Lama factor in the Tibet issue, has taken a hard-line direction with the Third Work Forum on Tibet held in the year 1994. The forum identified the Dalai Lama as "serpent's head" which must be "chopped off" in order to kill the serpent. Since then, the polemical attack against the Dalai Lama has gained monstrous proportion. The monks and nuns, after being subjected to frequent political indoctrination, are forced to parrot Chinese version of history and oppose the Dalai Lama. Tibetans, both laity and monastic community, continue to face arrest and other related punishments for non-conformity to official anti-Dalai Lama campaign such as ban against display of the Dalai Lama's photograph.◆

Three years for screening Dalai Lama's video

Ngawang Tsultrim, a 24 year-old exile returnee, was given three years' prison term in Drapchi Prison for screening a video of the Dalai Lama. He returned to Tibet in May 1999.

Tsultrim came to India in late 1998 and joined Drepung Loseling Monastery, Mundgod, South India. Due to his inability

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Ngawang Sangdrol receives Honorary Citizenship

In recognition of the courageous will of Tibetan political prisoners in the face of Chinese repressive regime, the Town Council of Florence, Italy, has unanimously conferred upon Ngawang Sangdrol the Honorary Citizenship on 16 July 2001.

In a letter addressed to the Tibetan Government-in-exile, Paolo Pobbiat, says that Sangdrol who is presently serving 21 years' imprisonment, rightly highlights the tragedy of Tibet. He further said it is extremely important that Florence, a city rich in its culture and history, has shown its solidarity to someone who best represents the peaceful struggle against the brutality of Chinese authorities. The move gains prominence particularly in light of the events such as Beijing 2008 Olympics and China's entry into World Trade Organization (WTO), which could eclipse the real situation inside Tibet.

Ngawang Sangdrol's felicitation came about last year when a representative of the Italian Section of Amnesty International suggested it to the board representative of the Government Party during a conference on Tibet.

Ngawang Sangdrol (lay name Rigchog), is from Garu Nunnery, Lhasa. She was first arrested when she was only ten years old in 1987 for participating in an independence demonstration and was detained for 15 days. On 28 August 1990, she again joined a demonstration and was detained for nine months without charge.

Her current sentence began on 17 June 1992 when she was sentenced to three years for attempting to stage a demonstration in Lhasa along with other nuns from Garu Nunnery. Sangdrol's prison sentence was prolonged by six years in October 1993 for recording freedom song in the prison. It was in July 1996 that the second sentence extension of eight years took place for participating in a protest within her rukhag (unit). Her sentence was extended by four years for participation in the May 1998 protests inside Drapchi Prison. She is currently the longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet with the total sentence of 21 years.◆

Railway line project vexes Tibetans

Despite strong media hype of China's ambitious railway project between Lhasa and Gormo considered as the world's highest railway line, Tibetans raise concern over the negative ramification on the inhabitants who live in close proximity to the site.

The initial site proposed for the construction of Lhasa Railway station, according to some sources, were in the areas of Yabda Township and Sangmo Township of Toelung Dechen County. The residents of these areas strongly protested when they were ordered to relocate to Phenpo Lhundrup County. A written appeal was addressed to the County head expressing their wish to remain in the same area. However, the matters gradually dissolved with the authorities promising to consult their superior. Finally, it was decided to construct a railway station in Dip village, Tsalgungthang Township, Lhasa Municipality. Dip village is situated very near Lewu Township on the other side of Kyichu river. A bridge is also to be built on Kyichu River.

The railway route passes through Nagchu into Dechen Township, Mar, Ghurum in Toelung Dechen County. The fields in the area through which the railway line will pass are being measured and marked .The farmers show strong resentment against it, moreover, the public in the locality talk about the possibility of meagre compensation for their land and short-lived benefit of the compensation. They say that the benefit will only be for a short while and that they will face huge loss in their annual production in the future.

As soon as the announcement came of the implementation of actual work, Dolkar, the County Head, said that the railway project would help around 30,000 people of the county and that the share of beneficiaries would amount to 75 per cent of the county's population .The county, because of its high rate of food grain production, is considered one of the most well-off districts around Lhasa. Surrendering the farmland would render 75 per cent of beneficiaries from the project landless and eventually lead to their impoverishment.

Another unconfirmed information reveals that more than hundred Tibetan prisoners from Nyari Prison, Shigatse Prefecture, have been brought in as labourers to the project sites.◆

Drakar Nunnery closed, all nuns expelled

In the beginning of 2001, the Chinese officials closed Drakar Nunnery and expelled all the 20 nuns. The officials accompanied by village heads from Nyelam County, Shigatse Prefecture, met to discuss and eventually announce the official ban on local nuns joining the only nunnery in the area.

In the fall of 2000, Nyelam County police warned all the villagers in the area of legal prosecution for families who had their daughters in the nunnery. The families were ordered to withdraw their daughters from the nunnery failing which they would be considered dissidents and face dire consequences.

The nunnery, as claimed by the officials, had no permit from the government. This atrocious claim was widely believed to be nothing more than an excuse to implement the harsh policies to extinguish Buddhism from the Tibetan soil. "The nunnery received no grants from the government. The permit, as the officials claimed to be mandatory, was just a permit to thrust their stringent and repressive crackdown on our religion", said Choekyi.

Choekyi said that Drakar Nunnery was the only place of worship for the local people in the county. The nunnery was reconstructed with donations from the nuns and locals after its demolition

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"Work team" visits Rongpo Monastery

Owing to precedence of political activism, the "work team" officials held classes for the monks of Rongpo Monastery, Rebkong County, Qinghai Province, to "re-educate" them politically.

As has been the case with other monasteries, monks under the age of 18 were expelled from the monastery. A school was set up under the patronage of Lama Tenzin Jigmey especially for the expelled monks. The school has a total strength of 60 students and eight teachers, all from Rongpo Monastery. Subjects such as English, Tibetan and Buddhism were taught in the school.

The "work team" members insisted that the expelled monks should instead join a regular school. Lama Tenzin persuaded the officials to allow him to run the school and assured them of no political overtones in setting up the school and that he would take responsibility for any untoward incidents.

Gedun Nyima, 23, originally from Rebkong County, became monk at the age of 13. Rongpo Monastery with the current total of 500 monks, was listed in the "Preservation of Ancient Heritages" and 10,0000 yuan was earmarked for its renovation in March 2001.

Nyima reported that a fellow monk, Jigmey Dawa, was arrested and eventually imprisoned for three years after his return to Tibet in 1998. Dawa had studied for a year in India. He was released in March 2001.

The informant joined Guemar Monastery in the same county after six years' study at Rongpo Monastery. The "work team" members frequently warned the monks against display of the Dalai Lama's photograph but the monks defied by keeping the pictures. Guemar Monastery has 80 monks.

Nyima acquired a travel document from Lhasa and passed through Dram to reach Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 2 June 2001. He is now at Gaden Monastery in South India. ◆

Arrest Reports

Tsenyi Monastery

According to reliable information from Tibet, PSB officials from Ngaba (Ch:Aba) County, Marthang (Ch: Hongyuan)County and Tsenyi Township arrested four monks from Tsenyi Monastery, Ngaba County, Sichuan Province.

In August 2000, the four monks covertly pasted independence leaflets and posters in a city in Ngaba County. In December of the same year, they repeated the leaflet-pasting activities in Marthang County.

Following the news of these pro-independence activities in the region, the officials raided Tsenyi Monastery and discovered some leaflets and wooden block prints.

Subsequently, Jigme (33)from Garsam Township, Jinpa (30) from Toema Township, Khedrup (45)from Tsaru Township and Kelsang (40) from Tsenyi Township were all arrested in March 2001. The present whereabouts of the four arrested monks remain still unknown.

Bhugon Monastery

Three monks from Bhugon Monastery, Chamdo Prefecture, were arrested in May 1997 for their involvement in pasting wall posters of pro-independence slogans.

The PSB officials took into custody Gonpo Gyaltsen (24), Ngawang Nyima (24) and Tsering Nyima (22) and detained them at Drayab for about a month. Later, they were transferred to Chamdo Detention Centre.

By October end, the Chamdo Intermediate People's Court sentenced Gyaltsen and Nyima to five years' imprisonment whereas Tsering Nyima received four years' prison sentences. The three are currently serving their sentences in Drapchi Prison.◆

Tax burden adds to rural poverty

A huge burden of tax is being levied on the residents of Gangkar Township, Tingri County, Shigatse Prefecture. The residents are mainly farmers who sustain on the limited crops they grow in the little fields allocated to them.

The farmers mainly grow wheat and beans and their average annual production values around 4000 yuan. The government has lifted the tax on crop in 1997 but started to levy tax on livestocks as payment for the grazeland; five yuan each for horse, a yuan each for sheep and two yuan each for their cattles. During winter every year, the village has to offer five sheep free of cost to the local government for the consumption of local officials.

Besides farming, the villagers rely heavily on income generated from porting luggage of foreign tourists who come to conquer the heights of mountain near the border between Nepal and Shakonpo. Porters get a total of 800 yuan, 600 yuan for upward and 200 yuan for downward trek, from which 20 yuan are collected as tax. However, the tax increased to 450 yuan this year, which was explained to the villagers as being used for developmental works in the village.

In another village of Guedor Po, most of the villagers live on loans with more than half of their source of income being taken away by the Chinese officials as taxes. The nine villages in the county have at least nine families each who are so impoverished that they hardly receive a day's square-meal.

Passang reported that there is no school in his village and the children had never been to school. Actually, there are about 80 children in his village who are of school-going age. He has a total of six children but all of them had no opportunity for schooling. Passang therefore brought two of his children to attend a school in India.

The Chinese officials too, has left no stone unturned to fine the families who have sent their children to study in India. In 2000, a campaign was launched in Gemar Township, Tingri County, to trace down the number of monks, nuns and children who have escaped to India. The families

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TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin 57

European Parliamentarian Delegation

Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of TCHRD, briefed 28 delegates from European Parliament including 11 parliamentarians on a visit to Dharamsala on 16 July 2001.

Mr. Nyandak presented the delegation with the current human rights situation in Tibet, more particularly on the EU policy on human rights in Tibet. He emphasised the fact that EU policy of bilateral engagement with China has failed to resolve human rights problem in Tibet.

The human rights abuses in Tibet, unlike in China, are linked invariably with the Tibetan freedom movement. Therefore, Mr. Nyandak urged the European parliamentarians to influence the EU member states to formulate separate policies for both China and Tibet to ensure better progress in the worsening human rights condition in Tibet. ◆

International Tibet Support Group Network

TCHRD met with 12-member delegation of ITSGN this month. In a two-hour discussion session with the members, the members were briefed on the present human rights condition in Tibet and the Centre's role and activities in the Tibetan community to date.

ITSGN is a body of Tibet related non-government organisation with a political mandate. Its core mission is to accelerate the worldwide Tibet movement on an international level.◆

Fulbright Scholars

Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, the Senior Prgramme Officer of the Centre, addressed a group of newly-selected Tibetan Fulbright Scholars on 9 July 2001.

They are leaving for various universities in the United States in August this year.

The group was briefed on how to present the case of human rights situation in Tibet to other audiences, in particular, to members of their respective universities. ◆

TCHRD Members

Nine individuals have joined TCHRD as members in July. As of July 2001, the total membership strength has reached 415.

The new members are Eric Blumenson, Vicki Burnttam, Sonam Topgyal, Tenzin Jigmey, Jigmey Tenzin, Wangdak Ganpo, Bhumgyal Dakpa, Allison Willits and Aaron Joseph.◆

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to adapt to the hot tropical Indian climate, Tsultrim fell ill constantly during his stay in India. He, therefore,decided to return to Tibet . While in Lhasa, he played the video cassettes that he had brought from India to some of his fellow friends from Chamdo region. It was after the very first screening of the cassette in July 1999 that the PSB officials arrested Trusltrim and subjected him to severe beatings and torture. In early 2000, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison.

Ngawang Tsultrim is originally from Sagang Township, Dzokhang County, Chamdo Prefecture.◆

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during the Cultural Revolution. The expelled nuns had to work on the families' field as they were left with no other alternatives.

Ngawang Choekyi, 21, is one of the twenty nuns who were expelled and returned to their homes after the nunnery was officially sealed in February 2001. Choekyi, who arrived at Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 9 June this year, wanted to join the monastery of Trichen Rinpoche in Shakonpo, Nepal. Owing to unavailability of separate facilities for nuns, Choekyi left for India to pursue her spiritual studies.◆

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who are found "guilty" in the eyes of Chinese officials were fined 700 yuan each but few escaped. As many as 40 children were found to be studying in schools and monasteries in India.

Pasang, 40, a resident of Gankar Township, Tingri County, Shigatse Prefecture says that his nine-member family had shares of land for only three members since his children were born after the division of farmland. Owing to his large family he had to buy extra cereals with around 1000-2000 yuan every year increasing the financial strain on his family.◆

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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.

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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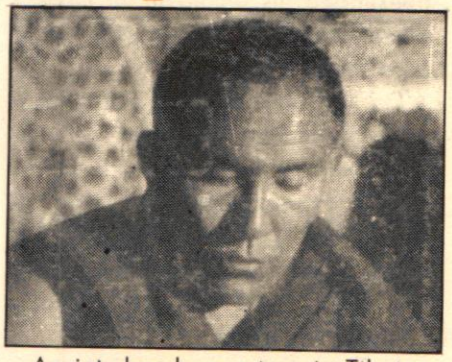
China continues to detain Chadrel Rinpoche



Anxiety has begun to grip Tibetans as Chadrel Rinpoche, the 62-year-old former abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery and Head of the Search Committee to identify the successor of the 10th Panchen Lama, failed to make an appearance after expiry of his six year prison term in May this year. Arrested on 17 May 1995 for "colluding with separatist forces", Chadrel Rinpoche received court sentence only after two years' detention.

According to information received by TCHRD, Tibetans in Lhasa and Shigatse, including the monks of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, are expressing grave concern over the dearth of news concerning Rinpoche's expected release, his present whereabouts and health condition. Chadrel Rinpoche's prison term of six years was due to expire in May 2001. The apprehension that Rinpoche might not actually be alive has become a daunting speculation.

According to article 47 of China's Criminal Law (CPL), it was clearly stipulated that the detention period, starting from the day of arrest, is counted in the term of prison sentence. Hence, in accordance with the Chinese law, Chadrel Rinpoche's six year prison term should have expired on 16 May 2001 since his arrest took place on 17 May 1995.

"The continued arbitrary detention of Chadrel Rinpoche is a manifestation of Beijing's total disregard of its domestic laws as well as international law. It is in fact a clear violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), signed by China in October 1998, that outlaws arbitrary detention", stated Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Executive Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, based in Dharamsala.

According to Tibet Information Network (TIN), the monitoring agency based in London, the Chinese authorities recently acknowledged the continued detention of Chadrel Rinpoche to a Polish parliamentary delegation, that visited Tibet from 8-10 August this year.

Gyaltsen Norbu, now a Deputy Party Secretary, told the delegates that "Chadrel Rinpoche is still serving prison term because he disclosed the secrets by giving out the name of the boy who was supposed to be the Panchen Lama before it was approved by the authorities". He also reportedly looked "visibly annoyed" when questioned about the whereabouts and present condition of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima (the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama).

On 14 May 1995, the Dalai Lama announced the then six-year old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. Three days later, the Chinese authorities arrested Chadrel Rinpoche and his assistant, Jampa Chung, from Chengdu Airport in Sichuan Province.

On 21 April 1997, after two years of incommunicado detention, Shigatse Intermediate People's Court held a closed trial and passed judgement on Chadrel Rinpoche and his assistant. In May 1997, Xinhua News, the official Chinese news agency, revealed that Rinpoche was sentenced in accordance with article 92, the first clause of article 186, and the 23, 24, 51, 64 articles and the second clause of the 59 article of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) Criminal Procedure Law.

Chadrel Rinpoche received six years' prison sentence and subsequent three years' deprivation of political rights for "conspiring to split the country" and "leaking state secrets". However, four months after the sentencing, Chen Jian, the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman, said that Chadrel Rinpoche was "ill and in hospital" and was not in custody.

Jampa Chung, the 50-year-old monk and assistant of Chadrel Rinpoche, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for

It was only around September 1997 that initial reports filtered about Rinpoche's place of detention. Previously detained in Trochu County (Ch: Heishui), Rinpoche was later imprisoned in Chuandong No. 3 Prison, Tazhu County, Sichuan Province, which holds highly sensitive political dissidents. Chadrel Rinpoche was reportedly kept after the sentencing in the top-secret compound, referred to as a "prison within the prison" sometime in late April or early May. In protest against the total prohibition of visitors and outside contacts, Rinpoche held hunger strike sometime in July. He was reportedly in very poor health.

Prior to his arrest, Chadrel Rinpoche held the posts of the Director of the Civil Administration Society, and Chairman of the Democratic Management Committee of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. Rinpoche was the member of National Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), and Vice-Chairman of the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") CPPCC.

In 1989, the Chinese authorities authorised him to head the official Search Committee to locate the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. Armed with Beijing's approval, Chadrel Rinpoche also maintained private communication with the Dalai Lama in order to locate the XI Panchen Lama.

By May 1996, Chadrel Rinpoche had been dismissed from all official posts because he had "gone against the basic principles and lost the political stand of a patriot" On 24 May 1996, Radio Lhasa announced that "in doing this, we have purged the CPPCC of bad elements and have made it clean".

Within days of the announcement in May 1995, the then six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima (the Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama) and his family disappeared from their home and taken into Chinese custody. To date, no government body, concerned organisation or independent observer has been allowed access to the world' youngest political prisoner.

Born on 25 April 1989 in Lhari County of Nagchu Prefecture, Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was recognised on 14 May 1995 by the Dalai Lama as the XIth Panchen Lama of Tibet, and given the name Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Trinley Phuntsok (and commonly referred to as Gedhun Choekyi Nyima). ◆

The politics of guiding tourist

A tourist guide was sacked and his employer fined when he was found discussing Tibetan politics with a group of foreign tourists.

Since 1998, Lobsang Dawa guided foreigners around Gyalthang (Ch: Zhongdian) County in Yunnan Province. In conjunction with other Tibetan guides, Dawa took about 10 groups of foreigners afield to Sadang (Ch: Lijang), along the way crossing the border between Tibet and China, where he introduced the foreigners to the basic concepts of Tibetan politics and history. He would appeal for their help in the fight for Tibetan freedom, and generally received a supportive response.

