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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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The year 2006 saw a host of sad events unfold. The Chinese authorities in Tibet did not show any sign of let-up. Throughout the year, various human rights abuses in Tibet were documented affecting both the civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights of the Tibetan people. Arbitrary arrest, detention and imprisonment continue to be appalling as ever in Tibet. During the year, two events of concern — start of Gormo-Lhasa railway¹ and the Nangpa Pass tragedy² — gripped international attention intensifying concerns over cultural genocide in Tibet and the plight of Tibetans escaping human rights abuses in Chinese occupied Tibet.

The Gormo-Lhasa railway officially started in July 2006. Since the unveiling of plan, the world's highest railway line was hit with controversy consistently. Among the myriad concerns, political motives and ethnic cleansing stands out prominently. Although government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) insist on development and tourism as motives for making the railway line, deployment of army in large numbers, immigration of Chinese settlers in Tibet, political strategic advantage, environment and hegemony are issues of grave concern. The railway facilitating a huge population influx³, including Chinese settlers into Tibet, is bound to inevitably change Tibet physically and culturally causing further alienation of Tibetan identity. The region will see a growth in mineral exploration, employment and enterprise bringing sudden huge demographic transformation in the region. The reigning factors like scientific know how, technology, knowledge, skills and expertise, government incentive, will stimulate the influx of population into Tibet as all these favour the Chinese than the Tibetans. Tibetans are bound to be excluded further in an already marginalized Tibet.

Despite the government propaganda of development and tourism, nowhere has the concerns and voices of farmers and nomads been addressed. The tertiary sector dominates 80 percent of Tibet and yet their concerns remain accounted for. It is a clear motive by Beijing to invest in the commercially non-viable railway line; political motive reigns supreme as former President of PRC, Jiang Zemin, said as early in 2001, "Some people advised me not to go ahead with this project because it is not commercially viable. I said this is a political decision, we will make this project succeed at all costs, even if there is a commercial loss".⁴ In light of such a motive, China plans to enhance its economic and political grip over the restive region; a political tool designed to wipe out the Tibetan identity.

On the contrary, investments in human capital development such as health and education have been significantly smaller than investments in hard infrastructure development projects. Therefore, in regards to the most basic and fundamental aspects of human development, Beijing has mismanaged its priorities inside Tibet. Hence, Beijing's actions established the fact that it is more concerned with laying an iron track, a tool of control and administration, than in constructing clinics and schools in rural areas, which actually empower and bring positive development to the Tibetan people. Beijing's actions further demonstrate that, in formulating its developmental designs and modernisation in Tibet, it has served its own interests and long-term designs at the expense of the Tibetan people.

The plight of the Tibetan people came to the attention of the international community on 30 September 2006 when the world saw Chinese border police shooting indiscriminately upon fleeing Tibetans, resulting in death of at least two Tibetans at the Nangpa Pass in the Himalaya.⁵ Despite

the shock and condemnation expressed by individuals, non-governmental-organizations, governments and diplomats, status of the 32 arrested people remains unknown to date.⁶ It was even more disappointing that the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) chose to remain silent over the tragedy⁷ signaling an apparent silence by the OHCHR not to antagonize China, a permanent member in the UN Security Council. While no official statement came out from the OHCHR at the time of writing this report, authorities in Tibet have vowed to "strike hard" on Tibetan escapees. On 28 December 2006, in a video conference, all the Public Security Bureaus (PSB) in "TAR" resolved to "strike hard" on Tibetan escapees. The conference presided by the PSB head issued directives to curb "illegal crossings" and "to strike hard during the first half of 2007 [6 months] against illegal crossings", calling the campaign a part of measures to strike hard on "separatist" to ensure stability in the region. All the administrative offices in the "TAR" were directed to implement the campaign and also announce to and educate the public.⁸

Despite gruesome accounts of human rights abuses being documented on the Tibetan plateau over the years, China was able to win a seat in the newly formed United Nations Human Rights Council⁹. It is deplorable that a state tainted with countless abuses of human rights wins a place in the newly formed council irrespective of calls from various human rights organizations and NGOs to reject China's candidacy. PRC is yet to ratify the international covenant on civil and political rights although it is a signatory party to the covenant since 1998. The newly created Council, which its President called a new beginning for the promotion and protection of human rights, elected the first 47 members on 9 May 2006, by General Assembly. China getting elected as one of the 47 members of the council by obtaining 146 of a possible 191 votes makes the motives and purposes of UNHRC questionable. Key abuser of human rights such as China is unfit to sit on the council. The then UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, in his message stated candidly "the true test of the Council's credibility will be use that member states make of it..."¹⁰ The human rights situation in Tibet was raised during the first three meetings of the

Council.

In Tibet, the Chinese authorities continue to abuse human rights of the Tibetan people. In May 2006, high-level Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members of the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") in a meeting from 15-16 May 2006 resolved to "strike hard" against the Tibetan freedom activists and called for intensification of "patriotic education" campaign in the monastic institutions in Tibet.¹¹ In an interview with Der Spiegel on 16 August 2006, Zhang boasted that the authorities in Tibet are "organizing patriotic education everywhere, not just in the monasteries". On another instance at the end of October 2006, the "TAR" CCP plenary meeting resolved to stamp out "separatism" completely and achieve the "final victory"¹². Tibetan nationalists who became the focal point of the campaigns are subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention and imprisonment, enforced disappearance and a host of other violations of rights enshrined in the international bill of human rights. The monastic community is a regular target for implementation of the Chinese campaigns to enforce loyalty to the state. The political campaigns in the monastic institutions greatly hinder the spiritual studies of monks and nuns. Much against their wishes, they are forced to denounce the Dalai Lama thus creating a religious blasphemy. A new "TAR"-specific religious affairs regulations in addition to the regulations earlier promulgated by the State Council in March 2005 is now put into effect since 1 January 2007. The regulations are designed to harness loyalty to the state by the monastic community and to stamp out the Dalai Lama from the hearts and minds of Tibetan people. In light of the new "TAR"-specific religious affairs regulations, religious repression in Tibet seems set to escalate further in 2007.

In early February and July 2006, it became evident that the Dalai Lama rules the hearts and minds of Tibetan people inside Tibet. In an instant reaction to a call by the Dalai Lama based in India banning use of wildlife skin, Tibetans burnt large quantities of garments made of animal pelt.¹³ Public bonfires of burning animal skin were reported from several parts of Tibet; Rebkong, Labrang, Kardze, Chantsa, Ngaba "TAP", Kirti Monastery, and Lhasa.¹⁴ Chinese authorities in Tibet fearing public uprising against the state quickly put a counter ban by restricting Tibetans from assembling to make wild life pelt bonfires. In a startling gesture by the authorities in Tibet, television broadcasters of the Qinghai TV were

officially directed to wear garments decorated with animal pelts.¹⁵ In another instance Tibetans gathered in large numbers at Kumbum Monastery when rumours swept through that the Dalai Lama was going to be there.¹⁶ Several hundreds of Tibetans continued to wait in order to catch a glimpse of him showing defiance despite thousands left the spot after official orders to disperse. Although a rumour, the incident clearly showed the continued reverence to the Dalai Lama by the Tibetans in Tibet.