However, in 2000, a French group that Dawa had spoken to did not understand the implications and were openly discussing his remarks back at the hotel with Chinese tour guides. Consequenty, the information eventually reached the Chinese authorities of Gylathang, including his uncle, who advised him to keep quiet on these issues.

Approximately two weeks later, the Chinese police interrogated him as to why he had spoken to the foreigners on these issues and from where he had received the information. He niavely explained that he had been to India and learnt from the elderly Tibetans there, rather than having experienced these issues first hand. He was not treated badly during the session 'as the police knew his uncle, and because of this connection he escaped imprisonment.

Nevertheless, the Chinese authorities forced Lobsang, the hotel owner, to terminate Dawa's employment and also fined the hotel Y5000. He does not know if there were any additional consequences for them later on.

Dawa then operated independently without the knowledge of Chinese authorities. He took three to four groups of foreigners to Derong area. However, it was becoming very difficult for him to work. Therefore, with his uncle's help, Dawa obtained a Chinese passport. He said it is easier for Tibetans in that area to obtain Chinese passport as they are regarded as "ethnic Tibetans" and therefore, Chinese citizens.

He then quickly went to Lhasa where he stayed for one month before heading to Nepal without any difficulty. He rang his uncle recently who told him that the Chinese authorities are still hunting for him, even after five months. They have questioned his uncle about Dawa's whereabouts, and are keeping him under constant watch.

Dawa's first escape to India was in 1985 when he came to fulfill his ambition to become a monk. His parents desired for him to remain at home and run the house but Dawa's determination overrode their ambitions. He travelled to Lhasa, where relatives also attempted to convince him to stay.

In South India, he joined Drepung Monastery and remained there until 1989. He studied Buddhist Philosophy and Metaphysics. Recognising the need to improve his English, he then attended Bir Tibetan School for five months and simultaneously studied Tibetan. Following his studies, he returned to Nepal for the next two years where he worked as a part-time translator between Tibetan and Chinese for Taiwanese group.

Unhappy with his work situation in Nepal, Dawa returned to Tibet in 1992. The Chinese police arrested him at the border where he was questioned about his visit to India and Nepal. He was released the next day, as was the standard procedure at that time.

He worked in Lhasa as translator and guide for western tourist for the next two years, after which he returned to Kandze and began trading in mushroom and caterpillar fungus. He travelled often between Lhasa and Beijing without any problems and has also been to several other locations around China. ◆

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

A youth recieve three year sentence for voicing freedom slogans

Namdrol and Phuntsok Legmon

Phuntsok Legmon, layname Tseten Norbu, is originally from Toelung Dechen County in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). He became a monk of Taklung Monastery, located in the region north-west of Lhasa. He is currently 17 years old.

Every year, 10 March is commemorated in memory of the first Tibetan uprising in Lhasa that erupted in 1959 against the Chinese communist rule.

During such sensitive anniversaries, independence protests and poster pasting incidents often flare up causing huge embarassment to the Chinese authorities. Consequently, Chinese security forces attend known and suspected potential focus points in full force to avert such incidents.

It was during the 40th anniversary of 10 March 1959, in 1999, that Phuntsok Legmon and his friend Namdrol (layname Sonam Choedak) initiated an independence demonstration in the early afternoon. Despite heavy security presence, the two monks started their protest from northern end of Barkhor in Lhasa and called out for "Free Tibet", "Tibet is Independent", "Chinese quit Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama".

It is said that both Phuntsok Legmon and Namdrol wore caps and lay clothes to cover their identity as monks while protesting.

They were immediately intercepted by Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers who took them to the nearby police station. Namdrol tried to flee but was later caught. According to eye-witnesses, the monks were severely beaten with the use of batons by the police while they were on their way to the police station.

It was only recently that Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced the two monks to different terms of imprisonment, on charges of "inciting propaganda". Legmon was sentenced to three years and Namdrol recieved a four year sentence in prison. In Chinese-occupied Tibet, it has become quite common for Tibetans to be detained for as long as a year and more before any sentences are passed for their alleged crimes.

Despite the fact that both the monks recieved sentences for their political activities, the authorities continue to deny that they recieved sentences of any sort.

During a telephone interview that Associated Press, the news agency, had with an official from Lhasa Intermediate People's Court on 27 July, the officials deny any knowledge of sentencing Phuntsok Legmon and Namdrol. In the course of the interview, Zhang Jie, an official at the court, made a statement that "I am sure that we have never made any sentence as you mention in recent months".

Namdrol, a 22-year-old monk also from Taklung Monastery was born in Toelung Dechen County.

It is not yet known where the duo would be imprisoned. It is highly probable that both will soon be transferred to Drapchi Prison.◆

Religious repression in Drayab County

Religious repression is widely rampant in Drayab County, particularly acute in Drayab Peugue Monastery according to a recent arrival from Drayab County, Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR".

Photographs of the Dalai Lama are banned, and his name is forbidden to be spoken aloud. At all times, the term "Dalai Clique" or "splittist" must be used when referring to the Dalai Lama.

Every monk in the region is required to attend special political meetings in the monastery three times a year - every winter, spring and summer. In addition to this, up to three times a year, a "workteam" of around 10 members visit Peugue Monastery to conduct political "re-education" sessions for 5 to 10 days. During these sessions, the authorities insist that the monks denounce the Dalai Lama and the concept of Tibetan freedom.

Kunga, the informant, stated that the authorities would taunt and jeer the monks with eers such as: "trying to achieve the freedom of Tibet is like trying to build a stairway to the stars", "those fighting for freedom are just casting stones up into the sky", and "those writing slogans are just dropping rocks onto their own feet".

Hence, the monks usually claim total lack of understanding when questioned about the concept of freedom but stoutly refuse to denounce the Dalai Lama. However, even this stance sets up a conflict for many with their Buddhist beliefs, and many monks have felt compelled to leave the monastery due to this pressure.

The lay officials of Drayab County are also subjected to similar religious repression. During important religious festivals like Saga Dawa (the holy fourth holy month of the Tibetan calender), bans are imposed on circumambulation, burning incense, and visiting traditional holy sites, all of which are common religious practices among Tibetans.

Kunga related a locally well-known account of the suicide of a Peugue monk in 1996. Phurbu Audatsang, a monk in his 40's, committed suicide by jumping off a bridge into the local river during a "work team" session. He had refused to denounce the Dalai Lama, and consequently the "work team" decided to search his home for the banned pictures of the Dalai Lama. Along the way, Audatsang took the "work team" by surprise when he suddenly jumped from the bridge which they were crossing. He very well knew that they would discover his photographs.

Finally, Kunga also provided a list of past political prisoners from Drayab County.

1. Tsetse, 50, accountant monk from Puegue Monastery. He was arrested for possession of photographs of the Dalai Lama.in 1994. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Chamdo Prison the same year.

2. Jamyang Abo, in his 50's, a monk from Puegue Monastery. He was arrested for making a list of those responsible for destruction during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, particularly of the religious statues and artifects.In 1994, he recieved a three years' sentence in Chamdo Prison.

3. Tsedup, in his 40's, was arrested for listening to an audio cassette of the Dalai Lama's speech.He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Chamdo Prison in 1994.

4. Guepo Gyaltsen was arrested for pasting pro-independence slogans and sentenced to five years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison in 1996.

5. Nyima was a monk of about 30 years. He was arrested for pasting pro-independence slogans in 1996 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

6. Tenpa Wangchok, 28, was arrested for pasting pro-independence slogans and later sentenced to four years' imprisonment in 1996.

7. Nyima,a small-time businessman, was arrested for pasting pro-independence slogans. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in Chamdo Prison in 1997.

Kunga, the informant, is 21 years old and originally from Drayab County.◆

Four involved in leaflet distribution evade arrest

Four monks of Phumar Monastery made 1,800 copies of leaflets containing political slogans from wooden block prints in the year 2000.

In June 2000 at around 9 p.m. one evening, Dorjee, the informant and three friends pasted and distributed 1,800 political leaflets in the streets of Kandze County, Sichuan Province. Again in July, Dorjee and his friends repeated their leaflet distribution activity by printing more leaflets with the same contents.

The four involved in the leaflet distribution were Yeshi Dorjee, Sonam Wangyal, Rinchen Gonpo and Joenge Dhondup.

These political activities did not escape the notice of the local authorities. A police friend of the monastery head informed Dorjee about the matter by telephone, warning him of imminent arrest if they did not immediately flee. The monks left the monastery on 26 July 2000 and set off to different directions to avoid notice from the authorities.

Joenge Dhondup and Sonam Wangyal escaped to India in December 2000 and Rinchen Goepon is still in Tibet evading arrest. Dorjee fled to Nagpo, Kandze County, to finally make his escape into India after 11 month's hiding. Dorjee learnt that their rooms in the monastery were ransacked after their flight and few leaflets were found from the rooms of Dhondup and Goepon.

Dorjee reported that Chinese "work team" pay frequent visits to Phumar Monastery, which had a total strength of 80 monks, all of whom were originally from Kandze County. The monks were called for "re-education" meetings where they were told to oppose any "splittist activity" and the officials banned pictures of the Dalai Lama. Monks below the age of 18 were expelled from the monastery.

During visits of the "work team" which is about four times a year, the monks hide photographs of the Dalai Lama and put on display they leave.

Dorjee reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal with the assistance of a guide, to whom he paid 1500 yuan.◆

Permits mandatory for Mt. Kailash circumambulation

Shedup Yonten, a 26-year-old nomad from Bayang County, Shigatse "TAR", reported that there have been about 60 Chinese security guards stationed at Mt. Kailash for the past three years.

A seven-room accommodation building was constructed for the guards, indicating that this is to be a permanent station. The main purpose of this guard outpost is to issue permits now required while circumambulating the Mt. Kailash route. The three-day pass costs Y18 but people over 50 years of age are charged only Y14. A new permit must be purchased after every three days.

Tibetans in the area are highly offended that possession of the Dalai Lama's photograph is rendered illegal by the Chinese authorities. Yonten reported that in early 2001, a former monk from Goyar Monastery, Rinzen Phuntsok, confronted the authorities. He told them that being in a monastery is pointless as the main sources of worship, namely the Dalai Lama and the Karmapa, are denied to the Tibetans. The Chinese response was that Tibetans were free to worship other Lamas. In March, Phuntsok was taken from Yonten's village for interrogation, and since then details of his current whereabouts and present condition remain unknown.

Yonten came to know about the Tibetan independence movement outside Tibet only five years ago, when some of his local villagers returned from India and spread the information. The Chinese are extremely concerned about suppressing local sentiment concerning freedom activities. Consequently, Yonten's village is subjected to bi-annual census and three to four meetings a year, which focussed primarily on opposing the "Dalai Clique" and portraying the Chinese as great leaders and the saviour of Tibetans.

The informant also described how taxation in Bayang County has constantly increased since 1981. The local population feels the taxation levels are extremely high. Although the Chinese authorities allocate elaborate names such as 'Poverty Eradication Tax', there has been no improvement in the livelihoods of the local families.◆

Compulsory unpaid labour enforces rural poverty

Compulsory unpaid labour is widely prevalent in Drayab County and in most parts of Chamdo Prefecture, according to Ngawang Choedon (identity protected) who recently arrived from Tibet.

The Chinese authorities under the banner "to uplift the poor and backward Tibetans towards prosperity", enforce compulsory labour system.In reality, the residents of Drayab County reel under extreme poverty like never before. Furthermore, many young children aged between 12 and 16 are involved in the enforced labour.

Drayab region has a total of around 500 families, and nearly 700 inhabitants are forced to attend the compulsory labour. PSB officers monitor this compulsory work, which involves building new houses, and felling trees for agricultural purposes, but mainly consists of road construction. The work starts at 8.a.m and continues till 6.p.m, and often even much later, with barely a 15-minute lunch break.

This system of compulsory unpaid labour started in early 1997 in Drayab. During the initial six month period, all labourers received a wage, although very meagre. However, after this initial period nobody has been been paid since.

The farmers are made to work almost six months per year, which makes life extremely difficult as they already have a high workload; just in order to survive. It is exacerbated by the fact that there is no set timeframe for the compulsory labour either. The people can be called out at anytime, during any season - it is solely at the inclination of the authorities.

The Chinese authorities have designated that every family member who is above 18 and below 60 years of age is required to participate in this compulsory labour. However, according to Choedon, there are many instances of young children below 18 who perform this hard labour.

To help their parents who are either very ill or too poor to afford the Y300 per month as fine for non-attendance, some children are compelled to make false claim that they are 18 years. Other parents are unable to attend as they are too busy working to ensure their family's survival to afford the time demanded.

There is no leniency shown whatsoever, even on serious medical grounds. It is a situation of "attend work or else pay fine, there is no alternative," says Choedon. The authorities are apparently well aware that these children are in fact younger than the minimum age designation, but nevertheless encourage the practise. They know that the families have no funds to pay the fines, and this way the Chinese are not liable to their superiors for failing to enforce the quotas.

The majority of the people of Drayab are very poor and have no cash with which to pay fines. Most of them have already sold all their ornaments and valuable assets to pay their previous fines. They are now having to give their subsistence, butter and meat, in lieu of money, which the authorities have conceded to accept.

As Ngawang laments "We cannot go every single time to attend the compulsory labour. We also have to make our own living to eat and survive". In desperation, quite a few have resorted to begging and have headed to Lhasa. However, even this right of relocation has been denied, as they are removed forcefully back to Drayab by PSB officers.

Ngawang Choedon further says that construction of new houses and roads are not meant for the benefit of the locals, despite the feeble attempts by the Chinese authorities to convince them, but are actually for Chinese migrants. Ngawang said, " We are always told that many people will come here, but we really don't know who will come."◆

Poster pasting incident results in detention

Kyidup, 21, from Rokta Township, Sog County, was arrested in mid-April 2001. Recent information from Tibet indicate that he is currently held under detention at Nagchu Detention Centre.

In early March this year, he solely pasted pro-independence slogans which read "Tibet is independent" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" at Nagchu Motor Depot no. 1.

After nearly a month long investigation, the PSB officers arrested Kyidup. It is widely feared that he might recieve a heavy prison sentence owing to his involvement in political activities deemed dangerous by the authorities.

At the age of ten, Kyidup joined primary school at Rawak township where he studied for six years. He then studied in Tungshu Middle School in Sog County for five years. ◆

Taxation and other issues in Saga County

Since the beginning of 1990s, heavy taxes have been levied on almost everything in Trhango Village, Saga County, Shigatse Prefecture, stated Sonam Phuntsok, who reached India in late June this year. Phuntsok also reported on many pressing issues, from the birth control policy and substandard education to compulsory labour and religious restrictions in his area.

Phuntsok gave some examples to substantiate how many taxes are levied on animals and certain items. For example:

Wool - 2 kama per jama = 20%
(10 kama = 1jama = 2kg)
Butter - 3 kama per jama =30%

Animal tax: For animals within the allocated limit; Yuan 2 per goat; Yuan 6 per sheep;Yuan 5 for every other domestic animals.

Approximate value of animals: Sheep/goats : Yuan 140-400; Yak : Yuan 1200; Horse: Yuan 800 - Yuan 4000 (depends on the individual animal)

Though taxes usually vary from area to area, every village in Trhango area as well as residents in Dzongha and Deba villages in Kyirong County are subjected to these same taxes. The taxes are collected during a yearly meeting. The authorities claimed that the taxes would be going towards the alleviation of poverty by year 2000. Phuntsok pointed out that it is already 2001 and he says that poverty is actually getting worse than before.

The tax collection enforcement system is very strict, but the allocation of the livestock limit seems to be arbitrary. However, all livestock levels must be annually reduced by 30% either by selling to slaughterhouses or occasionally to those who buy animals to save its life. This potentially means that if a family has few poor breeding years, the livestock number could be dramatically reduced and possibly fall a below sustainable level. These animal limits are supposedly imposed to protect the pasturelands from overgrazing.

Enforced labour is prevalent in Phuntsok's area. Every person over the age of three years is allocated a value of 60 points each year. Therefore, his family of nine members accumulates a total of 540 points. These points must be negated by an equivalent amount of work, where one days' labour equals three points. This labour includes the construction and repair of roads, houses and bridges, all of which are distinctly heavy labour. Family members must cover for any deficits in the total points due to any person's inability to work, or otherwise they are fined yuan 60 per point.

Phuntsok knew that in 1998, the three -child per family birth control policy was set in nomadic areas. Though previously enforced in urban areas, now the policy has become quite widespread. Women with extra children are forced to undergo abortions and medicines are dispensed. However, those women who are not healthy enough for abortions are allowed to give birth but are subjected to a fine of Yuan 1500. Excess children are deprived of all rights and privileges including education, healthcare, rations and the family's property share.

Tenzin Lochoe, Phuntsok's 32-year-old sister was taken to Trhango district hospital in September 1997 for enforced sterilisation. Her husband and Phuntsok were present during the operation that cost yuan 500. His sister stayed in hospital for two weeks and was advised by the medical personnel not to work for the following three months after the operation, which is apparently an abnormally long recovery period. All the villagers are against the birth control policy and the procedure it entails.

In Rela Village, which is two days journey from Trhango Village, Sonam heard of two women who gave birth even after undergoing forced sterilisation. In other areas, IUD's (Intra-Uterine Device) are used for birth control, and the Chinese are claiming that these are functional for 15 years, not the standard 3-5 years. These are being placed in older women, usually above 30. By the time they are removed the person is beyond child-bearing age. However, unsurprisingly, there are often problems being caused by these devices, necessitating a visit to the hospital for their removal.

Phuntsok strongly feels that the Chinese authorities are enforcing substandard education in his area. After 1996, Trhango Municipality built a school that teaches upto class three and accommodates 60 students. The school teaches Chinese, Tibetan and Maths. However, the standard of teaching is so poor that the villagers consider it a showpiece rather than a functional school, and believe that an education there is worse than no education at all.

Chinese authorities designate a number of students to attend this school from each particular village. If the number of potential students exceeds this enforced limit, then the students are selected through lottery process. Sonam's 12-year-old brother is currently at the school.

Many of the richer families prefer to pay

Continued on page 7

TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

TCHRD release report on Drapchi Prison

On 21 August, TCHRD released a report on Drapchi Prison in both English and Tibetan languages. A media briefing was also held on the same day which was attended by both local Tibetan and international media personnel. The english report is titled "Drapchi : Tibet's Most Dreaded Prison".

The report provides insight into one of the most notorious prisons in Chinese-occupied Tibet, based on reliable information gathered over the years.

Contrary to a recent claim made by a top-level official that Tibet has currently only 115 Tibetan political prisoners, TCHRD recorded 252 known Tibetan political prisoners as of June 2001. From the total figure, 129 political prisoners remain incarcerated in Drapchi Prison alone, including 26 female political prisoners.

Since 1987, 27 deaths have occurred in Drapchi Prison, and 47 political prisoners have received sentence extensions on alleged charges of non-conformity and disobedience to prison rules and regulations.

The report details 21 protest incidents within Drapchi Prison, both major and minor, initiated by individuals or a group as a whole. The largest and consequently most violently suppressed of all protests have been the May 1998 protests that resulted in the known death of eight political prisoners and sentence extension of many more.

Drapchi Prison has, over the years, mutely witnessed Chinese brutality and beatings, deaths and deceit, from the days of Chinese invasion in the 50's, to the infamous Cultural Revolution of 60's and 70's, to the 80's active pro-independence period, and up till the present time - where the passion of the incarcerated Tibetans still burns just as brightly. ◆

Talk on human rights in Tibet

The Executive Director of TCHRD, Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, met this month with a group of students from various universities throughout America.

Information on Tibetan human rights was presented and an active discussion followed. Mr. Zayul was pleased at the success of the meeting and the level of interest and concern expressed by the student group.◆

TCHRD members

We would like to welcome Vicki Ireland, R.P. Sinha, Spencer Goertz Giffen, Dhondup Choephel Geleg, Tenzin Dawa, John Kittridge, Jennifer Mae Nuttall, Victoria Dean, Alan Cantes, Kirsti Braarud, Tsering Choemphel, Passang, Bhuchung D. Sonam, Jeanet vander Wonde, Tsewang Norbu, Sonam Dhondup, Gabriella Holland, Susan Nesbitt, Sylvia Farlasovska, Prof. Anand Kumar, Manoj Kumar Singh and Bharati Puri as new members of TCHRD.

As of August 2001, TCHRD's membership has increased to 435.◆

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Yuan 1500 fine for refusing to send their children to school, whereas the poorer families have no option but to reluctantly send their children. Apart from regarding the schooling as offering nothing beneficial, the villagers are also deprived of a working member family. Additionally, the families themselves have to bear the costs of child's food, accommodation and tuition.

Phuntsok lamented that Tibetans in his area face religious restrictions. All religious activities require permission from Pema Dhadon, the local military base leader. The villagers apply to the village head who in turn seeks permission from Pema Dhadon, who would then delegate specific days for the religious activity. Photographs of the Dalai Lama were totally banned. There have been cases where the Chinese officials trampled on the banned photos once they are forcefully seized. The informant himself possessed two photos of the Dalai Lama. Before the photo raids, he went up into the hills and hid the photos inside a stupa.

Sonam Phuntsok comes from a family of nine nomads, and has never received any education at all. There were no schools in his area till 1996. Trhango area actually accommodates six villages, each consisting of approximately 60 families. Phuntsok undertook small business for four years, horse dealing and trading goods such as clothing and rations between Shigatse and Tingri. For engagement in small business, a permit and business card is required.

Phuntsok wanted to seek an audience with the Dalai Lama. Moreover, the ban on photographs of both the Dalai Lama and the Karmapa as well as stifling heavy taxation were becoming intolerable for him. Therefore, Phuntsok decided to leave for India. ◆

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Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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HUMAN RIGHTS update

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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

SEPTEMBER 2001 VOLUME VI NUMBER 9

Nepali authorities imprison 10 Tibetans to 10 years for lack of official documents

On 20 August 2001, in a restaurant in Boudhnath, Kathmandu, Nepali police arrested two monks for failing to possess appropriate residential documents.

Two days later, eight Tibetan students (four male, four female) were arrested by Nepali security personnel at Thangkot checkpoint, the largest checkpoint on the Nepal-India border. The students were attempting to travel through Nepal to return to Tibet after finishing their schooling in India. They were arrested for failing to possess the relevant travel documents.

Tibetans in Tibet require three official documents from the Chinese authorities to leave the country, which are expensive and difficult to obtain. People who wish to travel to India or return from India are looked upon with suspicion because they are suspected of having association with the "Dalai clique" and bringing back "splittist" ideas. Consequently, most Tibetans leave Tibet without official permission and therefore cannot obtain appropriate documentation for entry into Nepal. Although there are great risks involved, every year many Tibetans cross through Nepal on their way to India to visit family or seek audience with the Dalai Lama, attend schools, or flee from Chinese persecution in Tibet.

On 23 August 2001, all ten arrested Tibetans were fined by the Nepali Immigration Department, operating under the Ministry of Home. Huge fines were imposed and any non-payment carried a default sentence of 10 years' imprisonment.

The eight Tibetan students were each fined US $1,365 and an additional penalty of 20,000 Nepali Currency (NC) for illegally crossing the border, totalling NC Rs 121,897.25 per person.

The two Tibetan monks received an even harsher penalty. Their sentencing papers state "Your entry into Nepali territory without a visa and valid travel documents is liable to a punishment/fine of US$2,215.00 (equivalent to NC Rs 165,349.75) under section 3 (1) of the Foreign Regulation Act of 2040 [Nepalese calendar] and an additional penalty of NC Rs 40,000 under section 10 (4). You are therefore, ordered to deposit a total fine of NC Rs 205,349.75, failing payment of which you shall be liable to imprisonment up to 10 years from 2058/5/6 to 2068/5/5 [Nepalese calendar] under section 53 and 38 (4)." (translated from original text in Nepali)

Given that a standard annual salary in Nepal is around NC Rs 30,000-60,000, these fines appear extremely severe. Considering that these Tibetans are students and monks, without any sources of income, there is no possibility that they would have the funds to pay such exorbitant fines. All ten have therefore now been imprisoned.

The Tibetans are reportedly being held in the largest prison in Kathmandu, in Dili Bazaar. Tibetan officials in Nepal, the UNHCR, and the US Embassy in Nepal have attempted to intervene with the Nepali authorities to obtain the Tibetans' release at the earliest possible date.

The two monks were formerly with the Sera monastery in India. Their names are

1. Sonam Lama
2. Sechya Lama

The eight students are from Amdo in Tibet and had visited India for schooling. Their identities are as follows:

3. Sangye Dhondup	Male	19 years
4. Lobsang Dorjee	M	19
5. Dorjee Tashi	M	21
6. Drukar	M	26
7. Tenzin Yangzom	F	19
8. Sheri Tso	F	23
9. Tsepel	F	25
10. Kyizom	F	22

Kyizom is being held at the Tibetan Reception Centre, Kathmand, under surety, to receive treatment for a heart condition. She will be returned to the Nepali Immigration Department when her health stabilises.

This type of arrest and penalty appears to be a recent instigation by the Nepali authorities as the first known case occurred only 14 months previously. On 22 June 2000, Gendun Samten, a monk from Rebkong, Amdo in North Eastern Tibet, was also arrested by Nepali security officials. He was arrested in Jiri, one hour's drive south of the Nepal-Tibet border and similarly charged with failure to possess residential papers. Gendun Samten was initially fined NC Rs 50,000 (US$675). When he failed to pay this amount, he was imprisoned. After several months, he was given the option of paying in instalments of US$25 per day until a total of US$900 was reached. As he couldn't afford these repayments, Gendun Samten is currently in Jiri Prison for a default sentence of ten years.

In a interview that the Centre conducted with the Mr. Kelsang Chime, the Director of the Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal, it came to light that Nepali police arrested six more Tibetan escapees in May this year at Barabisi. The detainees were reportedly handed over to Chinese police at Dram border. The identities of the detainees are still unavailable as yet.◆

Obituary of a former political prisoner

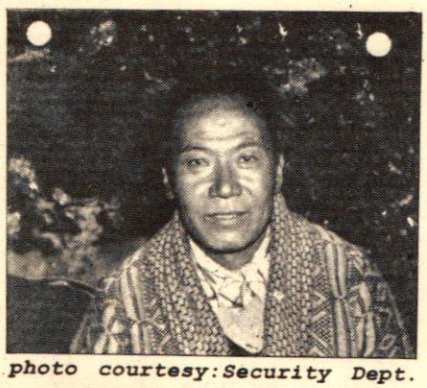

photo courtesy:Security Dept.

Namgyal Tashi, a 66-year-old former political prisoner and father of Ngawang Sangdrol, the longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet, passed away at his home in Lhasa on 20 August 2001. Due to maltreatment that he received in prison, Tashi had frail health and was reportedly receiving medical treatment.

Namgyal Tashi spent eight years in Drapchi Prison for alleged political activities, and was released at the end of 1998. Following a flag-raising incident at Samye Monastery, and suspected involvement in other pro-independence activities, Tashi and his son, along with four other relatives, were arrested in June 1991.

For his active pro-independence involvement in the 1959 March Lhasa Uprising and the Cultural Revolution, Tashi was detained for many years in "reform through labour" camps. He endured harsh beatings and torture during his imprisonment. Tashi is originally from Chideshol Towship, Gongkar County, Lhoka Prefecture, "TAR".

Ngawang Sangdrol, the second youngest of his eight children, was detained a year after Tashi's arrest. The 24-year-old former nun of Garu Nunnery is serving a total of 21 years in Drapchi Prison for exercising her right to freedom of expression and participation in "separatist activities" ◆

A 12-year sentence for pasting posters

In 1999, a monk was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for pasting up pro-independence posters. Gonpo, a former monk of Tawu Monastery in Tawu County, Kandze "TAP", Sichuan Province, aged 18 years, pasted independence posters on the buildings of a Chinese police station, a bank and on electric poles in 1994.

Five years later, Gonpo was arrested by four police officers while he was at the Tawu market. He was taken to Tawu Police Station and detained for 10 months, after which he was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for involving in "political activities". He is presently serving his sentence in a "reform-through-labour" (Ch: laogai) camp at Sheduk Kyang, which is a day's drive from Tawu County. He is reportedly kept in isolation from the other prisoners.

In addition to these kinds of arrests, the Chinese authorities in Tawu County recently announced that all monks and nuns are required to supply photographs of themselves and allow inspections of their rooms, or else face closure of their institutions.

Of the two nunneries in Tawu County, Tsalpo Nunnery was closed down in mid-2000 owing to its refusal to abide by the announcement. The doors of the nunnery are officially closed with red ribbon bearing the seal of the local authorities. All the 300 nuns returned to their families. Palmo and Tashi Lhamo (aged 17 and 18 years respectively), two nuns from Tsalpo Nunnery, are presently working in the fields with their families.

According to a recent information, Raptrol Nunnery, with approximately 300 nuns, faces possible closure owing to the defiance of the Chinese order by the nuns. The officials pay frequent visits to the nunnery to collect photographs of the nuns who decline to toe the official line.

Lobsang Tsundue, the informant, had been herding and working in the fields since his childhood. None in his family has ever attended school. Though there are three schools in his locality, Tsundue was unable to join due to exorbitant fees. He reached Nepal on 17 August 2001.◆

Two separate bomb incidents rock Kandze "TAP"

TCHRD has received information from refugees of two bomb incidents in Kandze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture".

A bomb explosion rocked a building complex in Zakang Township, Derge County, Kandze "TAP", in August 2000. Despite the powerful nature of the blast, no casualties were reported.

In the search and investigation operation that followed, the needle of suspicion pointed to the monks of Guesa Monastery, located in the area. In due course of time, a Tibetan hunter by the name of Guepon Wangchuk was arrested and subsequently detained for six months on grounds of suspicion.

Due to his limited source of income and financial constraints, Wangchuk hunts for a living. He earlier participated in protest relating to Geshe Sonam Phuntsok's arrest in 1999. Along with many other monks, he was detained for six days and suffered tremendous torture at the hands of Chinese policemen at that time.

He stated later, "The police came to the detention cell. They kicked and

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profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

A monk earns life imprisonment for "endangering state security"

Sey Khedup is currently 27 years old. He is originally from Yona Township, Sog County, Nagchu Prefecture, "TAR". Born to Thinlay and Choeyang Chozo, he has three brothers and seven sisters.

During his childhood, Sey Khedup studied in the local primary school at Yona Township for five years. In 1994, he became a monk of Sog Tsendhen Monastery, which is one of the biggest monasteries in the area.

In March 2000, Chinese authorities arrested six Tibetans from Sog County, including Sey Khedup, on different dates and locations. The other five arrested were Tenzin Choewang (64), Tsering Lhagon (41), Yeshi Tenzin (33), Trakru Yeshi (45) and Gyurmey (29).

The Chinese authorities viewed Sey Khedup with suspicion regarding his level of loyalty to the "Chinese motherland". Sog Tsendhen Monastery is noted for being the most politically active monastery in the area. There have been scores of arrests and imprisonments from there in connection with independence activities.

Independence leaflets printed on wooden block stencils had begun to appear in and around the monastery, calling for the Chinese to leave Tibet and to give the Tibetans the freedom that is due. As Sey Khedup was carpenter and carved wooden block stencils in the monastery, he was suspected of being involved in these past political activities.

After his arrest in March 2000, Sey Khedup was taken to Sog County Detention Centre. After few days, he was returned to Nagchu Detention Centre where he underwent an extended period of interrogation in an attempt by the officials there to extract a confession.

Until his trial, his whereabouts remained completely unknown to the family. Upon learning it later on, the officers denied visitation rights to his family members, who underwent as harrowing an experience as the detainee himself.

Exactly nine months later, in mid-December, the Nagchu Intermediate People's Court held a public trial for Sey Khedup and the other detainees. All of them were charged with colluding with the "Dalai splittist clique and carrying out activities endangering state security". The court produced independence posters, wooden block prints, and cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama as evidence of the charges levied against them.

Sey Khedup received the harshest sentence of life imprisonment. It is presumed that this was because he claimed sole responsibility for all the charges brought against them. The harsh sentence could also be attributed to his skills and background in the work of carpentry and carving on the wooden printing blocks.

It is believed that the authorities closely monitored the movements and activities of the detainees with the tacit cooperation of an insider from Sog Tsendhen Monastery. Owing to its past political activities, monks there are under strict surveillance and restricted freedom of movement.

After the sentencing to life imprisonment, Sey Khedup was transferred to Drapchi Prison, where he remains currently incarcerated. ◆

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Derge County farmers reel under enforced plantation

The practice of enforced plantation has been rampant in Zakong Township in Derge County since mid-2000. Lobsang Namshi, a recent escapee from Tibet, reported that farmers in his neighbourhood face constant threat of their land being confiscated by the local government and the farmers are forced to plant vegetation on the confiscated lands.

The farmers have to give a certain portion of their total landholding to the government. They receive some compensation but it is insufficient. For example, in return for one and half mu of land, the government compensates Namshi's family with 436 gyama (unit of measurement equivalent to 500 grams) rice and 437 gyama wheat per year.

Four out of Namshi's seven-member family, aged over19 years, holds a certain portion of land. The plantation drive is a huge strain on the family's meagre source of income. By the end of 2000, Lobsang's family was forced to move to Lhasa to beg on the streets. To make matters worse, the beggars in Lhasa now have to pay 6 yuan every month to the local Police Station or face arrest.

Under Zakong Township, there are nine villages; Sadrong Village, Dotha Village, Nyenge Village, Gaye Village, Gaye Yada Village, Yulo Village, Hotha Village, Thongchu and Grana Village. In Grana Village, there are about 30 families, and approximate total population of 130 Tibetans. All the farmers in these villages have had to sacrifice some part of their land towards the enforced plantation campaign.

The whole campaign has invoked a mixed reaction from the farmers. Some farmers fear that the government will cease the compensation after few years. The farmers' greatest fear is that the government will eventually take all their land for enforced plantation.

Lobsang Namshi hails from a farming community in Zakong Township, Derge County, Kandze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"). He enrolled in Guesa Monastery in Kandze "TAP" and studied for three years from 1998 to 2001. He reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 13 September 2001 and plans to join Sera Monastery in South India.◆

Human cost of the Chinese birth control policy

Losa Kyi, who used to work for the Family Planning Committee, reported that the Chinese authorities strictly implements a two-child per family policy in Xinghai (Tib: Tsigorthang) County, Tsolho Prefecture, Tsongon Province.

The local authorities use forced sterilisation, IUD (intra-uterine device) implantation and dispensing of contraceptive pills. The authorities even determine the timing of the birth of the second child. Having unauthorised children results in the imposition of exorbitant fines and total denial of the rights usually entitled to a child e.g. food rations, access to education and health care.

In Xinghai County, 70 percent of the population are Tibetans, the remainder consisting of Han Chinese and Hui Muslims. The Chinese authorities set a maximum limit on the number of children born annually and also enforce a minimum gap of two to three years between children.

Women who already have one child are constantly reminded of either the need to sterilise or the exact period when they are allowed to give birth to their second child. For any extra child, the authorities fine the family 3,000 to 4,000 yuan. The poor families are sometimes compelled to sell their domestic herds to meet the payment of this fine.

Approximately, 100-200 cases of forced sterilisation are reported every year from this area. The operations, which are usually performed in the nearby county hospitals, cost nearly 1,000 yuan. Sometimes the doctors themselves go to the villages to perform these operations. The operation costs less for healthier women than for those with a history of illness.

Many Tibetan women have suffered permanent disabilities or death from these involuntary sterilisation and contraception procedures. Generally, contraceptive pills are distributed free of cost whereas the insertion of an IUD device cost a patient approximately 50 yuan.

At the age of seven, Losa Kyi was admitted to her local primary school, after which she studied at the County Middle School. Later, she enrolled in Tsolho ("TAP") Medical School where she studied medicine for three years. Upon graduation in July 1993, she was given job at the Xinghai County Nursing Hospital. Since 1995, she was employed in the Family Planning Committee of Xinghai County.

Losa Kyi left Tibet in June 2001 with her sole child and reached Dharamsala in August 2001. She escaped to India so that she can educate her child in Tibetan language, culture, and religion along with a modern education. She also has plans to study Tibetan language herself. ◆

An arrest of a Tibetan PLA

The Chinese authorities in Nagchu Prefecture arrested a member of the Peoples' Liberation Army for pasting up independence leaflets.