While Chinese authorities in Tibet carry vilification campaigns against the Dalai Lama, the international recognition of the Dalai Lama as a global leader and statesman grew. The United States, Canada and the Republic of Kalmykia offered their recognition to the meritorious works of the Dalai Lama. In June 2006, Canada's new government led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper granted honorary citizenship to the Dalai Lama.¹⁷ The United States in September this year awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his contribution to "interfaith religious harmony and non-violent conflict resolution"¹⁸. On 10 December 2006, the President of the Republic of Kalmykia awarded the Dalai Lama with the White Lotus order, the republic's highest honor, "for his outstanding merits and considerable contribution to the spiritual revival and prosperity of the republic."¹⁹

Two important changes occurred in the leadership of the so-called "TAR" this year. First, was the appointment of hardliner Zhang Qingli as the new "TAR" Party Secretary on 26 May; he had already been acting Secretary since November 2005 and took full responsibility of the office in June.²⁰ The second was a major shift in the composition of Lhasa's Communist Party Committee, which now seats only 8 Tibetans, or 26 percent of the Committee's thirty seats.²¹ A close ally of President Hu Jintao, Zhang was appointed to Tibet just as the Gormo-Lhasa railway was nearing completion suggested that Beijing wanted to tighten control over Tibet in 2006, which Zhang was quick to do. In June 2006, he expanded the patriotic re-education campaign and shortened government contracts with Tibetan NGOs from five to two years.²² Tibetan representation in the Lhasa Communist Party Committee has declined over the years and is now at a historical low. For the first time in 25 years, Qin Yizhi, a non-Tibetan leads the Lhasa

CPC.²³ The low Tibetan representation (26 percent only) is a mockery of the PRC's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, whose preamble states, "Regional ethnic autonomy reflects the state's full respect for and guarantee of ethnic minorities' right to administer their internal affairs."²⁴ The Special Rapporteur on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance of the then UN Commission on Human Rights in a report in December 2002 said "Although laws guarantee Tibet self-government, Tibetans' governing power is very restricted and is subject to strict supervision and authorization by the central authority". Instead of the public representation improving, the year saw the lowest Tibetan representation.

In 2006, TCHRD documented 26 known Tibetans²⁵ arrested for alleged political activities.²⁶ There are currently 116 known Tibetan political prisoners in Tibet.²⁷ This year some prominent cases of imprisonment of Tibetans; Dolma Kyab²⁸, Sonam Gyalpo²⁹ and Namkha Gyaltsen's³⁰ stand out from the rest owing to the utter harshness in serving long-term sentences between 8 to 12 years prison term. Dolma Kyab, a 29-year-old teacher and writer was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for writing a manuscript "Restless Himalaya" which never got published. His writings about democracy, self-determination and other Tibetan issues landed him in jail on charges of "Endangering State Security", a crime otherwise not understandable to the international community and human rights law. In a hand-written letter to the UN written from prison³¹, Dolma said that he was accused of "espionage" and "separatism" for writing a manuscript. He further stated his firm commitment and belief of raising awareness among humanity in promotion of environmental protection and women's health protection. In another case, Sonam Gyalpo who was last heard of being led away by Chinese State Security Bureau officers on 28 August 2005, a few days ahead of the commemoration of the 40th founding anniversary of the so-called "TAR", was reported to be served with 12 years prison term on charges of "Endangering State Security". His crime was possession of audio and videotapes of teachings by the Dalai Lama and few literatures of political nature. Being a fervent Tibetan nationalist who was earlier put in jail for three years for participating in a peaceful demonstration on

27 September 1987, Sonam was looked upon with suspicion by the Chinese authorities as a routine practice. Another prominent case was that of Namkha Gyaltsen, a monk from Thinley Lado Village, Kardze, sentenced to eight years jail term for alleged painting "separatist" slogans on government property and circulating pro-independence posters and displaying banned Tibetan national flag.

Chushul (*Ch: Qushui*) Prison in Tibet, which began operational around April 2005, is highlighted this year. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Dr. Manfred Nowark, in his report³² to the UN Human Rights Council this year described the abominable conditions of the prison and called for the release of three prisoners (Jigme Gyatso, Bangri Jigme Tsamtrul Rinpoche and Lobsang Tsultrim)³³ who he was able to meet convicted "of a political crime, possibly based on information extracted by torture". The Chinese authority in Tibet use the new prison to imprison Tibetans served with long prison terms. Not much is currently known about the prison but in light of the Special Rapporteur's report, the conditions and maltreatment in Chushul Prison seems to be harsher than Drapchi Prison³⁴. It was reported that many Tibetan political prisoners served with long-term sentences have been transferred from Drapchi to Chushul Prison.

It was inspiring to note that Phuntsok Nyidron, formerly a nun at Michungri Nunnery who spent 15 years in Drapchi Prison, was able to testify about the atrocities being carried out in Tibet to the UN Sub Commission on Human Rights on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on 14 August 2006³⁵. On behalf of the Tibetan people she thanked the Sub-Commission for the historic resolution on Tibet adopted on 23 August 1991. In June 2006, two of the formerly "Drapchi 14 singing nuns", Rigzin Choekyi and Lhundrup Sangmo, arrived in exile in India.³⁶ Along with Phuntsok and other nuns they recorded songs of freedom and inspiration in 1993. Rigzin and Lhundrup served 12 and 9 nine years prison term respectively in Drapchi Prison. Upon arrival, they too spoke of the maltreatment political prisoners receive in Chinese administered prisons in Tibet. Similarly Palden a.k.a Phuntsok Tsering³⁷ and Tsering Dhondup³⁸ who served six and five years in Drapchi Prison respectively upon arrival in exile testified of the abominable conditions and maltreatment political prisoners receive in Drapchi Prison.

In a good development this year, the situation in Nepal improved making it easier for the fleeing Tibetans to transit Nepal for exile in India. For the past few years the Tibetans faced enormous hardship during the government of King Gyanendra and the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. The political agreement this year between the democratic government of Nepal and the Maoists paved way for an easier transit for the Tibetans.³⁹ Resident Tibetans in Nepal could observe important Tibetan national days including the birthday of the Dalai Lama, Tibetan National Uprising Day, and Tibetan Democracy Day etc, which were otherwise prohibited in Nepal.

A total of 2445 Tibetan refugees escaped into exile and reached Dharamsala this year⁴⁰. Of these, majority comprises of teenage Tibetans and novice monks and nuns who seek religious education that is banned in Tibet; children sent by their parent to study in Tibetan exile schools, feeling that it is their only chance for a reasonable education; and nomads and farmers leave because they have been relocated from their land for development projects, like the Gormo-Lhasa railway.

The status of education in Tibet is grim. About half the total exodus from Tibet continues to be minors below 18 years seeking educational opportunities in exile in India. Majority of the fleeing Tibetans who were struck with tragedy at the Nangpa Pass were minors. When images of the tragedy and its survivors flashed across the globe, the world wondered at the innocent face of 7-year-old Dekyi Paltso who was part of the fleeing group. Like many others, despite the risks involved Dekyi was also sent by her parents to get broad-based education in Tibetan schools set up in India, an apparent dissatisfaction over the quality of education in Chinese controlled Tibet. For many Tibetans who graduate from higher educational institutions in Tibet, discriminatory practices by Chinese authorities in hiring Tibetans for civil services is rampant. There is also rampant practice of giving jobs to only rich, affluent and those having connection to officialdom [*Ch: Guanxi*]. In a December 2002 report, the UN Special Rapporteur on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance said that "Tibetans in the "TAR" suffer various forms of systematic and institutional discrimination in the fields of employment, health care, education and

public representation." In late October 2006, Tibetan students of the Tibet University staged a rare public protest in front of government offices in Lhasa over discrimination by Chinese authorities in hiring Tibetan graduates to civil service jobs.⁴¹ Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers quickly acted upon the incident by rounding up the students and forbade them from mass gathering. In May 2006 Tibetan graduates in Golog "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") in Qinghai Province petitioned to the local government to give jobs without bias and discrimination as promised in a policy implementation between 2001 – 2005 but apparently failed.⁴² Fake household registration in Tibet by mainland Chinese students usurp opportunities meant for Tibetans. The Education Department of "TAR" in a rare public acknowledgement in the official media said, "...these days many Chinese students from mainland China were making "TAR" household registration card..."⁴³

In an important landmark this year, a committee from the National People's Congress visited the "TAR" in August 2006 to review the implementation of Regional National Autonomy law promulgated in 1984.⁴⁴ The visit by the committee is first of its kind since the promulgation of law. Although little is known about the visit, the Centre sees this as an important positive development in light of the ongoing Sino-Tibet dialogue. Envoys of the Dalai Lama visited China for a fifth round of talks from 15-23 February 2006.⁴⁵ The delegation had a day long meeting with the Executive Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department, Zhu Weiqun, on 22 February 2006, in Guilin City. The latest round of discussion saw the two parties agree that there is a major difference in approaching the issue and agreed that more discussions and engagements will clear the obstacles. The host arranged a trip to Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region for the envoys to observe the situation; an interest the envoys had shown in their earlier visits.