According to reliable information received from Tibet, the Public Security Bureau officers initially arrested a Tibetan named Kochok in March 2001 for pasting pro-independence leaflets in the Nagchu area of the "Tibet Autonomous Region". The leaflets which were written both in Chinese and Tibetan languages read "Tibet is an independent country", and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama"

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TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

Historic moment for TCHRD at World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa

For the first time in the history of Tibetan NGOs, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received UN accreditation to attend the World Conference on Racism (WCAR) held recently at Durban, South Africa. Three staff members of the Centre participated in the conference: Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Executive Director, Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Senior Programme Officer, and Mr. Jampa Monlam, Field Officer.

At the first Tibet Briefing during the preliminary NGO Forum organised by the Tibetan delegation, Jampa Monlam presented his personal account of life as a political prisoner in Chinese-occupied Tibet. Other Speakers at the Briefing were Ela Gandhi, Member of Parliament, South Africa; Jampel Choesang, the Representative of the Office of Tibet, South Africa; John Ackerly, President of International Campaign for Tibet; and Xiao Qiang, the Director of Human Rights in China.

During the course of the NGO Forum, the TCHRD organised a panel discussion regarding the People under Foreign Occupation. Representatives of Palestine, Kurdistan, Aceh, West Papua, Eastern Turkestan, and Tibet exchanged views on the suffering of their peoples living under foreign occupation. The meeting, conducted in an informal atmosphere, decided to organise collaborative follow-up events in the near future. Both Mr. Nyandak and Ms. Aukatsang participated in the discussion.

On the same day, the Tibetan delegation to the WCAR organised a Chinese-Tibetan Dialogue on Racism. Chinese and Tibetan delegation to the NGO Forum held an informal discussion on how the two communities can develop a better understanding on the racism issue in the future. Jampa Monlam of TCHRD was among the Tibetans participating in this dialogue.

TCHRD staff at WCAR

TCHRD worked hard with the other Tibetan delegations to ensure that the NGO Declaration included paragraphs relating specifically to the Tibetan situation. The members of the Tibetan delegations lobbied all caucuses and the Tibetan issue received a high level of support from many of the attending delegations. However, in the final draft, all wording relating to the Tibet issue had been inexplicably deleted. Following further intensive lobbying and with the continued level of support, particularly from the Asia-Pacific caucus, not only were the three paragraphs reinstated into the NGO Declaration, but an additional four paragraphs were included into the Programme of Action.

Consequently, in the Programme of Action, in one of the paragraphs on the Tibetan issue, the NGO Forum calls "on all states to exert pressure on the Chinese government to open negotiations with the Tibetan government-in-exile, headed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in order to find a mutually acceptable and lasting solution to the situation in Tibet" Included in the NGO Declaration is to "recognise the situation of the six million Tibetan people suffering from 50 years's of Chinese occupation who continue to suffer institutionalised forms of racial discrimination under the Chinese occupation, and condemn actions of the Chinese government that continues to exploit, explore and and extract the rich mineral resources of Tibet, causing irreversible damage to the fragile eco-system on the Tibetan plateau".

At the following official WCAR conference, TCHRD closely followed the proceedings of two Working Groups, on Draft Declaration and Draft Programme of Action. These groups negotiated the adoption of the two documents in particular and due attention was paid to the developments surrounding the paragraphs with explicit references to foreign occupation, colonialism and population transfer.

In yet another historic move, Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul delivered a three-minute oral intervention to the Plenary session of the III World Conference Against Racism (WCAR). The statement was delivered in the name of TCHRD, but was actually on behalf of the four NGOs accredited to the WCAR, namely the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), the Worldview International Foundation (WIF), and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation(IFR). The Foreign Occupation Caucus of the NGO Forum, Human Rights in China, the Tibetan Women's Association, and the Tibetan Youth Congress, also associated themselves with the statement.

In the joint statement, Mr. Nyandak appealed to the WCAR to recognise Tibet as a de facto colony of China. He expressed grave concern over institutionalised and cultural discrimination implemented and encouraged by the Chinese government against the Tibetan people, as a direct result of foreign occupation. He further requested all delegations to include China in the country-specific references in the Declaration, for the widespread and institutionalised racism committed against the Tibetan people over the past fifty years.

Staff members of TCHRD gained another opportunity to present oral statements to the Plenary Session of the Third World Conference Against Racism, when Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, presented a three-minute statement on behalf of the Asia Pacific Caucus. In her statement, she mentioned that the on-going illegal occupation of Tibet continues to perpetrate highly discriminatory practices against the Tibetans, enforced population transfer, and oppressive state control over every sphere of existence of the Tibetan people, including religion, education and political decision-making.

On 4 September, as a follow-up to the Tibetan Vigil during the NGO Forum, the Tibetan delegation organised another Vigil outside the ICC Building, the venue of the official WCAR session. Carrying a huge banner, "China's Tibet - The World's Largest Remaining Colony" and placards which included, "Racism Begins in Beijing Too!", members of the Tibetan delegation received a lot of media attention and support from the participants in the conference.

The Tibetan presence in Durban received both local and international media coverage. Major newspapers in Durban and other cities of South Africa ran feature articles on the Tibetan issue, and the participation of the Tibetan delegation to the NGO Forum and WCAR. The Natal Witness, published from the city of Pietermaritzburg, ran a feature article on Jampa Monlam, on 5 September with the heading,"Soft voices taking on Chinese Racism".◆

TCHRD's Executive Director appointed Kalon

Mr. Nyandak making oral statement at the WCAR

On 19 September 2001, Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the 36-year-old Executive Director of TCHRD, was appointed as one of the three kalons of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Prof.Samdhong Rinpoche, the first directly elected Kalon Tripa in the history of Tibetan democratisation, made the announcement following unanimous approval from the members of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD). The oath-taking ceremony being duly over, Mr. Nyandak's portfolios include two departments: the Finance Department and the Health Department.

Mr. Lobsang Nyandak has been the Executive Director of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy since its establishment in 1996. He has played an instrumental role in guiding the Centre from a small independent monitoring organisation to one of the internationally respected and recognised NGOs on the world platform today.

It is a measure of Centre's success that it gained UN accreditation to attend the recently concluded World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa. The Centre has played, and will continue to play, a crucial role in monitoring and disseminating information on human rights situation in Tibet, and lobbying the international community for support.

In 1996, Mr. Nyandak was elected Member of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies representing the Kham Province, the post that he held till 2001. Mr. Nyandak was also the Vice-President/ Secretary of the National Democratic Party of Tibet during the same period. His earlier services included five years' tenure as the Secretary and Joint Secretary of the Tibetan Youth Congress from 1990 to 1995.

The staff members of both the main office and the branch office in Kathmandu, along with all the past and present volunteers, extend heartiest congratulations to Mr. Nyandak and wish him a successful, productive and meaningful tenure in the Kashag. While the Centre will miss Mr. Nyandak's invaluable experience and guidance, we are excited about the new opportunities that he now has to explore in the furtherance of Tibetan cause.

We also congratulate Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, the Kalon (Tripa) for the Department of Security and Department of Information and International Relations; Mr. Thupten Lungrig, the Kalon for the Department of Education and Department of Religion and Culture; and Mr. Lobsang Nyima, the Kalon for the Department of Home. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavour.◆

Dear subscribers,

Due to high level of significant activities undertaken by the TCHRD this month, extra pages have been allocated to share the news, with you. The Centre wiil revert to the standard format in the forthcoming Update issues. Thank you.◆

"Future with Asia" NGO Conference

Ms. Chokey at the conference

Ms. Tenzin Chokey, English Researcher at the Centre, attended a four-day conference organised by Sweden International Development Agency (SIDA) from 28-31 August 2001.

The main aim of the conference was to strengthen relations between Asia and Sweden, by arranging an opportunity for new networks to be created between representatives from different non-governmental organisations for future co-operation.

The participants came from Sweden and 18 other Asian countries, and represented a wide variety of popular movements and NGOS. These range from small local groups to national organisations and included grass root activists, staff members and executives.

One of the highlights of the conference was the speech given by the Swedish Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh. After her impressive talk, she gave speakers the floor for opportunity to ask her any questions. Ms. Chokey asked what the Swedish government's position was with regard to human rights situation in Tibet. Ms. Lindh gave a very assertive and positive answer, much to the annoyance of the eight Chinese delegation members. She said the Swedish Government has raised the Tibet issue with China in the recent European Union Meeting taking into account the deteriorating human rights condition in Tibet.

Ms.Chokey forged some new and invaluable relationships between TCHRD and many Asian and Swedish NGOs. She also met with some of the Chinese delegations and had some interesting discussions.◆

Human Rights Awareness Week

TCHRD organised the Human Rights Awareness Week programme from 3-7 September 2001 at the Tibetan Community Centre in Mcloed Ganj, Dharamsala. It dealt with topics related to human rights, refugee rights and environmental issues in Tibet.

On 3 September 2001, Bagdro, a former political prisoner, presented personal account of his life history, with the use of some documents and pictures He introduced his biography entitled "A Hell on Earth".

On 4 September, the Centre organised a panel discussion on the issues affecting refugees chaired by Mr. Lobsang Tsering, a Tibetan researcher at the Centre. The panelists included Mr. Choegyal from the Tibetan Reception Centre, Mr. Lobsang Gelek, Deputy Secretary of the Planning Council, and two recently arrived refugees from Tibet.

On 5 September, Mr. Lobsang Tsering, talked about Tibet and the United Nations to a group of approximately 20 people. A video on the Panchen Lama was shown later on.

On 6 September, Ms. Tenzin Chokey, English Researcher at the Centre, gave talk on human rights situation in Tibet to a group of approximately 20 people followed by interesting question-answer session. After the talk, a video show was shown.

On 7 September, Ms.Tsering Yangkee, Head of the Environment and Development Desk, Department of Information and International Relations, gave a talk on the environmental issues concerning Tibet. Ms. Yangkee discussed in detail on the Chinese government policy of building railway line from Golmod to Lhasa.◆

Human Rights Training

Mr. Dorjee Damdul, the Field Officer at Kathmandu Branch Office, recently attended a 15-day human rights training course in Kathmandu, Nepal. The "Second Orientation Course in South Asian Peace Studies" held from 1 to 15 September was organised by the South Asia Forum for Human Rights.

The course was attended by peace and human rights activists, media personnel, researchers, and academicians. The course included the examinations of themes related to Justice, Reconciliation, Peace and Non-violent practices and various forms of violence such as state violence, structural violence etc. The course also took into account issues of legality, pacific but coercive policies, forms of justice, and the ethics of reconciliation. ◆

continued from page 2

stamped on our face while we lay with our face down. Later, I was hung up in a crucified position and the pain was unbearable".

In a separate incident in Tawu County, Kandze "TAP", Sichuan Province, a Chinese shop was blasted with explosives late one night with no reported casualties.

The authorities suspect the act to be carried out to agitate the regime of the Chinese Communist Government yet there is no clear proof. Since the operation was shrouded in secrecy, the identity of the "culprit" is still unknown.◆

continued from page 4

The leaflets were put up in many strategic areas around the region.

However, one month after Kochok's arrest, a Tibetan PLA member named Kedrup claimed responsibility for the leaflet-pasting incident. Subsequently Kedrup was arrested and detained in Nagchu Detention Centre and Kochok was later released.

Kedrup is 28 years old, originally from Sog County, Nagchu Prefecture, "TAR" He joined the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) when he was young. ◆

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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Monks at Sera Monastery face detentions

According to reliable information received from Tibet, the Public Security Bureau (PSB) in Shigatse "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") detained a monk while he was listening to an audiotape containing teachings of the Dalai Lama.

In January 2001, at around 10 p.m., a patrolling officer based in the monastery overheard the tape being played in Jampel Gyatso's room. Gyatso belonged to the Tsangpa Khangtsen (Tsangpa Unit) of Sera Monastery. The officer ransacked his room for further incriminating evidences and found the audiotape.

Gyatso was immediately detained in Gutsa Detention Centre, where he remains incarcerated. It is reported that his family and friends are prohibited from visiting him at the detention centre.

Jampel Gyatso, 26, was born in Lhatse County, Shigatse "TAR". Since 1994, he has resided in Sera Monastery as an "unregistered monk" and studied Buddhist philosophy.

Two months later, another detention occurred at Sera Monastery. In March 2001, Tendar, a 30-year-old monk, was detained on suspicion of involvement in political activities. His current whereabouts and place of detention are unknown. Tendar is originally from Purung County in Shigatse "TAR", and was well respected in the monastery for his mastery over Buddhist philosophy.

Sera Monastery has 580 "registered monks" (red-card holders) and 200 "unregistered" monks (white-card holders). The "unregistered" monks are prohibited from attending monastic gatherings but many still engage in personal studies.

Since 1996, the Chinese government has stationed a Democratic Management Committee (DMC) in every religious institutions in Tibet. Three times a month, this committee holds compulsory meetings to indoctrinate the monks with political education and the DMC's rules. Failure to attend the meeting results in a fine of 50 Yuan (eight yuan is equivalent to one US $) per session. ◆

A Tibetan juvenile detained in Nepal

According to a letter dated 7 May 2001 recently received by the Tibetan Reception Centre (TRC) in Kathmandu, the border police has detained a boy and his guide at Dulikhel Checkpost near Tibet-Nepal border, on 3 May 2001.

Tsewang Phurbu, 14, is originally from Tingri County, Shigatse "TAR", and had recently worked as a waiter. His father, Nyima Tsering and mother, Shedol, live in Tibet. In accordance with his parents' wishes, Phurbu tried to escape Tibet to seek audience with the Dalai Lama in India and then to pursue study in a school administered by the Tibetan government-in-exile.

Phurbu sought the help of a Sherpa guide to escape through the Nepal border. The pair left Dram border on 2 May 2001, around 5 p.m., and walked the night along a forest track. The next morning, they rode in a taxi for a considerable distance. The guide suggested Phurbu to go ahead in a public bus and that he would pick him up soon. Phurbu followed the instruction and travelled till the guide who came in a taxi, stopped the bus. Phurbu got down to continue riding in the taxi. The guide assured Phurbu that he was safe and he would reach Nepal soon.

However, after few hours, the Nepali border police at Dulikhel Checkpost stopped the taxi and interrogated the passengers. Since Phurbu could not speak either Nepali or English, he was immediately recognised as a newcomer. He, along with the guide were detained in Dulikhel for two days before being handed over to the Nepali Immigration Department.

During their detention by the Immigration Department, the guide suggested they would break the jail together. However, Phurbu reassured the guide that the TRC would soon help bail them out. On the night of 5 May 2001, the guide woke up Phurbu and asked him to help break the windows, but Phurbu refused to assist. The guide finally managed to break the window and escaped only to be caught outside.

The attempted escape resulted in both Phurbu and the guide being transferred to Dili Bazaar Jail in Kathmandu on 6 May 2001. The guide was released on payment of a fine, although the amount is unknown. The officers there asked Phurbu to pay a fine of 17,200 NC. As he did not have the money, he sent a letter to the Tibetan Reception Centre appealing for help.

It is believed that Phurbu will be released as soon as the fines are paid. TCHRD understands that relatives of Phurbu in Nepal are trying to raise money to secure his bail. ◆

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Begging in Lhasa

Jampa Wangchok , a recently arrived refugee from Tibet, provided information on begging in Lhasa.

Wangchok and his brother arrived in Lhasa in July 2000. As they had no money, they begged for a living. According to Wangchok, the beggars would sit along the circumambulation route of Potala Palace every morning. The patrol officers, during their rounds around 11 a.m., would forcefully remove the beggars from the place. However, unfettered by the restrictions imposed upon them, the beggars would return to the same place around 4 p.m.. Except for a few physically handicapped Chinese beggars, the other beggars were Tibetans originating from remote areas of Tibet.

The number of beggars increases significantly during religious occasions. For instance, on 15th day of the Tibetan calendar (considered as the holiest day of the month), particularly the fourth month, hundreds of beggars would line up along the routes and each beggar would receive an average of 100 yuan per day. While on other days, a beggar would receive an average of 10 yuan a day.

All people including the beggars who come outside from Lhasa have to register at the Local Committee Office and 60 yuan is charged as registration fee. Chinese officers would come to inspect each household once every ten days and those who fail to register are liable for fine. The committee also collects another 10 yuan from the beggars in the name of "cleanliness".

Jampa Wangchok and Jampa Choephel, both in their twenties, arrived Nepal on 18 September 2001. They are both originally from Choego Village, Derge County in Kham Province.

Wangchok further said Choego Village has failed to reap the benefits of China's "modernisation" and "developments" in Tibet. The village has 40 families with an approximate population of 200 people, mostly farmers. The village has no motorable road, electricity or medical facilities. Sick villagers seek the blessings of lamas in lieu of medical treatment. ◆

Border security halts mass freedom flight

Nagchu Police on 1 April 1999 detained a group of 72 Tibetan escapees in Nyima County, Nagchu "Tibet Autonomous Region". Twenty-five of the detainees, their ages ranging from six to 40 years old, hail from areas around Lhasa and the rest from eastern parts of Tibet. All were attempting to flee into exile. One of these was Samdup, who has recently arrived in Nepal and provided us with the information.

The group was detained in Nagchu Detention Centre for eight days and then transported to Lhasa PSB Anti-Riot Department where they underwent intensive interrogation. Afterwards, they were transported to Gutsa Detention Centre and detained for three months and three days. During their detention, the interrogation sessions sought to determine the purpose of their escape to India and their future plans.

Sixty four escapees were released after four months of detention at various detention centres. However, eight Tibetans were singled out for further punishments of "re-education through labour". This penalty in theory applies to people who commit minor offence that do not rise to the level of crime but in practice it is widely used against political dissidents. Here, the courts do not make the decisions, rather they are made by administrative committees dominated by the police.

All eight of the Tibetans penalised this way were either former political prisoners, former clergy who had been expelled from their institutions by "work team" members or current clergy.

Five Tibetans were ordered to undertake two years "re-education through labour". They were Dawa, a monk from Gaden Monastery, Meldrogungkar County; Phuntsok Choedon and Nyima Dorjee from Phenpo Lhundrup County; Lhakpa Dorjee from Nyemo County; and Samdup from Chushul County. The other three escapees were ordered to undertake one-year "re-education through labour". They were Yangkyi, a nun from Nyemo County; Passang Norbu and Rinzin from Lhasa.

All eight were taken to Trisam Prison, one of the biggest "re-education through labour" camps located in Toelung Dechen County, 10 km west of Lhasa. Established in 1992, the prison is sometimes referred to as Toelung Dechen or Toelung Bridge.

Samdup reported that when he was first imprisoned, there were approximately 300 prisoners. By the time he was released on 31 March 2001, the number had doubled. The majority of the prisoners were Tibetans.

Samdup recalled the horrific prison conditions they endured. Prisoners did not get sufficient food. Some prisoners fell sick due to contaminated water and unclean food. The prisoners were also required to clean human excrement from the toilets and manure the prison fields with human waste.

At nine years of age, Samdup became a monk of Ratoe Monastery in Nyethang Township, Chushul County, Lhasa City. The monastery had a maximum of 90 monks while at present they number only 50. The decreasing trend in the total number of monks is ascribed to the frequent "work team" visits to the monastery.

In 1995, a Tibetan National Flag was hoisted at the door of the monastery's main hall but nobody knew who was responsible. With the appointment of Rabgyal, a pro-Chinese Tibetan, as the Head of the monastery, the monks felt as if they were under close surveillance. No cases of independence activities in the monastery have been reported since then.

Since 1997, the officials from Religious Department and Police Department of Chushul County have visited the monastery once every week. During meetings, the monks would show immediate annoyance at any criticism levelled against the Dalai Lama.

Samdup is originally from a farmer's family in Chushul County, Lhasa. Samdup reached the TRC in Nepal in October 2001. ◆

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

Ordeal of a female prisoner of conscience

Ngawang Dolma, layname Nyima Dolma, was born in 1971 in Sangna Village, Yarong Gang Township, Phenpo Lhudrup County, Lhasa.

At seven, she joined a local primary school and studied for six years. Later, she gained admission to a middle school in Lhasa and graduated with good grades. At the end of 1986, she became a nun of Garu Nunnery in Lhasa. After a few years, she served the nunnery as a cashier.

Tibet during the eighties saw the rekindling of Tibetan demonstrations against Chinese rule. Many Tibetans courted arrests and long-term imprisonments for participating in anti-Chinese and pro-independence demonstrations.

On 19 December 1987, Ngawang Dolma and six nuns from Garu Nunnery led a pro-independence protest in Barkhor in Lhasa, calling out for a "Free Tibet". This protest is believed to be the first ever independence demonstration initiated by nuns after the Chinese take-over in 1959 and Cultural Revolution (1966-1977) in Tibet.

The other six were Gyaltsen Choenyi, Gyaltsen Norbu (layname Tsetan Dolkar), Gyaltsen Wangchuk, Gyaltsen Dickyi, Ngawang Zompa , and Gyaltsen Choetso. Their ages ranged from 17 to 25 years.

Within few minutes, Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers rounded up the nuns and detained them in Gutsa Detention Centre for a period of one month and six days.

All the nuns were detained for periods ranging from seven to nine months. Owing to intervention by the late 10th Panchen Lama, the nuns were released on 23 January 1988.

Dolma and her friends rejoined the nunnery after their release. Chinese officials and policemen visited religious institutions and expelled those clergies with a history of arrest, detention and imprisonment, for involvement in political activities.

Around March 1990, a team of Chinese officials visited Garu Nunnery. In the process of "clearance operation", 22 nuns including Ngawang Dolma were expelled from the nunnery and returned to their homes.

After expulsion, Dolma learnt English language for a while, then worked as a salesgirl in a Chinese shop on the streets of Norbulingka Palace. Due to her good educational background, she was paid handsomely for her job.

In April 1998, Dolma in collaboration with her friend Phuntsok Tsondue printed independence leaflets. She entrusted some leaflets to her friends for distribution while she herself pasted and distributed the leaflets in and around Potala Palace.

The officers from Lhasa PSB Branch Office started investigating the leaflet distribution incident. In June 1999, Dolma and Tsondue were arrested and kept in Lhasa PSB Detention Centre where they were interrogated and beaten.

The nuns were later transferred to "TAR" PSB Detention Centre and remained incarcerated for few days. On 6 January 2000, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced the two detainees to different years of imprisonment on charges of "endangering state security" under Article 103 (2), 25, 66 and 56 of the Chinese Criminal Law. Ngawang Dolma received a sentence of three years' imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for two years.

Within ten days, she was transferred to Drapchi Prison where she is currently serving her sentence. ◆

Chinese monopoly over business and employment sectors in Lhasa

The dominance of Chinese citizens over all walks of Tibetan life can be attributed to the population transfer policy of Beijing authorities. Viewed as an attempt to change and control Tibetan culture and identity, the population influx threatens the livelihood of the Tibetans and encourages racial discrimination.

According to a recently arrived Tibetan couple from Lhasa, Chinese citizens are able to obtain the necessary papers and permission to run a business more easily than local Tibetans. This is due to their links with higher Chinese authorities. In Lhasa, a large number of shops and restaurants, factories and in fact, almost all the business establishments are owned and run by Chinese nationals. Moreover, the Chinese authorities give more grants and assistance to Chinese civilians than to the Tibetan people.

Most of the taxi drivers in Lhasa are Chinese nationals. They have a strong sense of Chinese-ness and help each other set up businesses and establishments. Chinese passengers would rarely ride in taxis owned by Tibetan. Given the high percentage of Chinese population in Tibet and more particularly in Lhasa, this seriously hampers the Tibetan driving business.

Since Chinese restaurants have flooded Lhasa, the survival of traditional Tibetan food looks dim. The husband, one of the two escapees, used to work in a restaurant as a cook. He quit as his business failed to reap profits and the restaurant was closed down.

The couple escaped via Saga County in Shigatse in the "TAR" when the patrol officers there detained the couple for two nights on charges of attempted escape to India, a charge that they both denied. Armed patrol officers and sniffer dogs guard the escape route in the area. They were told whilst in detention that it was the same escape route for the Karmapa (the head of the Kagyu religious sect who had a dramatic escape in the end of 1999) and his entourage.

The duo complained that the living opportunities in Lhasa are pathetic for the Tibetans. The wife lamented, "No matter how hard we work, we have always lived hand to mouth. The fruit of our toils goes into heavy tax payments instead of uplifting our living conditions. To put it in a nutshell, we work to feed Chinese mouths. We chose to escape to India with the hope for a better and more certain future".

The couple arrived in Tibetan Reception Centre in Nepal on 15 October 2001. They wish to study in a Tibetan school in India. Pema Dolkar, 28, is the wife of Phurbu who is a year older.

Dolkar studied in Lhasa Middle School no.4. The school tuition fee excluding expenses on books and miscellaneous items cost approximately 500 Yuan per term. The amount is a huge financial burden on average Tibetan family who finds it difficult to afford the exorbitant fee, and eventually resulting in high school dropout rates. Dolkar quit school to work as a receptionist in a hotel. From 1989 to 1997, she remained at home. In 1997, she was employed as a taxi driver in Lhasa till her escape into exile.

According to another escapee, Tibetan exile returnees who work as tour guides or translators face racial discrimination. Certain NGOS like Save the Children's Fund prefer exile returnees for translators as they have better accent than the Chinese. Many Chinese translators replaced the Tibetan translators.

It is believed that a thousand Chinese who have been trained as translators and tour guides are soon to flood Lhasa City, thus endangering the few existing jobs for the Tibetans. The local authorities would summon Tibetan tour guides who are exile educated Tibet returnees for interrogation sessions concerning their past and present activities. The exile returnees have to buy a compulsory ID for 1,000 Yuan, and besides they are not entitled to ration cards.◆

Monk's health deteriorates after prison release

According to information provided by a recent escapee from Tibet, Dawa, a monk who served two years in jail, is suffering from health problems after his release. His legs have become weak and he is not able to walk properly.

Generally, his health has deteriorated to a great extent and he is currently seeking medical assistance. His failing health is attributed to severe torture and maltreatment he endured in prison.

During Monlam Festival (observed on the 15th day of the first month of the Tibetan calendar) in Lhasa in the early months of 1998, leaflets calling for "Free Tibet" were seen widely all over the area. The informant also saw the leaflets.The slogans were written on small pieces of paper.

Though no evidence could be provided which proved Dawa's involvement, he was held to be the prime suspect. It is said that another Tibetan monk, Ngawang, believed to be a Chinese agent, has instigated the police into arresting Dawa out of personal grudge.

Shortly thereafter, Dawa was arrested on grounds of suspicion and later sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Qinghai Prison, on charges of "endangering state security".The prison officials subjected Dawa to severe beatings and torture. In January 2001, Dawa was released from the prison.

Aged in his late thirties, Dawa is an ex-monk from Gaden Monastery in South India where he lived for eight years. He belonged to Gaden Shatse Lhubum Khangtsen (Gaden Shatse Lhubum unit) of the monastery.

Gyaltsen, the informant, escaped to India so that he could attend the forthcoming Kalachakra due to be held in Bodh Gaya in February 2002. Thereafter, he plans to join Kirti Monastery. He reached the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 21 September 2001.◆

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Tibetan leader's transfer ignite local protest

Shalo, the Tibetan head of Karlang Township, Karze County, is highly respected by the local inhabitants for his generosity. He played an important role in the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity in Karze and particularly in Karlang Township.

Shalo had always stressed the importance of all aspects of Tibetan culture and had shown keen interest in traditional Tibetan dance and costume. Owing to his good leadership, the local people held the Tibetan culture in high esteem. He also acted as the benefactor of poor and needy Tibetans and provided them assistance whenever necessary.

In August 2001, as words went round that Shalo has been transferred away from the position of Township Head, the local Tibetans grew anxious. Therefore, a delegation of three Tibetans, a local community leader, a retired Tibetan and a civilian Tibetan from Karlang, went to Karze County to protest against the transfer. The three men requested the county government to retain Shalo in his present post as Township Head (Ch:Xiangzhang).

The local residents interpreted this transfer as a deliberate attack against leaders who upheld Tibetan culture and tradition. At the time, the results of this protest were unknown, as our informant had left her hometown by then.

Dolma Youdon, the informant, is 16 years old. She escaped with her two brothers via Lhasa and arrived at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 18 October 2001. She intends to join a school in India whereas her brothers wish to join monasteries. She is originally from Karlang Township, Karze County.

She and her brothers left behind four other brothers and three sisters. Youdon is the second youngest in her family. Their elder brother, a monk based in India, asked her to come to India for a better education and future as well. She came with her two brothers to India. ◆

Tibetan TV crew member share behind-the-scene story

Ngawang, who reached Nepal on 20 October 2001, worked for the "Tibet Autonomous Region" TV Network as a driver and technical assistant. This position provided him with a good insight into the makings of Chinese propaganda where exaggerated statistics and distorted realities play a dominant role.

In July 2001, Ngawang's TV crew was involved in a project filming the scale of economic and social development during the 50 years' of Chinese occupation of Tibet. Under the banner of "TAR" TV headed by a Chinese man called Yeyu, the team covered rural and remote areas in close proximity to Lhasa.

During their visits, Ngawang could see no sign of real development in any sphere of Tibetan lives. In a primary school in Nyemo County he found that the students receive only 2 jiao (10 jiao is equivalent to 1 yuan) out of 5.3 jiao allocated for daily expenditure. This is despite the Central government allocating the school 16 yuan per student a month. It appears that the reduction occurs when the Central Government transfers the money via Lhasa authorities to Nyemo County. Hence, only a fraction of the money reaches the actual beneficiaries.

Owing to such embezzlement of money reserved for social benefits at various official ranks, the condition of the school and the students has not improved. The local people have requested the authorities ' permission to set up a new Tibetan school. However, no positive response has been forthcoming. The local people have built the existing school with little assistance from the Chinese government.

During interviews, the leaders at township and county level, would present fabricated and exaggerated versions of the reality. While the crewmembers were filming the school, the entire scene was set up to present a different picture.

The monasteries and monks were deliberately left out from film shooting as there was a likelihood of monks speaking against the Chinese government and this would challenge the image the company was told to project to the world.

The whole project took longer than the planned three months because every scene was staged. People would be selected first and given rehearsals on what to project in front of the camera. Owing to the large number of Chinese propaganda works, people hardly ever believe everything that is aired on TV. Ngawang said, "The only show the people believe to be true are the football matches and world news which the Chinese can not distort. Anything else shown are known to be fabricated".

Ngawang also reported that preparation is underway for construction of a railway station in Toelung Dechen County. This is being partly built by Tibetans in Lhasa who are arrested for gambling or for trying to escape Tibet. The gamblers are punished with two years' of labour at the railway construction site, whereas it is three years for the arrested escapees.

Generally, Tibetans from areas in close proximity to Lhasa draw more suspicion from the Chinese authorities and therefore, it is normally impossible for them to obtain passport and visa to come to Nepal. It is widely believed that all the documents for travel will be processed from Beijing by next year, thus making the whole procedure all the more difficult for the Tibetans.

Ngawang said the mood in Lhasa is repressive. Police personnel, both uniformed and plain clothed, patrol Barkhor and Lhasa. The authorities are still on the lookout for those Tibetans who participated in the mass demonstration in the eighties. So, there is minimal chance of putting up protest posters and initiating independence demonstrations.

However, during Shoton Festival (Curd Festival) in Drepung Monastery this year, a Tibetan national flag was seen hanging out from the windows of a house located near where the thangka

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TCHRD ACTIVITIES Bulletin

Solidarity Network Meeting at Dharamsala, 20-23 September 2001

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) joined hands with Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), Tibetan Women's Association (TWA), and Habitat International Coalition (HIC) to organise the first Solidarity Network Meeting of Peoples under Occupied Territories in Dharamsala, India, from 20-23 September 2001.

Groups representing Tibetan, Palestinian and Kurdish people participated in the meeting. Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Senior Programme Officer, and Mr. Lobsang Tsering, Researcher represented the Centre at the meeting.

The participating group conceived this solidarity network programme in 1996 at the Istanbul Habitat Conference. In Istanbul it was decided that there would be three stages to the programme: Information Sharing; Analysis of Individual Cases; and Formulation of Joint Actions.

The goal of this continuing solidarity network is to change the behaviour of the occupying states. This goal provides the network with a common purpose of ending occupation by building on international legal frameworks.

The context of the meeting was set by HIC through the presentation of housing rights legal framework and describing changes in housing rights discourse from Istanbul to the present. To measure and evaluate current work, each group went through the SWOT Analysis looking at Strengths and Weaknesses in the present, and Opportunity and Threat in future.

After reviewing each others' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the participating groups decided on supporting a democratisation process within each independence movement first and then externally. To share and combine network and advocacy actions, it was decided that joint training in UN treaty bodies especially International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and intervention in regional or international forums, should take place.The network decided to promote reciprocal solidarity through civil society and leadership.

On 22 September 2001, the group had a special audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his Palace. The participants briefed His Holiness about the meeting and the country -specific situations. ◆

School Tour with Amnesty UK

Mr. Gaden Tashi, Field Officer at the Kathmandu Branch Office of TCHRD, was invited by the Amnesty International to tour different secondary schools in UK, to mobilise youth involvement in the Stamp Out Torture Campaign through student action networks forum.

The tour took place from 8-18 October 2001 and covered 15 different schools in Manchester, Glasgow, Kent and London. A balance of public and private schools was selected to reach young people from cross section of social economic and ethnic backgrounds.

The presentations, which were described as "effective" and "interactive", lasted from 15 minutes to one hour, and relevant materials were left at the schools for long-term impact.

The number of direct participants in the school tour is just over 3,780 young people and over 120 teachers. Inspired by the talks, many students suggested organising awareness raising events in future and submitting feedback to the organisers.

Twenty young people and at least one teacher from each school were asked to evaluate the presentation. 90% of pupils stated that Mr. Tashi's presentation was helpful, interesting and motivating and that they learnt new information about torture and human rights.

The tour further strengthened links with various Tibetan organisations such as Free Tibet Campaign, Tibet Society in London, Tibet Information Network, Ap Tibet, Tibet Foundation, Tibet Images, Meridian Trust, and the Tibetan Community in London. The tour received positive media coverage. ◆

Human Rights Workshop in Delhi, 23-29 September 2001

TCHRD in conjunction with Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) in Hong Kong and South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR) in Kathmandu, organised a one-week human rights training workshop at Golden Huts in Delhi from 23 to 29 September 2001.

The purpose of the workshop was to increase awareness and understanding amongst Tibetans living in exile on human rights. The 20 participants (13 women and 7 men) included Tibetan high school teachers and principals, university students and staff members of Tibetan NGOs, such as Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) and TCHRD.

The participants learnt about a number of U.N. Conventions related to human rights, and strategies for responding to human rights violations. These strategies included ways to utilise the UN system, how to undertake fact-finding and human rights monitoring, and the use of an urgent appeal networks, such as that employed by AHRC and TCHRD.

Resource Person for the Workshop included Prof. Dawa Norbu, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Mr. Tapan Bose, SAFHR; Mr. Henri Tiphagne, People's Watch; Mr. Basil Fernando, AHRC; Mr. Bruce Van Voorhis, AHRC ; and Ms. Tenzin Chokey, TCHRD.

The workshop was hailed as a great success by the participants judging from positive feedbacks at the conclusion of the workshop. ◆

Martin Ennals Award Nomination

On 15 October 2001, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) nominated TCHRD for the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.

The Award is granted annually to an individual, or an organisation, in recognition of their commitment and ongoing endeavour for the defence and promotion of human rights.

In their nomination form, the ICT has described TCHRD as the "first modern, professional, all-Tibetan human rights group which has become one of the most prolifica and effective organizations in the Tibet movement, having many results to show".

TCHRD in turn nominated Tanak Jigme Sangpo, the longest serving male political prisoner of Tibet, for the Award. By the time he is released on 3 September 2011, Jigme Sangpo will have spent 28 continuous years in Drapchi Prison on charges of "counter-revolutionary" activities . He will be 85 years old at the time of release.

The 2002 award ceremony is planned to be held at the North-South Media Festival in Geneva. ◆

Educational talk series in three Tibetan schools

In accordance with the Centre's objective to create awareness of democracy and human rights among the Tibetan children, staff members of TCHRD visited three Tibetan schools this month.