In the early part of 2006, human rights organizations and free speech campaigners have heavily criticized internet corporate giants Google⁴⁶ and Yahoo Inc. Bowing to official diktat, Google launched a censored service in China. For their weakness in fighting for a right to information, protesters followed Google workers at conferences, university lectures and at its headquarters in California.⁴⁷ Almost all Tibetan organizations and Tibet

supporters removed Google services from their respective websites. Yahoo Inc, for helping Chinese authorities in jailing a Chinese writer, was also heavily criticized by the international community.⁴⁸ All the big names in internet business have now bowed to the Chinese authorities in an effort to expand their presence in the Chinese market. Microsoft, Cisco were earlier criticized for their meekness in filtering information for internet users in China, and Google and Yahoo followed suit. It is deplorable that internet corporates help abusive states like PRC in their crackdown on online dissidents and deprive correct information to millions of information hungry citizens.

2006 marks the 10th anniversary of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, which was established in 1996. Over the decade, TCHRD has endeavored to uncover human rights violations in Tibet and reveal its findings to the rest of the world. As the Centre embarks upon another decade of human rights research, it remains firmly committed to realizing the goals set out in its mission. Despite the dedicated hard work by individuals and various organizations in the world including TCHRD, the human rights situation in Tibet remains grave. In light of the courageous selfless activities and calls for freedom by Tibetans in Chinese occupied Tibet, TCHRD is inspired to work harder and will continue to highlight the situation more vigorously in the years to come.

endnotes

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- 4 New York Times, 10 August 2001
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- 6 While majority of the names were obtained, few remain unknown. The list is as follows: 1)Kunsang Namgyal (22 yrs) Palyul County (hit in leg as seen by others, dead or survived not known), 2)Lobsang Paljor (33 yrs) from Lhopa Township, Kardze County 3)Jampel Tseten (16 yrs) from Poda Township Pashoe County 4)Sonam Wangdue (13 yrs) from Lhasa Tsemonling 5)Sonam Palzom (22 yrs) from Driru County 6)Lobsang a.k.a Tsering Choegyial (monk) (33 yrs) from Tarchen Township Nagchu County 7) Lodoe Nyima (15 yrs) from Domed 8) Gatsok (19 yrs)from Gatha Township Tengchen County 9) Jigme Phuntsok (15 yrs) from Sertsa Township, Tengchen County 10) Sonam Phuntsok (10 yrs) from Jodha County 11) Ming Shomo (13 yrs) from Dege County 12) Karma Tsethar (9 yrs) from Derge County 13)Tenwang (7 yrs) 14)Lhakpa Dolma (8 yrs) 15) Dhondup Lhamo (9 yrs) 16)Dechen Dolma (10 yrs) 17)Wangchen (11 yrs) 18) Tsedon (12 yrs) 19)Karma Tseten (16 yrs) 20)Lodoe Namkha (16 yrs) 21)Karma (19 yrs) 22) Samten (19 yrs) 23)Dhondup Palden (21 yrs)
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EU Arm Embargo on China to Stay

According to BBC report on 18 January 2007 "The European Union (EU) stands by its conditions for lifting an arms embargo on China" the EU head of foreign relations has said at bilateral talks. EU enforced arm embargo on China after 1989 Tiananmen Square massacres of pro-democracy demonstrations by the Chinese students.

Mrs Ferrero-Waldner, the EU External Relations Commissioner re-listed three conditions - China must ratify the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, release activist who were involved in Tiananmen Square demonstrations, and abolish "re-education through labour" system of imprisonment without trial. United States and Japan had been putting pressure on EU to continue with the arm embargo.

The Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing denounced the decision to stay the arm embargo as a "political discrimination".

China Detain a Tibetan for Saving lives of Sheep

Ngawang Nyima, 36 years old from Gangkat Township of Dhingri County reached Tibetan Reception Center in Kathmandu in January 2007. The following is her account of the arrest of Tibetan businessman and village leader Pempa for saving lives of 100 sheep from slaughterhouse. "Pempa aged around 40s is a well-known businessman from Dhingri. He is very sincere, generous and religious person. He helps poor people of his village and is even chosen by the villagers as their leader. During the holy month of Saka Dawa on 4th month of Tibetan calendar, in June 2006, it is known that Pemba purchased 100 sheep from various slaughterhouses around Dhingri and gave them new lease of life. Pempa dedicated the positive karmic merit accrue from such act to the long life of the Dalai Lama. This news spread and soon the local police came to his house to search his house. The police found a CD of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech. After his arrest the Chinese authority confiscated all the 100 sheep he bought. He is currently detained at Ngari prison in Shigatse."

Human Rights Watch Report Critical of China

Human Rights Watch World report 2006 is critical of China's human rights record. Under a separate heading TIBET, it has cited major human rights violation in Tibet in year 2006 - beginning with arrest and four year sentencing of Gendun, a Tibetan monk for expressing his opinion on Tibetan history and culture. The case of Namkha Gyaltzen's eight years sentence is also highlighted. The Chinese shooting of Tibetans escaping through Nangpala Pass is given in details.

It also state "the opening of the Qinghai-Lhasa railroad in July 2006 exacerbated concerns among Tibetans that they would be unable to compete economically with an anticipated influx of Han migrants." On the whole the report was critical of China's human rights record in Tibet.

Two Monks of Tashilhunpo Monastery Detained

The Chinese claim of religious freedom in Tibet is a mere lip service or empty claims. The fact that in Tibet today there is no freedom of belief and faith. In an interview with Kunga Namgyal alias Lobsang Choephel, a monk of Tashilhunpo Monastery, who arrived at Dharamsala in January this year after escaping Tibet testified to the Centre, "In February of 2006 the Public Security Bureau (PSB) of Shigatse came to Tashilhunpo Monastery and arrested a monk named Buchung age around 30 from his room. The reason for his arrest was that he showed CD of the Dalai Lama's teaching at 30th Kalachakra, held at Amravati in south India in January 2006 to his village people. Buchung is known to have detained at Shigatse Detention Centre and there is no information whether he was tried by the Govt of not."

In another instance - In September 2006, Shigatse PSB arrested three monks of Tashilhunpo Monastery at the outskirts of Shigatse while attempting to escape to exile. After their arrest three of them were handed over to PSB and detained at Shigatse Detention Centre. Passang 26 year old, one of the three monks was forcefully made to confess to the charge of luring other two monks to escape with him. Other two monks Tshedor, 21 years old and Tashi 21 years were released after brief detention. They have rejoined Tashi Lhunpo Monastery.



Phuntsok Nyidron visits TCHRD

Phuntsok Nyidron, 34 years old, a former "Drapchi Singing Nun" visited Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy on 29 December 2006. This was her first visit to India after her release into exile in United State on 15 March 2006. Mr Jamphel Monlam, Assistant Director introduced the staff members and showed around the office. He also briefed about the works of the centre and the publication materials and campaign launched for her release.

Phuntsok Nyidron, a former Michungri nun was first arrested on 14 October 1989 at the age of 19 for her peaceful pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa. She was sentenced to nine years on the charge of "counter-revolutionary" and for being a ringleader of the group. Again in 1993, her sentence was extended by eight years for recording songs on freedom along with other 13 nuns. She was given a year reduction from her 16 years prison sentence. She was released on 26 February 2004 after serving 15 years of imprisonment for her peaceful demonstration and her engagement in singings songs with her colleague in Drapchi prison. She was awarded the Reebok Human Rights Award in 1995, while she was in prison. Even after her release, her movements were restricted and was virtually under house arrest. After strong international outcry and lobbying she was finally released to exile in March 2006.

Assistant Director Spoke at Youth Leadership Training

Jamphel Monlam, Assistant Director was invited as one of the resource persons at the "Tibetan Youth Leadership Training" organized by Tibetan Youth Congress from 4-10th January 2007 at Tibetan Youth Hostel, Rohini New Delhi. Mr. Monlam spoke in length on human rights situation inside Tibet. He also introduced the young aspirant leaders with general power structure of the Chinese leadership, Communist Party of China and those who in China leadership with the help of slide presentation.



Mr Monlam addressing the participants

A floor was later opened to the participants of the training and there

was active discussion between the participants and the resource person. His talk on human rights situation and power structure of the Chinese leadership was greatly appreciated by the workshop participants.

**Wishing all the readers a very Happy and Prosperous Losar (Tibetan New Year).
-TCHRD Staff**

Ngawang C. Drakmargyapon Briefs Tibetan NGOs

Ngawang C. Drakmargyapon, a UN expert briefed staff of the Tibetan NGOs in Dharamsala - Tibetan Youth Congress, Tibetan Women's Association, the Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet, Students for a Free Tibet and Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy at the latter office on the functioning of UN Human Right Council. He had an informal discussion with the

members of the Tibetan NGOs about the functioning of the former UN Human Rights Commission and its relevance with the newly formed UN Human Rights Council, which will meet again in March-April this year. He also suggested a need of a better coordination among Tibetan NGOs in raising the human rights issues at the highest level in more constructive manner.

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2005)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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Nangpa La shoot out survivor manages to escape into exile on his second attempt

On 30 September 2006, a group of Tibetans escaping from Tibet while crossing Nangpa pass near Nepal border were shot by the Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP). It was reported that a 17-year-old nun Kelsang Nortso was killed and a youth in mid twenty was injured due to the incriminate shooting by Chinese PAP. 41 Tibetan refugees from the group managed to reach Dharamsala safely, while 32 Tibetans were arrested by Chinese during the shooting incident.

A 15-year-old Jamyang Samten one of the detainee, was able to escape into exile during his second attempt. He safely reached Dharamsala on 29 January 2007. He testified TCHRD about the Nangpa la shooting incident and its aftermath.

“My name is Jamyang Samten. I am from Joda district, Chamdo County. I belong to a family of four which consist of my mother, brother, sister and myself. I attended an elementary school at Chamdo Township from the age of 6. I dropped out of school at the age of 10 and worked as animal herder for the village office. I get 300 Chinese Yuan per month as a salary for my service. While herding, I met many people and some of them suggested me to go to India, where I will get audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and better education opportunity. Therefore I decided to escape to India. Without informing my family members, I went to Lhasa and stayed with my uncle who is a trader. After 10 days, I spoke to my uncle about my intention to go into exile. Thereafter, he sought a guide who

would take me to India and paid 5000 Chinese Yuan to the guide. When we started our journey to India from Lhasa, there were 75 people in the group excluding two guides.

We left from Lhasa in a vehicle and started walking after crossing Shigatse. On 29 September 2006, before reaching the base of Nangpa La Mountain near Nepal border, one of our co-escapee Lobsang Paljor, who is from Kardze County became ill and was not able to walk. Our guide decided to stay back to help him and would come later on. After advancing further, we reach near Nangpa la during night. Since it was a bright moon night, we could easily see army stalking in their base camp.

Due to that, one of the guide said, ‘if we all go together, there is a high risk of Chinese police seeing us. I will take my group of 43 people first and will come afterward to take you all.’ He left with his group.

We the remaining 32 people, waited below snow capped mountain for the return of our guide. At that time our co-escapee Lobsang Paljor has come, but the guide Jamyang was not with him. Upon enquiring him about the other guide, he told that Jamyang has left him. He does not know where he went. We waited for our guides for the whole night and it became morning. Suddenly at that time, we heard the gunshots and also saw two army vehicles moving. We became very apprehensive about the safety of our earlier group, who might be in trouble. Out of fear and helplessness, we hid at the mountain for three days. After three days of hiding at the place, we decided

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY



Continued at next page

Continued from page 1

to proceed further at 4 pm, as we were left with no food and may die out of starvation.

As we moved from the place, we saw a man waving his hand to us to come up. We mistook him for our guide and climbed towards him. However, he shot two gun fires toward us. Though we had wished to escape at that time, but we could not as we all were hungry and tired. Thus, we did not move from our place. Within a moment, large number of army climbed down from the hill and handcuffed all of us. They took us to the army camp.

From the 41 co-escapees who have gone before our group, a nun was killed and a boy was injured at his leg due to shooting by Chinese PAP at the Nangpa pass on the morning of 30 September 2006. In the camp, we were provided little food and then shifted to Dhingri(ch:Tingri) Detention Centre. The dead body of the nun was also brought to Dhingri. However, it was not known what happened to the dead body afterwards.

In the detention centre, we were severely interrogated by the officials for three days about our guides with severe beating and torture. We were then taken to a new detention centre in Shigatse. Over there, we were made to stand still with a bowl full of water on our head. In case the bowl fell on the ground we were beaten. This torture continued for ten days. Afterwards, we were made to do odd jobs for a month.

Soon relatives and parents of the detainee began to arrive at the detention centre for our release. From the 13 children in the group, the eldest was 15 years old, while the youngest was four years old. After a month, we were released by the police with a threat that we will be given death sentence, if we caught trying to escape into exile again.

We all went together to Lhasa from Shigatse, and afterwards went back to our respective homes. I went back to my uncle's place in Lhasa. After staying at his place for few days, I was able to

secure a travel pass from Lhasa to Dram (a bustling town at the Nepal-Tibet border). In Dram, I paid 3000 Chinese Yuan to one Nepali and he took me to Tibetan Reception Centre at Kathmandu, Nepal. I reached there in December 2006." ■

EP and Canada adopt resolutions on Tibet

The European Parliament during its meeting in Strasbourg, France on 15 February 2007, passed a resolution on Tibet reiterating its support to peaceful dialogue between China and Tibetan government in exile. "Commission hopes that a solution to the Tibet question will be found soon that is compatible with Chinese sovereignty and respects the Tibetan population, and that the only way of attaining this ultimate goal is by means of a peaceful process based on open and direct dialogue that is not subject to any precondition." The resolution further "urges the government of the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama to continue and resume, notwithstanding their differences on certain substantive issues, the dialogue without preconditions and in a forward-looking manner that allows for pragmatic solutions that respects the territorial integrity of China and fulfills the aspirations of the Tibetan people." The resolution shows European Parliament's continuous support of peaceful resolution of Tibet issue through dialogue.