On 8 and 9 October 2001, Mr. Lobsang Tsering and Ms. Tenzin Chokey, researchers at the Centre, spoke to senior classes of seventh, eighth and ninth at TCV School in Suja. Mr. Tsering talked on the concepts of democracy and its development in Tibetan society. Ms. Chokey dealt with the United Nations human rights system and current human rights situation inside Tibet. The staff members also gave a talk in the evening to the junior schools comprising of approximately 500 students.

On 15 October 2001, Mr. Jampel Monlam, Field Officer at the Centre, and Mr. Lobsang Tsering, spoke to classes eighth, ninth and tenth in TCV School in Gopalpur. Mr. Monlam talked about issues of human rights violations in Tibet while Mr. Tsering dealt with Tibetan democracy and human rights principles.

On 22 October 2001, Mr. Lobsang Tsering and Mr Jampel Monlam visited Sherab Gatseling School near Dharamsala. The school organised around 500 students in a big meeting hall, where Mr. Tsering and Mr. Monlam gave talks on human rights and democratic values. ◆

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was hung. It is an annual event for the thangka to be displayed across the walls of the monastery. Many people saw the flag including the informant. Several foreign tourists photographed the scene and hid the film rolls immediately to avert confiscation.

Ngawang along with his wife and a child reached Nepal on 10 October 2001. The couple escaped because they felt a strong sense of job insecurity. ◆

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
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E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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.

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TCHRD's publications:

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A former political prisoner on arrest, torture and maltreatment

Gendun Gyatso (layname Yonten Phuntsok), who recently arrived from Tibet, reported on his detention days and detention of other monks as well.

Born in Thonney, Chamdo County, Chamdo Prefecture "TAR", Gyatso grazed cattles during his childhood. At 14, he joined Pomda Monastery in 1995. There were 70 monks in residence at the time of his admission.

Gyatso reported that on 28 July 1997, "work team" visited Pomda Monastery for the first time to conduct "patriotic education". The "work team" consisted of 30 officials and was headed by Tenzin Norbu from Drayab County and Tsewang from Pashoe County Religious Department.

The 70 monks were divided into three groups and separate meetings were held for each group. The "patriotic education" sessions would start at 9am in the morning and restart from 3pm to 9pm daily with a period of lunch break in-between. In the sessions, the "work teams" emphasised the need to condemn the Dalai Lama and "spilttists" activities and instead show loyalty to the Chinese motherland.

On 16 August 1997, the "work team" presented the monks with a document condemning the Dalai Lama and the "splittists" activities. The monks were compelled to read and sign the document which was passed in turns to all the monks. When the document finally reached Gyaljing, layname Lobsang Tsering, he stated that he could not read *Yenag* (the running hand used letter, the headless character), and that he could read only in *Yekar* (letter furnished with a head). The "work teams" promptly translated the document into *Yekar* but Gyaljing still refused to read or sign the document. He was the discipline master (Tib: *Geko*) of the monastery and shared a room with Gyatso.

Arrest of Gyaljing

Refusing to sign the document, Gylajing told "work team" members amidst the crowd of monks that it was for similar reason that he left Chamdo Monastery two years earlier to join Pomda Monastery.

The "work team" took Gyaljing to a police station in Pomda Township (which is normally reserved for petty ciminals). Thereupon, Gyaljing was interrogated and beaten mercilessly. The officers there tried to make him sign the document with the use of brutal force. Gyaljing, however, shouted slogans such as "Long live the Dalai Lama" and "Free Tibet". His hands were immediately tied behind his back and a towel placed in his mouth.

During the time of Gyaljing's detention, the police ransacked his room (which Gyaljing and Gyatso shared) and discovered a hand-drawn Tibetan flag with a photo of the Dalai Lama at the centre.

On the same evening, approximately 60 monks decided to flee the monastery rather than face more "patriotic education" sessions. Only nine monks remained at the monastery at the time. It was suspected that Gyatso was instrumental in urging the monks to flee en masse. The next day, a team of police officials and "work team" members began their search for the monks but in vain. These officers threatened the parents with punishment if they did not reveal the whereabouts of the monks. These monks remained in hiding for about eight to ten days.

In order to bring an end to the crisis, the Abbot of Pomda Monastery, appealed to the monks to return. The Chinese officials reportedly assured him that there would be no further "patriotic education" classes and "work team" visits. Subsequently, the monks returned to the monastery around 27 August of the same year.

Following the return of the monks, approximately 80 officials from the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People's Armed Police (PAP) surrounded the monastery and interrogated each of the monks individually.

During that time, the officers overheard a monk named Yonten questioning the detention of Gyaljing. As a result, Yonten

came under heavy suspicion leading to interrogations and surprise raids in his room. The officials further discovered a drawing of mountains and snow lions (elements in the Tibetan national flag) on the wall of Yonten's room.

In the course of the interrogation, the officers suspected Yonten to have drawn the flag which was earlier found in the room of Gyatso and Gyaljing. He was severely beaten that time. Unable to bear the torture inflicted, Yonten finally revealed that Lobsang, his cousin monk at the monastery, had drawn the flag.

Consequently, on 28 August 1997, Lobsang was detained and taken to Chamdo PSB Detention Centre. During his four days' detention, Lobsang endured severe beatings. He finally revealed under torture that it was Gyatso who drew the Tibetan flag.

The detention and torture of Gendun Gyatso

On 2 September 1997, PSB officers detained Gyatso in Chamdo PSB Detention Centre and interrogated him about the flag incident. The next day, he was forced to sign a statement of his crimes. Gyatso endured severe beatings and torture during his detention period of three months. He reported that officials from Anti-Riot Department (a small cell within the detention centre) and PSB were involved in the torture including few Tibetan officials as well.

These officials kicked Gyatso around his head and torso and used electric cattle prods (which is approximately half a meter in length and flexible like a rubber truncheon) to beat him on his back and buttocks and shocking him with electricity each time the prod touched his skin. At one stage Gyatso remembered about twenty people, men and women, taking turns to whip him with an electric cord. He was whipped so hard that he was unable to sit down or lie on his back for weeks together. He was denied medical treatment and did not see any other prisoner besides his cell-mate.

Gyatso reported that he was left standing in the cold wintry nights dressed only in a shirt and pant for four times. He was handcuffed and his arms were tied above his head.

Gyaltso related that the worst form of torture that he endured was confinement in a small room flooded with water. The officials used electric prods to electrocute him through the water knocking him unconscious. He would wake up in his cell after a long period of unconsciousness. During his detention period, Gyatso was tortured at all times of the day and night in no set pattern.

On 10 November 1997, Gyatso was given three years' "re-education through labour" as punishment. At the time of his detention he was considered a minor under Chinese Law and could not be classed as a political prisoner.

In mid-December 1997, Gyatso was transferred to Zethang "Re-education Through Labour" Camp (Ch: Lao Jiao Suo Prison) in Chamdo. At this camp, he was forced into hard labour although there was no further beatings or torture.

Initially the punishment was for three years of hard labour. However, the authorities increased Gyatso's sentence by one more month after he was caught with a picture of the Dalai Lama under his pillow. Gyatso had found the picture in one of the Chinese propaganda magazines distributed in the prison to discredit the Dalai Lama.

Gyatso still suffers from the after-effects of the torture. He suffers from kidney disease which is aggravated when exposed to cold.

Other Political Prisoners

Gyatso shed light on the identity of some of his fellow political prisoners in Chamdo PSB Detention Centre. He particularly remembered the seven monks from Serwa Monastery in Pashoe County who were arrested on 1 July 1997 (the day of Hong Kong's hand-over to China).

Information on these monks was related to Gyatso by Dawa Dorjee, one of the seven monks. As reported in October 1997 issue of Human Rights Update, the seven monks were arrested for shouting "Free Tibet" in a daring public demonstration. The identities and ages (at the time of arrest) of these monks are Tashi Phuntsok (25); Rinzin Choephel (24); Sherab Tsultrim (25); Dawa Dorjee (24); Lobsang Damchoe (26);Ngawang Choephel (16); and Lobsang Dechen (25).

Among them Rinzin Choephel was sentenced for eight years and the sentences of others range between four to seven years. The seven monks were transferred from Chamdo PSB Detention Centre to Drapchi Prison sometime in September 2000.

Dawa Dorjee related to Gyatso about the torture that the seven monks suffered whilst their detention. The monks were stripped naked and hung upside down. Their bodies were then hit with big sticks and electric prods applied to their genitals, causing serious burns. The monks were made to stand up straight and repeatedly hit with a big stick on their shins which knocked them down on the floor. The police then stamped on their heads and faces with their boots. The monks were covered in blood and excretra and had to crawl against the wall to stand up.

Gyatso also reported on the detention of Lobsang Dhondup who was sentenced to three years for putting up "Free Tibet" posters in Chamdo Prison in July 2000. He is originally from Thenthok, Dzogang County. He is expected to be released in 2003.

Lobsang is said to be the nephew of Tashi Rabten who died under mysterious circumstances during a "work team visit" in Thenthok Monastery on 1 May 2000. The "work team" forced the monks to denounce the Dalai Lama and confiscated all the pictures.

Gyatso, the informant, was released after completing his three years and one month on 1 Oct 2000. He was not allowed to rejoin Pomda Monastery or any other monasteries. He resided in Pomda three months and then moved to Shigatse where he stayed for another eight months.

Gyatso arrived at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu on 4 November 2001.◆

profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS**

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

A 15-year sentence for wooden block prints bearing political slogans

Tsering Lhagon, 41, is originally from Village #2, Yakla Township, Sog County. Lhagon has eight family members consisting of his wife(37); his four children - two sons and two daughters all below 11 years; his mother Aya (65); and his sister.

Although the family's primary occupation was farming, they also grazed few livestock as well. Lhagon however engaged in lots of other works such as sewing, carpentry, and contracting houses.

Lhagon had never been to school. From his early age, he took lessons from his father, a prominent engineer in the construction of traditional Tibetan style building of his time. With the demise of his father during the Cultural Revolution in 70's, the responsibility of his family directly came upon his tender shoulder.

Gradually, Lhagon acquired many skills and became "a man with many qualities". He worked as a foreman and a main supervisor in constructing traditional Tibetan houses of his locality. Beside he was also good at sewing clothes and wood-carpentary. In short, he became a household name in his locality and commanded a lot of respect.

Since 1985, Lhagon served as the main supervisor in the construction of Sog Tsendhen Monastery, in Sog County untill its completion in January 2000.

In March, 2000, officials from Security Department of the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") along with few Nagchu and Sog PSB officials arrested Tsering Lhagon after discovering two wooden block prints with carvings such as "Free Tibet", "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama", "Tibet belongs to Tibetans" and "China quit Tibet" from his residence.

Around the same time, five other Tibetans from Sog County were arrested on different days. The other five are Sey Khedup (27), Tenzin Choewang (64), Yeshi Tenzin (33), Trakru Yeshi (45) and Gyurmey (29). They were all charged with involvement in the recurrent political and resistant activities that have taken place in Sog County since 1993.

Nearly nine months after the arrest in mid-December 2000, Lhagon and the other detainees were brought for a public trial at Nagchu Intermediate People's Court. They were accused of supporting activities of the "Dalai clique and carrying out activities endangering state security". The court produced independence posters, wooden block prints and cassettes containing speeches of the Dalai Lama as evidences of the charges levied on them.

Tsering Lhagon was later sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. While the other five detainees were sentenced to varying prison terms ranging from seven years to life imprisonment. Currently, he is now serving his term in Drapchi Prison in Lhasa.

As a result of the arrest, Lhagon's family is reeling under extreme poverty. Prior to his arrest he was the sole bread earner. Now his wife is the only working person in the family of seven people. It is reported that "the family is nearing to starvation". ◆

Shop demolition in the name of development

In 1998 the Chinese authorities of Sog County announced that in the name of the "Western Development Programme" existing shops in the area were to be demolished and new shops built instead. The authorities further said that the land on which these shops were built belonged to the Chinese Government.

The shopkeepers were given a few days' time in which to demolish their shops and save the fittings and wood. Otherwise, the authorities threatened to demolish the shops themselves and destroy everything.

Many shops were demolished and new shops built as demanded by the authorities. Since then, the authorities owned these shops which was all built in Chinese style, replacing the traditional Tibetan architectural style.

The authorities offered the new shops for sale or lease at high rates. For example, the informant paid 20,000 yuan to purchase a shop in a far inferior location of the area. The average rent for these new shops was around 7,000 yuan per month which is far beyond the reach of most Tibetan shopkeepers. The informant gave example of a Tibetan tea-stall operator who shifted into one of the new shops. The rent he paid to the authorities is 7,000 yuan per month, an amount not even covered by the money he makes from the business.

Chinese traders have begun to flood the area. They have access to cheap Chinese goods which they sell at a profitable rate enabling them to rent or buy the shops .By 2001, Chinese settlers owned 48 business units and only nine are now owned by Tibetans. The number of Tibetan-owned businesses is decreasing rapidly.

The informant stated that until 1998 Tibetan businesses were developing and thriving. In 1998, the informant estimated that there were around 40-50 shops in Sog County. Chinese owned only one or two of these shops and the rest were owned by Tibetans.

Sog County consists mainly of farming and nomadic families. In 1980 the low-lying farm land was allocated to families according to the number of members per family. In the case of the informant, they were given a large portion of land as his family was relatively large then. The family grew barley and had a herd which they take up to the mountains to graze during the summer.

In January 2000, the authorities allocated the highlands where nomads grazed their herds and where *Yartsa Gunbu* (a valuable medicinal herb) grew. Previously, anyone could graze on these lands. After the boundaries were marked, disputes began to erupt between people over the use of land. The disputes were particularly acrimonious where the land divided held *Yartsa Gunbu*. The fightings were often violent and people were killed. The Tibetans pleaded with the local authorities not to continue with the allocation of land, because they feared more violence. At the time of the informant's departure, the local authorities were still refusing to listen to the people's complaints.

The informant also reported on the plight of one poor family. The father and eldest daughter of the family died and the eldest son suffered a serious injury which rendered him incapable of working. The local villagers went to the authorities of village and town to seek help for the family. They were told to take the matter to the county authorities. After repeated pleas for assistance, the county authorities granted the family with 300 yuan.

The local banks refused to lend money to the family even with the offer of personal guarantee for the loan by the informant. The family is now completely dependent on the generosity and charity of local Tibetans. There is no social security or income support available to the family.

Families who own property can mortgage it to obtain loans from the bank. The informant explained that a family need to have property worth double the amount of the loan. Beijing Government in the name of "help-the-poor" scheme tax about 25% of the loan amount. In theory this fund was accessible to poorer families to borrow money to build houses. However in practice, as the previous example shows, the poor families were unable to borrow money. The informant was unsure about the distribution of this 25% tax. Though 25% tax was taken out of the loan, the borrower still pays interest and make repayments based on the full amount borrowed.

The informant reported about healthcare access in Sog County. There is a medical clinic with one doctor for all the villages. The local Tibetans deposit 2,000 yuan before receiving treatment. Without this deposit, the doctors would not treat the patients regardless of the severity of the illness.

Despite having to pay fees up front for treatment, people were also required to pay compulsory medical insurance of 20 yuan per person since 2001. None of the villagers seem to have benefited from this arbitrary collection of money

In 1996, Dhimey, the informant was elected by his villagemen to oversee the affairs of his village in Sog County. Dhimey worked in this position for five years and earned 30 yuan per month. Every village in Sog County has five Party members appointed by the local government. Their main duty was to monitor "splittist" activities in the village. During his tenure as village head, Dhimey was made to sign a contract stating that he would be held responsible for any political activities occurring in the area.

Dhimey's main responsibility was to act as a middleman between the local people and the county authorities. At meetings held in the village on a monthly basis, Dhimey had to read out official Chinese documents which mainly condemned the "Dalai clique" and also contained speeches from communist party icons such as Mao Tse Tung, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Guo Jinlong ad Raidi. The documents praised Chinese development in Tibet and the greatness of Beijing. Dhimey believes that this was a Chinese

way of indoctrinating Tibetans with Chinese communist ideology.

Dhimey claimed that currently all the heads of the government departments in Sog County are Chinese; where prior to 2000, some of them were Tibetan. The change came into effect by the end of 2001. The official justification was that Sog County has been a "hot-bed of political activities". Hence, the appointment of Chinese officials are designed to prevent any further dissent.

It is estimated that there are currently 200 Chinese civilians in addition to a large contingent of military personnel. Before there were only Chinese officials but now more civilians have arrived. This new group of Chinese settlers tend to occupy new buildings and start businesses. The influx of Chinese settlers are increasing year by year in Sog County and they seem to have less difficulty than the Tibetans at acquiring the necessary permits to start business.

During his time in the administration of the village, Dhimey tried his best to request the local Chinese authorities to build a road and to bring electricity to his village. Despite constant appeals, Dhimey never received a positive response from the authorities. He believed that money allocated through the "Western Development Program" would never help in the development of his village as there are no Chinese settlers living there.

Dhimey claimed such discriminatory attitudes were prevalent in all aspects of improving village life. The village school which educate approximately 27 students, is in a dilapidated condition. He appealed to the authority for some improvement but received no response on the matter.

Dhimey fled Tibet in a group of approximately 42 people most of whom were monks and included a nine year-old boy. During his escape, a guide told Dhimey about the detention of approximately 60 Tibetans who were caught trying to escape. The guide who led the group was reportedly sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

The escapees had a hard time during their flight into freedom. One of the guides fell sick and had to return. Many other escapees suffered sickness and starvation. Some ate ice to survive the treacherous winter crossing. The group reached Kathmandu on 12 November 2001. ◆

Restriction on Admittance to Lhasa Monasteries

Hard and complex series of bureaucratic procedures for students intending to join monasteries in Lhasa renders enrolment in religious places of learnings very difficult.

After spending six years at Payen Monastery in Sichuan Province, Karma Nyandak decided to join either Sera or Drepung Monastery in Lhasa for higher education. At Lhasa, Nyandak faced a formidable array of beauracratic procedures from the local Chinese authorities before being allowed to join either of the monasteries. A total of six government official documents were required before admission was allowed:

1) Written permission from his previous monastery stating his intention of leaving the monastery

2) Written permission from the local authorities in Jarnon Township in Tenchen County

3) Written permission from the local authorities of Tenchen County

4) Written permission from Chamdo City

5) Written permission from the Department of Religious Affairs in Lhasa

6) The last official document that Nyandak had to obtain was from a separate government office in Lhasa.(The office which is believed to be closely associated the PSB decides on the final recruitment of monks to the three major seats of monasteries in Lhasa - Sera, Drepung and Gaden. Nyandak was unable to remember the name of the office at the time of interview.)