On the same day the Canadian Parliament during its meeting in the Capital city of Ottawa, also passed a resolution on Tibet. The resolution which was adopted by unanimous consent that, "urges the Government of the People's Republic of China and the representatives of Tibet's government in exile, notwithstanding their differences on Tibet's historical relationship with China, to continue their dialogue in a forward-looking manner that will lead to pragmatic solutions that respect the Chinese constitutional framework, the

territorial integrity of China and fulfill the aspirations of the Tibetan people for a unified and genuinely autonomous Tibet." The motion was introduced by Ms. Peggy Nash, a Member of Parliament from Toronto and the draft resolution was championed by Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet, as an initiative that parliamentarians around the world could take up in their own legislatures. "The coordinated actions of democratically elected bodies representing hundreds of millions of people would demonstrate an unprecedented level of solidarity for achieving a negotiated solution for Tibet," Di Nino said. ■

Richard Gere urged Germany to press China on human rights and Tibet

Richard Gere, who was in the German capital for the annual Cinema for Peace gala urged Germany, which holds the European Union and G-8 presidencies, to press China about its human rights record and Tibet.

Gere, a longtime advocate of the Tibetan cause said at the news conference that, "This is a moment of great possibility for ... not just punishing but encouraging China to become part of the modern world and Tibet should be ever-present in any discussion with China."

Bob Geldof, a rocker and anti-poverty campaigner, who was with Gere also echoed Gere's call for action on China. "It is probably the job of Germany this year, the privilege of Germany this year to embrace China into the international norms that are expected of behaviour," He said. ■

profile

POLITICAL PRISONERS

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

Biography of former political prisoner Ngawang Rigdol

33-year-old Ngawang Rigdol alias Yeshi Dolma was born in Yeje Village, Thangkya Township, Meldrogungkar County, Lhasa, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). Her family livelihood is dependent on farming. Due to poor condition of her family, all the children work in farm and did not receive opportunities to attend school. Though she was ordained as a nun at Garu Nunnery, she did not get enough religious study over there as the nunnery was totally destroyed during Cultural Revolution and was not reconstructed afterwards. When Ngawang joined the nunnery, there were around 50 nuns in the nunnery. At that time they spent their time reconstructing the nunnery and didn't receive much time for studying religious text.

In late 1980, when Tibetans in Tibet started peaceful demonstrations and protest calling for Tibet independence, she witnessed Chinese police ruthlessly suppressing peaceful demonstrators with brute force and violence. Ngawang took part in various pro-independence activities since 1989, but never got caught by the officials.

However on 14 June 1992, she along with ten other nuns were arrested by the officials during their protest in Lhasa. They started a peaceful demonstration from Potala palace calling for Tibet independence. As they reached near Lhukhang Road, five police vehicles stopped them and arrested by the Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials. The officials threw them in 5 police vehicles and were forcibly taken to "TAR" Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Centre in Lhasa City. The nuns were beaten severely for an hour at the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre and afterwards shifted to Lhasa City PSB Detention Centre

At Lhasa Detention Centre, the nuns were made to stand still facing the wall and were thoroughly interrogated. During the interrogation, Ngawang confessed that she was solely responsible for the protest. Hence, she was put in a solitary confinement, while

the other nuns were imprisoned at fourth floor in one cell.

The cell was completely dark with foul smell due to human excrement and urine. During her three months and 17 days solitary confinement in the cell, the prison authority brought some photo in the evening for identification. By linking her with the person in the photo, they constantly interrogate with severe beating.

Due to poor condition in the cell, torture and constant mental harassment, she developed poor vision, heart ailment and hearing problems. Despite her illness, she was not given any medical treatment in the prison. Ngawang was later shifted in a cell with three sex workers. However, her interrogation continued in the new cell. Time and again she was interrogated about the person and organisation behind her activities.

Finally in December 1993, Lhasa People's Intermediate Court charged Ngawang and Lobsang Choekyi as the main offenders and sentenced them to 6 years of imprisonment. Her other mates were given sentences ranging from two to five years of imprisonment. They were later transferred to Unit 3 in Drapchi Prison in January 1993. At that time there were around 100 female prisoners in Unit 3 which was specifically for female prisoners.

In Drapchi, she was made to clean the sewage for more than a year, which further worsened her health complications. Though, she was bedridden for three years in the prison, she was not given any medical facility by the prison authorities. Further she was made to do work by the prison guard. During family monthly visits, she was helped by two prisoners to walk.

When her family came to know about her poor health condition, they brought food, health tonic and medicine for her during their monthly visit, which gradually helped her in restoring her eyesight and health to some extent. The sufferings and torture inflicted on Ngawang in prison caused great

anxiety to her parents and which subsequently led to their premature death. Despite her personal loss and suffering, she never gave up her struggle for Tibet. Moreover in 1998, during one of the protest incident in Drapchi Prison, she was severely beaten and her hand was seriously injured due to beatings in the prison.

After enduring torture and suffering for six years in Drapchi, she was finally released on 14 June 1998 upon the completion of her sentence. After release, she sought medical treatment with the help of her relatives. She later got job as a road sweeper at Lhasa City. However, she was fired from the job after few months, as officials of the city came to know that she was a former political prisoner.

Then, she set up a small cafe in Lhasa Tsemonling. But the local police official suspected political discussions as many released political prisoner used to gather at the cafe. She was constantly monitored and was made to report her monthly activities to the local police station. Moreover, the local police official threatened her landlord and he subsequently vacated her from the cafe. Left with no other alternative to earn livelihood, she secretly left Lhasa and went to Mount Kailash, where she set up a small cafe. There she was able to earn some profit and also married a man who used to help her in the cafe. They had a baby from the wedlock.

During their stay over there, they have to report at Lhasa and Meldro Gongkar Police Station every month. Since they have not reported at the police station for long time, the police began their search. The police later found their whereabouts. Fearing the threat of their arrest, Ngawang and her family later escaped into exile on September 2006. They reached Kathmandu based Tibetan Reception Centre in October 2006 and Dharamsala on 29 December 2007. ■

Railway and Mining in Tibet

Meng Xianlai, director of China Geological Survey (CGS) announced on 24 January 2007 about the new discovery of vast metal reservoir in Qinghai- Tibet Plateau which includes crude oil, copper and many other resources of strategic importance. An estimate of 600 new sites of copper, iron, lead and zinc ore deposits were discovered by Chinese geologists on the Qinghai- Tibet Plateau since 1999, as per report made by the latest geological survey.

The recent announcement by the Chinese Geographical Survey on the discovery of vast mineral reservoir findings in Tibet came as a prophecy of the long claim of Tibetan government in exile about the Chinese exploitation of Tibet's rich natural resources. Earlier some experts were skeptical about the claims of Tibet's being rich in minerals and crude oils.

The minerals crude oil, copper, iron ore are worth \$ 128 billion. The new discovery came as a major relief to China's energy starved economy. China's economy is largely dependent on imports of raw minerals. China imported 326.3 million tons of iron ore in 2006. The huge demand of iron ore led to 164 percent price hike between 2004 and 2006.

The opening of new railway line from Golmud to Lhasa in July 2006 also assumes great significance in the view of new discovery of minerals in Tibet. In the past, Tibet was inaccessible due to hilly terrain and lack of transportation. With the opening of railway line, there is no end of natural resources extraction by China, which rightfully belongs to Tibetan people.

The main concern is the rights of the native Tibetan people who owned the land. They were not only denied from accessing the benefits of rich mineral resources, they were also evacuated from their land and house without any compensation. Since 1959, with the forceful occupation of Tibet by China, Tibetan people were deprived of basic human rights in their own land. Forget about their legal rights to their natural

resources, the locals were kept in dark about the mining activities going in their locality and neighborhood. Moreover, the mining activities have led to various environmental destruction and health hazards on the local people. The following interview with the resident of Markham County, highlights the testimony to the China's exploitation of Tibet's natural resources.

An interview with a resident of Markham, where 17 people died due to mining accident in April 2005

A 24 year old Gyatso, from Bhotsa Village, Shitrong Township, Markham County, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"), who has reached Tibetan Reception Center, Kathmandu, Nepal in December 2006 gave a detail account of mining activities going in his native village in Shedrong Township.

According to him, "In January 2006, around 15 Chinese geologists came to survey the Thaedhong Mountain which lies at the back of Bhotsa Village. After thorough survey of the mountain, they all went back. At that time the geologists came in two huge vehicles, bringing along with them many machines and tools which are used for the mining examination. They took some samples of soils and rocks from the mountain for further examination.

"The actual destruction of Thaedhong took place in August 2006 by using dynamite to blast the mountain. Around 80 feet were dug from all four directions and started to extract minerals from the ores. However, the Chinese government kept villager in dark about the activities by keeping the mining activities secret from the natives. All the labourers in the mines were Chinese. Not a single Tibetan is given a job in the mining field though it is located in their village. Tibetans were even not allowed near the mining areas."

There are more than 100 Chinese labourers working in the mining fields. It was assumed that more than 10 trucks loaded with mine materials are transported from the mountain each day. There is a speculation going among the villager that these trucks are being sent to industries in Yunnan. However, it was yet not known to them about the definite place where it is transported.

There are around 28 families living near Thaedhong Mountain. Of them 16 were permanently residing around the mountain. The residents were issued notice by local Chinese government in September 2006, to evacuate their place and move to Dram area near Nepal-Tibet border. The notice which was declared in one of the general meeting held by Township government, further state that the villagers had to move out as quickly as possible before the deadline of January 2007. Many farms of the natives were destroyed by rocks falling from the mountain after start of mining activities and such destruction is bound to happen in future also.

During the examination of mountain by the Chinese government appointed geologists, the elders of the villagers petitioned before various levels of government including County level, requesting them to cancel the mining activities taking place in their locality.

Moreover, the villagers has requested many time to Chinese government through Lodoe, a prominent leader in "TAR" and a native of Tsadrong district, Shitrong Township, Markham County, not to start mining activities in their village. But their requests went unheard and the mining activity was started forcefully without the consent of local people. The Thaedhong Mountain is now completely ruined due to mining and has led to the destruction of environment of the locality." ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

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“Democratisation and Local Governance” Workshops in exile Tibetan Settlement

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy conducted workshops and Survey on “Democratization and Local Governance” in the Tibetan Settlements of Lugsam Samdrupling, Dickyi Larsoe in Bylakuppe and Hunsur Rabgyaling settlements.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) attaches great importance to grassroots democracy, particularly the people’s participation in Electoral Democracy. In light of TCHRD’s mission, the Centre conducted workshops for the Tibetan people in Bylakuppe and Hunsur settlements. The workshop was aimed at preparing the general public to elect their Settlement Officer and constitute Local Assembly.

The task was carried out in three phases. In the first phase the Centre collected public opinion on electing their own Settlement Officer and setting up the Local Assembly. The Centre’s staff were divided into three committees to collect public opinion and verdict on the Settlement Officer and the Local Assembly.

In the second phase, the Centre organized workshops for heads of the villages, secretary of the Tibetan co-operative societies, representatives of NGOs and Managers of the various monastic institutions.



Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Election Commissioner addressing workshop participants

In the third phase, a public talk was organized for all the people in the settlements. It is in the purview of these three phases of the work, the Workshop on “Democratization and Local Governance” was conducted in Bylakuppe and Hunsur Rabgyaling Tibetan Settlements.

The finding of survey

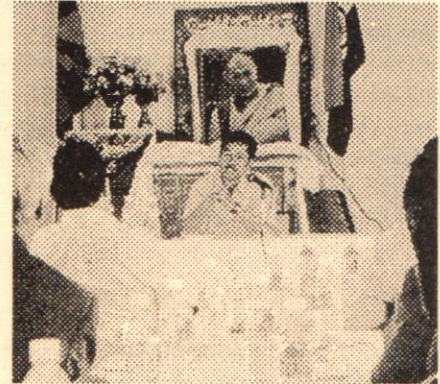
The Centre’s staff were divided into three committees in conducting the survey. The survey in Bylakuppe and Hunsur settlements took place between 1 February and 4 February 2007.

I. (a) On 1 and 2 February 2007, survey was conducted in 14 camps of Dickyi Larsoe settlement. A total of 482 people sat for the survey and out of which 445 people are in favour of setting up the Local Assembly at the grassroots level and the rest of 33 people are not in favour of setting up the Local Assembly at the grassroots level.

(b) Simultaneously the survey was conducted on the appointment of Settlement Officer. A total of 488 people sat for the survey. The outcome of the survey pointed out to 339 people in favour of the Settlement Officer appointed by the Tibetan Government in Exile while 139 people in favour of electing Settlement Officer by the people.

II. (a) On 2 and 3 February 2007, the survey was conducted in 12 camps of Lugsam Samdrupling Settlement. A total of 1676 people sat for the survey and out of which 1474 people were in favour of setting up Local Assembly at the grassroots level and the rest of 190 people opted not in favour of setting up the Local Assembly at the grassroots level.

(b) Simultaneously the survey was conducted on the appointment of Settlement Officer. A total of 1381 people sat in for the survey. The outcome of the survey pointed out to 683 people in favour of the Settlement Officer to be



Mr. Thupten Lungrik, Education Minister addressing workshop participants

appointed by the Tibetan Government in Exile while 661 people in favour of the Settlement Officer elected by the people.

III. (a) On 4 February 2007, the survey was conducted in 14 camps of Lugsam Samdrupling Settlement about the appointment of Settlement Officer. A total of 346 people sat in the survey. The outcome of the survey pointed out to 239 people in favour of the Settlement Officer appointed by the Tibetan Government in Exile while 96 people are in favour of the Settlement Officer to be elected by the people.

Hunsur Rabgyaling Settlement already has a functioning Local Assembly. Hence, the Centre did not conduct survey on Local Assembly.

Studying and analyzing the public opinion

The opinion forms were distributed and collected simultaneously on 2 and 5 February 2007. In the second stage, the opinions were categorized and studied. The general public worries and concerns were underlined and picked out.

The outcome of the opinions and concerns were then handed out to resource persons; Mr. Thupten Lungrik, Education Minister; Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Election Commissioner; Ms. Dolma Gyari, Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in exile, and Mr. Pema Jungney, Member of Parliament.

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People's doubts and misconceptions were forwarded to the resource persons. They in turn addressed the doubts and misconceptions to the general public. In that way the workshop presented a healthy dialogue and interaction amongst the general public.

Training and Workshop in Hunsur

The first Workshop was organized at Hunsur Tibetan settlement on 6 and 7 February 2007. The workshop was attended by the Settlement Officer, Local Assembly, village heads, community heads, Tibetan Freedom Movement, Tibetan Co-operative Society, Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, Regional Tibetan Women's Association and representatives from various monasteries.

The speakers and resources person were invited from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Deputy speaker of the parliament, veteran parliamentarian, and the Election Commissioner. The speakers called upon the workshop attendees about the importance and needs of why the settlement officer should be elected by the people at the grassroots level.

During their presentations, the speakers clarified many deeply entrenched doubts and confusions among the people. They also suggested remedies and solutions to the problems and ills faced by the Tibetans in the settlements. They spoke at length about



Mr. Pema Jungney addressing the public at Dickyi Larsoe Tibetan Settlement

the merits of the local governance and a vibrant grassroots democracy. They called upon the people to initiate democracy from bottom-up rather than having to introduce from top-to-bottom, as it has been the case so far.