Although this was not an expensive exercise, the sheer difficulty of obtaining the required documents ensured that Nyandak was unable to fulfil his dream of entering Sera or Drepung monasteries. Nyandak lamented, "The time spent visiting each of these offices to seek permission letter and the callous , time-buying attitude of the Chinese officials makes it almost impossible for the monks to join the monasteries in Lhasa, particularly monks from eastern Tibet".

Nyandak went on to state that even if he was successful in obtaining all the necessary documents and was admitted, he would not be allowed to participate in the official religious functions.

Nyandak also reported that the local Chinese authorities in Lhasa would fine any officials who are found donating money to monasteries. This discouraging trend ensures that there are less donors to the religious institutions making it financially difficult for the monasteries to continue to function.

Karma Nyandak grew up in Tengchen County, Chamdo Prefecture "TAR". After receiving education from a local school, Nyandak joined Nagsong Monastery at 14. The monastery housed 168 monks.

Few years later, Nyandak moved to Payen Monastery in Sichuan Province, which is one day's drive from Sertha Institute. Payen Monastery housed approximately 2,000 monks. The monks were forbidden by the Chinese "work team" to display portraits of the Dalai Lama.

Karma Nyandak arrived in Kathmandu on 27 October 2001. ◆

Security heightened in Purang County

Reports indicate that impeding arrival of approximately 50 Tibetans pilgrims from India to Mount Kailash in March 2001 raised concern amongst the Chinese authorities at Purang County. The local authorities incresed security measure along the routes of Mt. Kailash to avert infiltration of "splittist activities" from the "Dalai clique".

At the time, hordes of armed police were stationed in and around Purang border to chack the identities of the

pigrims. Many security checkpoints were set up along the routes. The local Tibetans were concerned that the Chinese forces would crackdown severely on the pilgrims and subject them to unnecessary harassment.

Dechen Tashi, the informant, learnt about the increased security whilst his detention at Purang County on account of attempted flight into exile. He has no further information on the issue.

Tashi first attempted to escape in June 1999 via Purang County (Ch: Pulan xian), Ngari Prefecture in the west of Tibet. The border police at Purang detained Tashi for a period of two months and interrogated him about his intention to meet the Dalai Lama. Tashi reponded that he was going to India on a pilgrimage. He was beaten beaten severely and forced to bent on his knees while the police kicked and stamped on his back.

Later, Tashi was released on the condition that he would return to his hometown immediately. He was threatened with detention and execution should he try to escape again. The officers took his fingerprints and forced him sign a statement that he would not escape again. As far as Tashi know, there were at least 30 Tibetans who were detained in Purang for having attempted to escape into India.

After his release, Tashi took up business in hometown. He traded with Khampa businessmen and sold goods to Nepali traders. He also did carpentry works.

Tashi reported that guides, regardless of whether they are Tibetans or Sherpas, are arrested and heavily fined if they are caught escorting escapees across the border. He is aware of few such arrest cases where the guides underwent torture at the hands of the Chinese authorities. However, he has no information on the identities and origins of these guides.

Dechen Tashi is originally from Ragyal Township, Nangchen County, Jyekundo "TAP" (Ch: Yushul "TAP"). He was a small-time businessman in his township and had never been to school.

Tashi reached Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathamandu on 22 November 2001. He intends to study and later run a small business in India. ◆

Taxing Faith

Tashi Rigzin is a driver who lives in Woubu Village, Gergye County (Ch: Geji xian), Ngari Prefecture "TAP". Rigzin arrived in Kathmandu on 5 November 2001. He reported to the centre on restrictions imposed by the local authorities on circumambulating Mt Kailash.

"There are two ways to reach Mt Kailash from my village. One covers a distance of 600 km and the other covers 500 km. Before last year many Tibetans from my village would go on a pilgrimage to Mt Kailash and they did not need any permit or paper. Since the summer of 2000, the local Chinese authorities have enforced new conditions. Every pilgrim to Mt Kailash now has to get permission from the local authorities.

This time when I went to Mt Kailash, I sought permission from the authorities of Ngari Prefecture. First I went to the township authorities to get a recommendation letter stating that I am a bona fide resident of Tsaka Township. I then showed this letter to the County PSB (Public Security Bureau) Office where they put an official stamp on the letter. I did not pay anything for the stamps.

Later, I took the letter to Ngari Prefecture PSB Office where I paid 10 yuan. The office kept the recommendation letter from the township authorities and issued me another letter with their official stamp. Finally, I took this letter to Ngari Prefecture army base where I was issued with another red paper with five stamps on it. I paid 34 yuan.

The distance from Ngari Prefecture to Mt Kailash is 270 km. There are two ways to go from Ngari Prefecture to Mt Kailash. One is from Purang County and another from Maser Township. At Maser Township, there is an army checkpoint which checks all pilgrims for their permit and ID cards. Failure to produce the reqired papers would result in pilgrims being sent back to their places of origin.

I showed the officers my permit and they registered my name and ID card number. After that, I was allowed to circumambulate Mt Kailash.

Pilgrims from Kham and Amdo have to first go to their prefecture office in Lhasa and get a recommendation letter. If they are from Lhasa they have to get this letter from their neighbourhood committee. Then they take this letter to Ngari Prefecture office in Lhasa where they can receive the permit for Mt. Kailash. To circumambulate Mt. Kailash, the permit and ID card are very necessary". ◆

Minimal Access to Healthcare in rural areas

This report is a compilation of intervieiws from three Tibetan escapees from different areas in Tibet concerning healthcare issues.

There are about 400 Tibetan families in Tsigorthang County, Tsolho "TAP". Whilst they have a local medical clinic it is poorly equipped and has no X-ray or operating theatre. A serious patient is referred to the next county hospital for treatment. The head of the clinic is a Chinese. There is not a single Tibetan doctor trained in Tibetan medicine in the area.

Tibetans in Ngaba County, Ngaba "TAP", have access to a hospital although the patients bear full cost of any treatment. The hospital employs no Tibetan doctors, and the main language used at the hospital is Chinese, thereby rendering the use of translators a necessity.

The locals in Woubu Village, Gergye County, Ngari "TAP", have no access to a healthcare clinic (or electricity or educational facilities). To seek treatment, the locals go to the township hospital which is 52 kms away. If a patient's condition is serious they travel 452 kms to the county hospital. Possession of a patient ID card lessens the treatment cost by half, otherwise the patients have to pay the full cost for any treatment.

The Chinese authorities in Gergye County have recently begun to enforce birth control policy and introduced registration of children and fines for families who have more than two children. ◆

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TCHRD Audience with the Gyalwa Karmapa

On 10 October 2001, the staff members of TCHRD had a private audience with the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, the head of the Kagyu sect of the Tibetan Buddhism, at Gyutoe Monastery in Dharamsala.

Upon getting briefed on the mission and activities of the Centre, Gyalwa Karmapa gave accolades to the staff of TCHRD for their works. He further urged the Centre to keep up with its standard.

Gyalwa Karmapa emphasised that the plight of Tibetans still living in Tibet under the Chinese authorities should be presented vividly and that TCHRD should continue to maintian its focus on the issue.◆

New Tibetan Researcher

TCHRD would like to congratulate Mr. Jampal Monalam for his promotion to the post of Tibetan Researcher with effect from March 2002.

Mr. Monlam earlier served the centre in the capacty of Fleld Officer since his arrival in Dharamsala in 1998. He was a former political prisoner who served five years in Drapchi Prison in Tibet.◆

TCHRD Information Booth at the Free Spirit Festival

In order to generate awareness within the local community as well as among foreign visitors, TCHRD staff organised an information booth at the Free Spirit Festival held in TIPA, Dharamsala, on 27 October 2001.

The staff distributed publications of the centre free of cost and answered queries from interested individuals on human rights issues in Tibet. ◆

Special Announcement

TCHRD is looking to fill two positions at its main office in Dharamsala, i.e. Executive Director and Field Officer. Announcements for both the positions have appeared in Tibet Times, Tibetan Review and Tibetan Bulletin.

For the post of the Executive Director, the prospective candidate should be a Tibetan (minimum 30 years old) with at least three years of work experience within the Tibetan community. A minimum of Bachelor's Degree with a proficiency in English is required. Good communication and inter-personal skills with initiative and the ability to analyse and juggle multiple tasks is required.

The selected candidate is expected to oversee Centre's activities and programmes, budget and personnel. He or she will also serve as the Executive Secretary of the Centre's Board of Directors and will be the conduit for other Board members.

The prospective Field Officer requires excellent writing and communication skills in Tibetan and English with a minimum BA or equivalent degree and a contract period of three years with the Centre. Preference will be given to those with previous experience in interviewing, research and translation work.

The selected candidate is expected to undertake the responsibilities of conducting interviews, research works, writing reports in Tibetan and translation. He or she may be assigned other responsibilities as and when needed.

For further information, please contact Ms. Youdon Aukatsang, Senior Programme Officer or e-mail at yaukatsang@tchrd.org or call 23363/25874 ◆

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in TIbet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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Detention and deportation of Tibetans at Nepal border

Juvenile Detention: Two missing, one's whereabouts uncertain and two released on bail

Dawa Tsering, a Chinese passport holder, decided to flee Tibet for India where many of his family now live and where he hoped to meet the Dalai Lama. He brought his daughter's children - Tashi Lamo (10) and her brother Dawa Tsetan (8) while escaping. The children's father had died recently and the family decided to send the children to India to seek better education.

Tsering came to Nepal by way of Dram and crossed the Friendship Bridge. As his two grandchildren did not hold Chinese passports, Tsering hired a Tibetan driver and paid him 6,000 yuan to ensure that the children reach Nepal safely. The driver was to hand the children over to a guide who would lead them across the border. This is the last time that Tsering heard of the children.

The informant arrived at the Tibetan Reception Centre (TRC) in Kathmandu on 6 December 2001. The TRC staff members have been making efforts to find out the children but to no avail. At the time of going to press, the children remain missing.

In a similar incident, a nine-year old boy named Kunga from Dzogang County (Ch:Zuogang), Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR", was arrested by Nepali police after crossing the border in a loaded truck. The boy was arrested in the second week of December and after being held in detention he became extremely distressed. In late December, the Nepali police handed the boy to Chinese border police. However, the current whereabouts of Kunga remains a mystery and relatives report that he has not returned home as yet. The relatives fear for the boy's safety and believe he may have been detained in either Shigatse or Nyelam detention centres.

Another case of juvenile detention has been reported to TCHRD. A Tibetan man and his two children attempted to escape via Dram. The man had a Chinese passport but his children did not. The children were arrested by Chinese police before crossing over to Nepal. They were transferred to Shigatse and detained for 20 days. The father returned to Shigatse to bail out his two children, which cost him 20,000 yuan. Later, the boys fled Tibet.

Other cases

Tseyang (15) traveled to Dram from Lhartse County (Ch:Lazi xian), Shigatse Prefecture (Ch: Rikaze), "TAR", with two other young Tibetans and a Sherpa guide. The group walked for three days along mountainous tracks bypassing Chinese border checkposts, and arrived in Nepal somewhere between Tatopani and Barabise. They then boarded a bus bound for Kathmandu.

After passing the Barabise checkpost in Nepal, several Nepalese policemen entered the bus and interrogated the passengers in Nepalese language. Tseyang, who wore Nepalese woman's traditional dress went unnoticed as she sat amongst several other Nepalese women in the bus. However, her two companions, Choeda from Amdo and Tenzin from Lhartse, were interrogated and removed from bus by the police. Tseyang managed to continue the journey and arrived at the TRC in Kathmandu on 18 December 2001.

TCHRD staff informed the TRC of the detention of Choeda and Tenzin, who in turn immediately informed United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Kathmandu. There has still been no word as to the fate of Choeda and Tenzin. Tseyang believes they might have been handed over to Chinese border police or may still even be in detention.

On 13 December 2001, a Tibetan man from Chamdo (Ch: Qamdo) Prefecture, "TAR", was arrested by Nepali border police at Barabise for attempting to cross into Nepal. The police transferred the man to Nepali Immigration Department because he did not have necessary travel permits. He was detained for one day at the immigration department before being handed over to the Chinese authorities.

The man entered Nepal with three other Tibetans who possessed Chinese passports. Upon being detained at Barabise, the Nepali police offered the

Tibetan a chance to cross over into Nepal for 1,000 yuan. As he did not have the money, the police sent him to Nepali Immigration Department.

The TRC staff has already alerted the UNHCR in Kathmandu who reportedly contacted Nepali Immigration Department. However by the time TRC staff could travel to the border, the man had already been sent back across the border to the Chinese authorities.

In December 2001, another group of seven Tibetans was said to have deported by the Nepali police for attempted entry into Nepal. The details of this deportation were unclear. Just as unclear are reports of recent detention of the uncle of an important figure in Tibetan Buddhism. ◆

Border security increased - thousands detained

In an unprecedented intensification of border security measures in 2001 has led to arrests of large number of Tibetans trying to flee Tibet. On 16 October 2001, Xinhua news agency, reported that border security officials of "TAR" had apprehended some 2,500 Tibetan crossing the border

Recently arrived refugees in Nepal have testified to TCHRD that many of these Tibetans have suffered beatings, torture and imprisonment, in some cases resulting in death. Large numbers of Tibetans have attempted to flee from areas such as Shigatse, Lhartse, Nyelam and Dram. It is reported that along with their arrest, many people have had their possessions confiscated upon being detained.

Tashi (name changed to protect anonymity), (35) from Drayab County (Ch: Chaya xian), Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR" recently arrived in Nepal and reported on the detention of seven Tibetans on 8 May 2001. The informant, who is a businessman from Lhasa, was on his way to Dram with seven Tibetans from Kham. At the last checkpoint before Dram, PSB officers stopped the vehicle and interrogated the seven Tibetans as to their destination.

Following the interrogation, the Tibetans were taken to a detention centre in Dram. The informant was concerned for their safety and followed them to the detention centre. He tried to convince the PSB that the detainees were not going to India but to Dram to meet with relatives and friends. Though the informant had valid travel permits, he was detained for his interference and defense of the escapees. His driving license was confiscated. After being detained at Dram, the group including Tashi were transferred to Shigatse Detention Centre.

At Shigatse Detention Centre, all their money was confiscated. The informant had 18,500 yuan taken from him and it was never returned. Tashi was accused of being guide for the group of seven Tibetans on the basis of his attempts to defend them. During detention, he was tortured. The length of Tashi's detention was longer than the other seven. They were detained for only three months after thorough interrogations.

Tashi reported that there were approximately 150 prisoners in Shigatse Detention Centre. The informant was initially confined to his cell for two months and then he did forced labour. At that time he noticed three nuns in the detention centre who all disappeared after some days - Tashi was not aware of what happened to them. He saw one elderly man called Tseko, who was ill, being released on the first day of their arrival in the detention centre.

Whilst in detention, Tashi saw a group of eight Tibetans from Amdo who were arrested in Lhartse County (Ch: Lazi xian), Shigatse Prefecture, "TAR", in late August. They were detained for one month. These Tibetans have relatives in Lhasa, who do business. The relatives secured their release by paying a fine of 2,000 yuan for each of them. The informant believe that at least 12 people were sentenced to "Laojiao" (Re-education through Labour Camps) from one to three years in Lhasa. Some of these 12 prisoners had already spent a year in detention.

As none of the Tibetans mentioned during interrogation that Tashi was acting as a guide for them, the PSB eventually let him free. Had his name been associated with acting as a guide and assisting Tibetans to flee, he would have been detained for several years.

Tashi was released on 12 October 2001 after being detained for five months. Upon release, Tashi's driving license was returned to him although he did not get his money back.

Tashi went on to say that by the time he was released, Shigatse Detention Centre was full of people arrested for attempting to escape. On the day of his release, the informant noticed an elderly woman with her six-year-old son being brought to the detention for attempted escape. He heard the elderly woman and her son were released few days later for no apparent reason. ◆

16 escapees detained in Lhartse

A recent arrival reported to TCHRD on the detention of 16 Tibetans in December 2001 in Lhartse County, Shigatse Prefecture, "TAR". On 26 December 2001, a truck carrying a number of passengers including 16 Tibetans was stopped by Chinese PSB in Lhartse. The truck was on its way from Lhasa to Tingri County (Ch: Dhingri xian) in Shigatse.

In the course of the interrogations, the Tibetan refugees were discovered without travel permits and taken off the truck. The PSB confiscated the truck driver's license. The 16 Tibetans were taken to the Shigatse Detention Centre and interrogated about their destination.

Prior to being detained in Lhartse, the group of Tibetans had managed to avoid arrest in Shigatse by the PSB, who had been alerted to the groups' presence in Shigatse. The Tibetans were planning to travel to India to attend the Kalachakra teachings given by the Dalai Lama in Bodh Gaya. Some amongst the group came

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profile **POLITICAL PRISONERS** 93

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

14-year sentence for political activism

Tenpa Wangdrag (lay name: Sonam) was born in 1941 to a farming family in Nedong County, Lhokha Prefecture, "TAR". As a small boy, Wangdrag joined a small Gelug monastery, near his home. During the Cultural Revolution the monastery suffered complete destruction. So, Wangdrag, together with other fellow monks worked in a labour camp making bricks and doing carpentry until 1980.

In 1980, Beijing government relaxed their policies on religious freedom. Wangdrag was among the first group of people, who were allowed to start restoring the completely destroyed site of Gaden Monastery. He worked as a carpenter for five years and lived in a tent. Wangdrag joined debating classes after they restarted in 1986 and returned to his studies of philosophy and Buddhism. He was the ritual master at Gaden Monastery until his arrest in 1988.

On 4 October 1987, Wangdrag and 50 monks from Gaden Monastery, made plans to demonstrate in Lhasa for Tibetan independence, following the demonstrations on 27 September and 1 October of the same year by monks from Drepung and Sera monasteries. However, due to a new PSB checkpoint at Tagtse Bridge, the group was unable to demonstrate.

Subsequently, Wangdrag provided other monks at Gaden with pamphlets about Tibetan freedom, including a speech of the Dalai Lama, which they copied numerous times and posted around the monastery and in Lhasa. Around the same time, "work teams" arrived at Gaden to monitor activities of the monks and advised them against engaging in political demonstrations.