Resource Persons

Thupten Lungrik, Minister of Education spoke at length about the functioning and administration of the Tibetan-Government-in-Exile. He called upon the people to be more proactive in assisting the Tibetan Government in decentralizing the process of democracy from its fledging state to more vibrant status. The general public was asked to play the lead role in the democratization. He marshaled scores of reasons and long term benefits for the people to have their own elected Settlement Officer through electoral process rather than having restricted and

confined to one appointed by the headquarter in Dharamsala.

Mr. Pema Jungney, a veteran parliamentarian gave an insightful exposure to the Local Assembly members. Hunsur settlement already has a functioning local assembly unlike Bylakuppe Tibetan settlements. He conducted a lively mock demonstration to the local assembly members about how to conduct the proceedings and the functioning of the local assembly. He also educated them, how to conduct a vibrant local assembly, the power of local assembly and the proceedings of local assembly house.

Deputy Speaker, Ms. Gyari Dolma gave an elaborate talk on the functions and merits of democracy to the workshop attendees from historical perspective, its birth, growth and spread. She also highlighted the limitations and shortcomings of the Tibetan democracy in exile.

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Election Commissioner called upon the people to take more responsibility and initiative in electoral process. He advised the general public that only people's participation in electoral process such as voting would ultimately test and determine the democracy.

Questions and answers session concluded the workshop. Speakers pointed out remedies and ways to solve the prevailing problems.

Public Discussion in Hunsur

During the last leg of programme in Hunsur Rabgyaling Tibetan Settlement, a public talk was organized at the Hunsur Community Hall on 8 February 2007. The talk was aimed at reaching out to more people.

Ms. Dolma Gyari asked for a need of efficient and successful functioning of Local Assembly. She also called on general public to participate more in order to set up local governance and a functioning grassroots democracy.

Mr. Thupten Lungrik issued his words of encouragement that the general public at settlements can elect their own chosen Settlement Officer. He pointed out to people that the elements of suspicion, doubt, lack of knowledge and unnecessary skepticism on the part of general public so far had dragged



Resource persons and workshop participants at Hunsur Rabgyaling Tibetan Settlement



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Ms. Dolma Gyari addressing participant at Workshop in Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement

the goal of setting up a vibrant electoral process at the grassroots level. He reiterated that these unfavourable conditions had acted as a stumbling block in setting up a grassroots democracy through popular choice.

The Election Commissioner Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, appealed the public to participate and take their share of democratization in exile.

Many pertinent questions were raised and the speakers shared their viewpoints. The workshop did succeed in informing the general public.

Similar Training and Workshop in Bylakuppe

The second Workshop was organized in Lugsam Samdrupling and Dikyil Larsoe Tibetan Settlements in Bylakuppe from 9 to 10 February 2007. The Workshop was attended by the settlement officer, village heads, community heads, managers from various monasteries, representatives of Tibetan Freedom Movement, staff of the Tibetan Co-operative society, Regional

Tibetan Youth Congress and Regional Tibetan Women's Association.

Public Discussion in Bylakuppe

During the last leg of programme at the Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement, a public talk was organized at the Dikyil Larsoe Community Hall on 11 February 2007. The talk was aimed at reaching out to more and wider people.

Ms. Dolma Gyari, Deputy Speaker asked for a need of efficient and successful functioning of Local Assembly. She also called on general public to participate more in order to set up local governance and functioning of grassroots democracy.

Mr. Thupten Lungrik, Minister of Education issued his words of encouragement that the general public at settlements can appoint or elect their own chosen Settlement Officer. He pointed out to people that the elements of suspicion, doubts, lack of knowledge and unnecessary skepticism on the part of general public so far had dragged the goal of setting up a vibrant electoral process at the grassroots level. He reiterated that these unfavourable conditions had acted as a stumbling block for setting up a grassroots democracy through popular choice.

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, The Election Commissioner appealed to general public to participate and take their share of democratization in exile.

Many questions were raised and the speakers shared their viewpoints. The workshop did succeed in informing the

general public about democratization of Tibetan democracy in exile and effective local governance.

Conclusion:

The workshop was successful in laying a firm foundation in setting up the Local Assembly and electing the Settlement Officer. The workshop was immensely successful in educating and informing the general public.

Prior to the actual Workshop, the Centre's staff listened and gathered opinions from various age groups with their views on the Local Assembly and election of the settlement officer.

Their views and opinions were forwarded to the speakers before their presentation. Accordingly, the general public fears, misconceptions, doubts and worries were addressed and clarified. The public was made to understand from this workshop that all the limitations and problems could be addressed through the rules and regulations.

The workshop has left an indelible impression on the public in gaining their trust, faith and conviction in the Tibetan Government's initiative and endeavours regarding the democratization.

The public expressed in their feedback form that they have found a firm faith and conviction in setting up the Local Assembly and the Settlement Officer at the grassroots level. The feedback forms suggested that the workshop succeeded in benefiting and empowering the general public's knowledge and understanding on the local governance and grassroots democracy.

The feedbacks also appealed and requested the TCHRD to conduct similar workshop and carry out survey studies in other Tibetan settlements in future.

There is a general sense of optimism and positive feeling in the public that the local assembly and election of settlement officer can be realized in future if the ongoing initiative and the drive continues. This is the biggest outcome of the workshop conducted by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy from 1 February to 11 February 2007 in Bylakuppe and Hunsur Tibetan Settlement.



Resource persons and workshop participants at Lugsam Samdrupling Tibetan Settlement

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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 in 1996.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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VOLUME XII NUMBER 3

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One detained during incense burning incident

At least one person was detained by Chinese police, when an unusually large number of Tibetans gathered at the Bumpa Ri (Vase Hill) in Lhasa, to burn incense and offer prayer on 14 March 2007, as reported by Radio Free Asia. The incense-burning ritual was made to coincide with grand life long offering ritual for His Holiness the Dalai Lama longevity made by the Tibetan Government-in-exile and Tibetan community in exile on 14 March 2007 at main Temple, Dharamsala.

It was reported that, Chinese police officials, after witnessing the gathering, stepped in to block the Tibetans from participation. At that time, a 42 year old-Tibetan woman from Jomda, Chamdo County, "TAR" was detained and another old woman in her 60s was assaulted.

Hundred of police were deployed in Lhasa in the afternoon to monitor and block people from burning incense. It was also reported that the offering prayers and burning of incense were

done in large way at Lhasa's main Cathedral; Tsuglhakhang and Tibetan shops in Bhakor remained closed on that day.

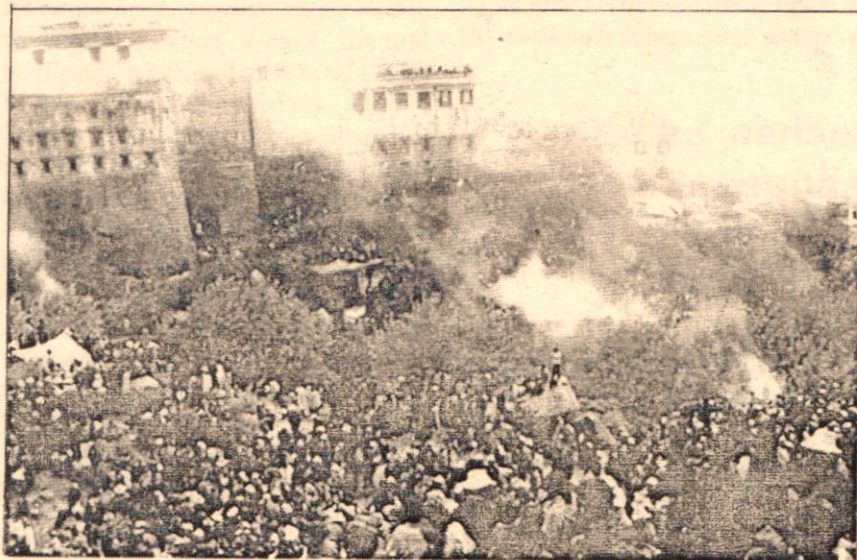
The sources inside Tibet said that, "Tibetans were normally not allowed to gather in huge congregations for prayers or incense-burning. But a large number of Tibetans converged in Lhasa and participated on that day."