Despite the official orders, Wangdrag spoke out against the "work team" at a meeting of about 300 monks. He said at the meeting that he could not listen to their advice and wanted to dedicate his life to his Buddhist God.

On 5 March 1988, the last day of the Great Prayer Festival, Wangdrag and four other Gaden monks were in Lhasa for the festival. On seeing the Chairman of the United Front, Zheng Ying, at the south of the Barkor, they surrounded him and appealed to him for the release of Yulo Dawa Tsering, a Lama from Gaden Monastery who had been arrested the previous year for talking to foreigners about Tibetan independence. Following this incident, the monks began shouting slogans such as "Free Tibet" which started a demonstration that was to become the largest demonstration in Lhasa during the late 1980's.

The next day, Wangdrak was arrested at Gaden by PSB, along with five other monks. While being taken to Seitru Detention Centre in Lhasa, the monks were beaten and their hands tied behind their backs. Wangdrag was interrogated on 20 different occasions by PSB and other highly placed Chinese officials at the detention centre. After six months his case was sent to Lhasa People's Procuratorate.

According to the '1989 Criminal File: No. 5', Wangdrag was interrogated by the Procuracy only once and on 19 January 1989, was sentenced by the Lhasa Middle Court to 14 years imprisonment and deprivation of 'political rights' for four years. He was accused of organising the demonstrations on 5 March 1988, and of engaging in "counter-revolutionary activities". Wangdrag appealed the severity of his sentence to the "TAR" High Court, but they rejected his appeal.

On 6 March 1989, Wangdrag was transferred to Drapchi Prison. He had refused to change from his monk clothes while staying at the detention centre. At Drapchi

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from Karze County, Lithang County, etc and included two elderly people aged over 60 and four teenagers, all aged under 15.

No further word has since been heard about the condition of any of these detainees. ◆

Religious freedom for "right kind of lamas"

Lobsang (name changed) reported that since 1996, to receive Chinese endorsement as a recognised Lama in Nagchu (Ch: Nagchu), monks are required to publicly denounce the Dalai Lama and undergo an examination of their political stance.

Lobsang, a Lama from Nagchu, stated that only those Lamas who publicly denounce allegiance to the Dalai Lama were able to enjoy "full rights of religious freedom". The informant said, "As a Lama, there is a great deal of pressure to promote Chinese Communist Party ideology and propaganda through our teachings and religious discourses, either to monastic or to the lay community. Local Chinese authorities often sit during the teachings and interject with political comments and control the content and flow of teaching. The Chinese authorities also monitor private lives of the Lamas to ensure that we conform to communist party ideology both in public and in private".

The informant reported the Nagchu Chinese authorities only register Lamas whose political opinions and attitudes complied with Chinese Communist Party ideology. Lamas who promote 'Chinese inspired socialist and religious propaganda' encompassing themes such as "Love the Country, Love the Religion" were more likely to be registered by the authorities and allowed to practice.

The effect of this policy was to limit inclusion of independent Buddhist Lamas into monasteries in Nagchu thus compromising on the quality of teachings for monks and nuns, and the lay community. Lobsang said many Lamas do not receive necessary registration papers and consequently, access to monasteries and teachings to local Tibetans are hindered. The local Tibetans suffer as only registered Lamas are able to teach in the villages and then only under supervision of appropriate authorities.

The presence and influence of Chinese authorities in the monasteries has negative effects on the ability of monks and nuns to maintain discipline and authority, according to the Lama. He further commented, "where once a monk or nun may have been punished for smoking or drinking, infringements such as these now go unpunished, with the consent of the Chinese authorities".

Lobsang lamented, "Many are worried about the loss of traditional cultural and religious activities and the changes that have taken place. The absence of trusted Lamas at this time heightens the difficulties faced by Tibetans in religious spheres. Some Lamas are so taken up with appeasing the demands of the Chinese authorities that they do not have time to conduct the traditional teachings required of a Lama. The pressure on some Lamas is such that their movements are constantly watched and their freedom to move about the area unescorted is curtailed." ◆

Compulsory tax on students

Choeyang graduated as a teacher in 1998 after studying for her certificate at a teacher-training centre in Jyekundo County (Ch: Yushul), Qinghai. She worked in a village primary school in Jyekundo, and taught mathematics, Chinese and Tibetan. She was paid a monthly salary of 1,300 yuan.

Ninety percent of students of the school were Tibetan, and the rest were Chinese. Classes were conducted in Chinese language and activities such as celebration of Tibetan festivals, observance of Tibetan culture, and references to the Dalai Lama were forbidden. For example, holidays were granted only on Chinese festivals to celebrate the occasion.

Choeyang reported on the tax imposed on students every year in her county by the local school authorities. Every June and July, the entire school would be sent up to the hills to search for Yartza Gunbu (caterpillar Fungus). The school was responsible for organising the trip and each day, Choeyang and her class would go up into the mountains to search for Yartza Gunbu. Each student was responsible for collecting up to 50 - 60 plants in a month. Teachers and other adults involved in the school had to collect 60 - 70 plants per month.

Choeyang related, "Every year it became harder and harder for people to locate the plant and meet the quota for collection of Yartza Gunbu. So many people now hunt for the plant that even experienced collectors can only find up to 30 plants a month. Last year, I could find only one good Yartza Gunbu plant per day. When we had collected the required quota (or as much as we could), local authorities would then assess the quality of what was collected - maturity, quality etc."

Often, the Yartza Gunbu collected was of poor quality or they would not have collected enough. As a consequence, the school authorities imposed a system of fines. The salaries of teachers were reduced and students (or their families) were fined with eight yuan for each Yartza Gunbu not collected.

The informant reported the school was never allowed to keep any of the Yartza Gunbu and she was not sure what the local authorities did with the collected plants. She knew of the mother of a school friend who sold her blood for money in order to pay the fines imposed on them for not collecting enough Yartza Gunbu. In another incident, two men with children at the

school who had not been able to collect the required amount of plant went instead to fish in the hope that they would be able to exchange the fish for their fines, which they were unable to pay. They used a common method of catching fish quickly - dynamite. Unfortunately, the dynamite blew up in their faces killing one of the men and seriously wounding the second man.

Choeyang said that opportunities for promotion in teaching field in her area were severely limited. As even with a teaching certificate, finding employment is very difficult. Last year, the local authorities told Choeyang to study further and provided 200 yuan per month as subsidy but she was required to fund the rest of the expenses incurred. She commented that the process of securing employment or of having their position secured is not difficult for those students whose families have money or good family connections. It was this lack of opportunity that finally led Choeyang to leave Tibet.

Another refugee from Kartze County reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult for Tibetans to find opportunities to improve their standard of living. He talked of the well-known concept of guanxi (connection with officials) becoming more widespread and impacting on all aspects of society. He went on to state guanxi and bribery were ubiquitous amongst Chinese officials. ◆

Chinese birth control policy affects Tibetan women

Many Tibetan refugees arriving in Kathmandu, report on human rights violations taking place in Tibet as a result of application of the Chinese birth control policy.

Gelek (23) from Qinghai, reports that Chinese birth control policy is rigidly enforced in his area. Every year, officials from township and county level visit all villages to check on each family. All new babies have to be registered with the county authorities. Families are allowed three children and if this quota is exceeded, women are forcibly sterilised.

Gelek state that every year, a number of women (he is unclear how many), are taken to Sangshul Township to be sterilised. The women taken for sterilisation are required to pay full costs of the operation and all medical care necessary. The local Chinese authorities encourage Tibetans through propaganda to only have one child.

Lobsang (31) from Nagchu County (Ch: Naqu xian), Nagchu Prefecture, "TAR", report that Chinese authorities have applied birth control policy in Tibet; as if Tibet were China, oblivious to the different cultural and ethnic factors that shape population control. Consequently, the policy as applied to Tibetan communities is flawed in its approach and results in human rights violations in many different areas of Tibet. The informant stated that the policy is applied to women with ages ranging between 25 - 40.

In 1999, five women in Nagchu County were forcibly sterilised, a dangerous operation given the standard of medical care available in the county hospital. One week later, one of the women died due to complications with the surgery. Many women in the area are now fearful of being forced into this operation, but Lobsang said once women exceed the number of children permitted by the Chinese, they have no choice but to have the operation.

In Tingri County, each family in the village is allowed to have only three children. In 1997, the informant's wife, after giving birth to the third child, was told by township authorities and head of the local women (Ch: zhouring) to either submit for a sterilisation operation or take contraceptive measures. Owing to poor health of the informant's wife, they resorted to taking birth control pills. For the first year the local authorities provided the pills free of cost but for the last three years, the family has had to bear expenses incurred on the pill. They paid two yuan per pill.

Every year the township and county authorities inspect each family and record the birth of children. Those women who already had three children were coerced into submitting for a sterilisation operation. The operation requires a visit to the county hospital, three hours walk away from the village and the patient has to bear all costs associated with the operation. The township hospital has five Tibetan doctors, although they only prescribe Chinese medicine.

Another escapee from Drayab County, Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR", feels that a serious issue in his local area is birth control. In the past six years, he says the local Chinese administration has become stricter in enforcing two or three child policy for farmers and nomads respectively.

He reports that under the leadership of the local village head, each family was examined. Those women who had two children already were listed and told when to present at the county hospital. "At that time, 50-60 women were sterilised in a day. It is claimed that 700 women were operated upon at that time alone in Drayab County. If the woman was not sterilised then she would be fined 1,600 yuan (US$188), and with an additional birth there would be more fine." The informant reported that living standards were not high in his area, and that the possibility of a fine would constitute a burden that most families could not face, "so the families have no choice but to go for the operation."

In another village in the same county, three of four women are reported to have undergone treatments in 2001 that is believed to be the cause of severe reproductive problems.

The informant said, "They gave medicines to some girls and they couldnt give birth to children anymore. After they gave medicines to the girls, [it seemed] the foetus in their womb didnt die immediately. It was said that they gave an injection when one girl was eight months pregnant, and was having trouble delivering the baby. So, the baby died, and she was taken ill for a long time." ◆

Death of a baby during treacherous winter crossing

Shodo Thashen, his pregnant wife Tashi Dolma and their four children - Tenzin Dhargyal (9), Lobsang Yeshi (7), Tenzin Wangchok (6) and Yeshi Dolkar (4) - fled Tibet after spending nine years in Lhasa.

They lived in Lhasa without an officially sanctioned ration card, which entitles a person to make purchases of land, goods and animals. After nine years, the couple's resources were eventually depleted. This lack of opportunities, particularly for his children, spurred the couple into making the decision to leave Tibet for India.

Thashen took his family and walked from Lhasa to Mt Kailash first for pilgrimage. It took the family three months to arrive and to circumambulate the Mt. Kailash nine times. Along the way, they passed through three checkpoints where the officers check for people's papers. Thashen possessed a citizenship card from Jomda County but his wife had no papers, and was nine months pregnant by the time they reached the last checkpoint. Dolma believes that his wife's pregnancy and a bit of luck enabled the family to make it through the checkpoints each time without any problems.

At Mt Kailash, Dolma's wife gave birth to a healthy baby girl. To help ease the difficulties of a mountain crossing, the family became part of a group of eight escapees who were trying to flee to India. After walking for 23 days thorough the mountains, the newborn baby died. The couple believes that the cold and fatigue during the treacherous mountain crossing in the wintry weather has caused the death of his fifth daughter. The couple brought the corpse of the baby with them to Kathmandu where staff at the Tibetan Reception Centre helped to organise for a cremation to take place. The family and the others arrived at the TRC in Kathmandu on 28 November 2001.

The couple said that while in Lhasa, their children attended aprivately-run primary school where all the students and teachers are Tibetan. However, no cultural activities or discussions regardin the Dalai Lama were allowed. They paid 35 yuan per child per month, a cost that became increasingly hard to bear over the years. Moreover, the staff of the school were constantly harrassed by local authorities to send the students to state-sponsored schools.

Thashen spoke on trading in Lhasa, " It has become very hard over the last few years to trade in Lhasa. Before traders would move around the counry trading goods. In my case, I used to buy jewellery from different areas of Tibet and bring them to Lhasa. In recent years, it has become difficult to move around the country and there are shortage of trading goods also. The presence of large number of Chinese in Tibet discourages Tibetan businessmen from operating. The Chinese business competitors often outshine Tibetan traders due to good connections." ◆

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however, he was forced to wear the standard blue uniform. He stayed in Unit One with criminal prisoners for five months, until the male political prisoner unit was established in 1989. He worked in the kitchen at that time, helping the cook and sometimes in the fields planting vegetables.

On 31 March 1991, the then US Ambassador to China, James Lilley, visited Drapchi prison. During his visit Wangdrag tried to present a petition to the Ambassador, written by political prisoners at Drapchi, listing the names of prisoners who had been tortured and their grievances. Unfortunately a Chinese interpreter snatched the document out of his hand, before the Ambassador could take it. As a result of this incident he was put in solitary confinement for 27 days, before being transferred with four other political prisoners to Powo Tramo prison, 800 km from Lhasa. Drapchi authorities said Wandrag had been responsible for the unrest among political prisoners at Drapchi and that he should be separated from them. Following the transfer, the remaining prisoners, fearing their friends had been taken to be executed, protested and demanded to know what had happened to their friends.

After arriving at Powo Tramo, Wangdrag was placed into solitary confinement for two months and then transferred to Unit Three, which is reserved for criminals. He was kept in Unit Three for three years. Whilst in Unit Three, Wangdrag's job was to manure the vegetable gardens by removing human waste from the unit and taking it to the fields. This job began to affect Wangdrag's health, particularly his eyesight, although he still had to work in the fields. Over time, Wangdrag's general health also began to deteriorate.

Unit three had no medical clinic and so Wangdrag had to wait for the doctor to come once a month. Unfortunately the doctor was unable to help his eyes in any way due to lack of medical resources. Eventually, his eyesight was so bad that the authorities took him to Dam Chu Hospital, near Powo Tramo Prison. He had to visit the hospital a number of times and each time, Wangdrag had to cover all the expenses incurred through the examination and for any medicines provided.

Wangdrag has not seen his family since his incarceration at Powo Tram, due to the distance from his family's home in Lhoka Prefecture to Powo Tramo, which is about 1,000 kilometres. In any case, his family can only afford to visit him once a year. Wangdrag is due for release on 5 March 2002. ◆

Rural poverty heightened

A 53-year-old farmer from Drayab county, Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR", provided information on the Chinese government's grassland allocation policy. "It has been 4-5 years since they distributed the grasslands. They told us not to let other people's cattle come into our land. They said that if someone else's cattle came to your land you should collect 100 yuan from the owner of the cattle.

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TCHRD Human Rights Calendar

For the first time in its history, TCHRD has brought out a 2002 Human Rights calendar. Each month of the calender describes incidences of human rights violations in Tibet pertaining to the month.

The calendar has some of the best paintings drawn by Tibetan students during an All-India Tibetan Schools Human Rights Drawing Competition organised by the Centre on 25 April 2000 to commemorate the 10th Panchen Lama's Birthday.◆

TCHRD Serthar report in English and Tibetan

TCHRD published a small report on Serthar Institute in both English and Tibetan language in December 2001. The report covers recent crackdown against Serthar Institute, history of repression, background on the institute, massive expulsion and demolition operations, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok's (the abbot) current whereabouts and condition, and other additional information.

Serthar Institute is located in Serthar County, Karze "TAP", Sichuan. After years of escalating restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities, over 7,500 religious practitioners at Serthar Institute faced forced expulsion and demolition of over 2,000 dwellings, by October 2001 to ensure the eviction was permanent. The current whereabouts of the revered Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok remains uncertain.

To avail a copy of the report, do mail us at dsala@tchrd.org or yaukatsang@tchrd.org or visit TCHRD website www.tchrd.org/pubs/serthar/ ◆

A Visit from TCHRD Funders

TCHRD happily received Gregor Enste, Head of Asia Desk, Heinrich Boll Fund, and Ulrich Voight from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany. The two were on an informal tour of Dharamsala. They were briefed on the Centre's past and future activities. ◆

TCHRD new members

The Centre would like to welcome following individuals into TCHRD membership fold. The membership list has spiralled from 435 to 466 as of December 2001.

The new members are Chiesa Elsa-Equazione, Dhondup Dorjee, Epeso Veronique, Renol Benjamin, Tsewang Lhamo, C.A.Kallianpur, Dawa Tsering, Kelsang Tsomo, Tenzin Thupten, Tenzin Choekyi, Kehdup Waiser, Phuntsok Dorjee, Phuntsok Dolma, Along Peter Manen, Puneet K Dhaliwal, Jigme Norbu, Tenzin Lodoe, Stephan Salyer, Stephanie Salyer, Stacy Jacobsen, Ahmad Munaf Siddique, Shivansh Singh, Annop K. Singh, Vaibhar Pandey, Jigar Bhatt, Amar Krishna Vyas, Prune De Montvalon, Acharya J. Losal, Acharya Yeshi Phuntsok, N.K. Gupta, Dechen Tsering (Wangchuk Tsering) and Greg Younger-Lewis. ◆

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Each place fights about 3-4 times in a year. If we live friendly and happily with our neighbouring people they tell us that we can not live this way. They distributed the grasslands and they divided the river and always make to fight. They (the government officials) don't come at all to give advice. Yet they will be happy if we fight. They can make [corrupt] money if we fight." He said that fights over grassland in other areas have been shown on television.

This farmer also described collection of Yartsa Gunbhu. "There used to be lots of caterpillar fungus but recently people from outside the region have come to pluck it. These people get a permission pass from the township authorities We used to get 7-8 gyama of fungus, with 4 people collecting at a time. Now we only get 3-4 gyama because that is all that is left after outsiders come in."

Finally, he said that the government " told us it would be good if we take up business. They said we should become traders." He comments "If we become traders they will be able to take lots of tax." ◆

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Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
Top Floor, Narthang Building
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala 17 62 15
H.P. INDIA

E-mails: dsala@tchrd.org; Website: www.tchrd.org; Ph: 0091 1892 23363/25874, Fax: 25874

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) • Racial Discrimination in Tibet (2000) • Impoverishing Tibetans: *China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • Prisoners of Tibet: *Profiles of current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty (2001).*

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Please e-mail us at *dsala@tchrd.org* or *yaukatsang@tchrd.org* or write to us on our postal address for further information.

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