Earlier Chinese government issued an official decree where Tibetan Communist Party members and government officials were barred from visiting temples in Lhasa for a week-long period. A Chinese official with a surname of Wang from a village nearby Lhasa told Reuters that Tibetans were warned of expulsion and dismissal from the job, if they visit Buddhist temples in Lhasa. This announcement was made while annual session of National People's Congress ends in Beijing. However, it was not known about the connection.

The ban was apparently made to curb the unfading influence of the exiled Dalai Lama in Tibet and was aimed to prevent Tibetans from praying for long life of the Dalai Lama, their spiritual god-king.

Irrespective of the official decree, a large numbers of Tibetans gathered in Lhasa to burn incense and offered prayer on 14 March 2007 for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

On March 14, a grand ritual of offerings was conducted for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama by the exile government and the Tibetan Community in exile. The exile government also appealed to all Tibetans—young and old—to get involved in meritorious actions on that day.



Tibetan Political Prisoners continue to live under deplorable condition

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) released a new report "Prisoners of Tibet" on 23 March 2007 at Geneva and Dharamsala simultaneously. The report launched during a side event at the ongoing 4th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, highlights the tragic consequences Tibetans bear for exercising their fundamental human rights of expression, opinion and conscience.

Tibetans are victims of an authoritarian government that feels free to impose arbitrary punishment on anyone who exercises basic human rights, which are guaranteed by international law and nominally protected under the Chinese constitution. Under current law and practice, Tibetans are imprisoned either through summary judicial process or an administrative detention of no longer than four years. It is virtually impossible to know the true number of political prisoners as China does not allow independent organizations to visit prisons, labour camps and detention centers on a regular and systematic basis.

According to TCHRD records, there are currently 116 known Tibetan political prisoners, out of which 51 are serving a sentence of ten years or more. Monks and nuns number 80 or 69% of the total number of political prisoners in Tibet. The actual number of Tibetan political prisoners is likely to be higher than the above-cited figure. Former political prisoners form the major source of information while friends and relatives of prisoners who have recently escaped into exile are also a major and valuable source of information. Information on political imprisonment in Tibet is generally treated as "state secret" and chargeable for "espionage" and thrown into jail for long terms if anyone caught with passing information. There is a culture of fear and a palpable sense of self-censorship on the part of Tibetans and a deep seated and widespread zero-tolerance of any activity or viewpoint that is perceived to challenge the Communist Party's control over the aspects of society it deems crucial on the part of the authorities. Torture is a regular feature in Chinese administered prisons in Tibet. Since 1987, there have been 88 known death of Tibetan political prisoners as a direct result of torture and inhuman treatment in prison.



For many years Drapchi Prison housed majority of Tibetan political prisoners and was known notoriously for the inhumane treatment met to political prisoners. In early 2005, Chushul (Ch: Qushui) Prison became operational, since then most of the political prisoners have been transferred to this new facility. The prison located away from Lhasa City (approx 120 kms) enables the authorities to keep visitors away and maintain a tighter control on the prisoners. Manfred Nowak, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, after a visit to the prison on 27 November 2005, described that the prisoners complained about basic conditions better in Drapchi than in Chushul Prison.

This report contain profiles of most of the current known Tibetan political prisoners. ■

Panchen Lama's Disappearance Case raised in UN Human Rights Council

On 22 March 2007, the UN Human Rights Council heard a joint statement by 15 NGOs describing the disappearance of the Eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet "a continuous crime." The joint NGO statement was made in reaction to the report of the Working Group

on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance (WGEID), one of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, which was presented on 21 March 2007.

A representative of Movement against Racism and Friendship among All Peoples (MRAP) delivered a statement, making a specific reference to the WGEID report which said: "All cases of enforced disappearance remain under active consideration by the Working Group until they are clarified. The crime of enforced disappearance, as defined in the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, is a continuous crime until the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person becomes known."

"Accordingly, the enforced disappearance, since 1995, of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet, is a continuous crime," the NGO statement told the Council.

The joint statement made on behalf of human rights groups who are based in Asia, Europe, North America and Africa, wondered why the WGEID did not engage in a fresh intervention on the case of the Panchen Lama with the China.

"Tibetans and followers of Tibetan Buddhism remain deeply concerned about the whereabouts, well-being and fate of this boy. Therefore, we wish to know why the report of the Working Group failed to consider a renewed urgent intervention on this case, especially when the Working Group publicly stated on 2 May that its first session in 2006, "coincided with the 17th birthday of the Panchen Lama who disappeared when he was only 6 years old."

The statement was supported by the following NGOs, Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), Society for Threatened Peoples, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Interfaith International, France Libertés – Fondation Danielle Mitterrand, Pax Romana, International Educational Development, International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and other Minorities, Transnational Radical Party, Nonviolence International, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and Commission africaine des promoteurs de la santé et des droits de l'homme (CAPSDH). ■

profile

POLITICAL PRISONERS

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

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Biography of former political prisoner Kalsang Thutop

Kalsang Thutop alias Bhagdro was a native of Takthong Village, Sangda Township, Toelung Dechen County, Lhasa, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). After studying at village primary school for five years, he worked at the village as accountant and staff. In 1980, he was ordained as a monk at Drepung Monastery which is located in the west of Lhasa City.

Kalsang was one of the 27 Drepung Monks who led the first pro-independence demonstration since 1959, on 27 September 2007. He pasted pro-independence posters as well as distributed pamphlets containing the teaching of the Dalai Lama and articles related to Tibet Independence in Monastery and Lhasa City.

Later, on 5 March 1988, he took part in a mass peaceful demonstration in Lhasa. He was also a member of 'Tibetan Freedom Movement,' a secret underground organisation formed by ten monks of the Drepung Monastery in the same year. He was involved in pasting 'pro-independence' poster secretly on many occasion.

After the imposition of Martial Law in Lhasa by Chinese government on 7 March 1989, the Chinese Security Police arrested one member of the group. This was followed by the arrest of few other members of the organisation.

When Chinese police began to suspect about his involvement and was about to arrest him, he along with Ngawang Gyaltzen secretly left monastery for exile. Before reaching Dram (Nepal-Tibet border), their vehicle met with an accident. Ngawang Gyaltzen suffered a severe head injury in that accident and they could not proceed further.

They went back to a village near Dram for Ngawang's treatment and went into hiding for 3 days. Later, they continued their journey into exile by travelling in the night. However, on the night of 13 March 1989,



Kalsang Thutop doing kitchen work in Drapchi Prison

Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) followed them.

Since, Ngawang was badly injured, he could not walk fast enough. They were caught by the PAP at the border and detained at the PAP camp for three days. Later, they were handed to Public Security Bureau (PSB). The security personnel's took them to PSB Detention Centre. In the detention centre, they were thoroughly interrogated under extreme tortures for several times.

Finally on 28 November 1989, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Kalsang along with nine other friends and one political prisoner for 5 to 19 years of imprisonment. They were allegedly charged with forming a 'counter revolutionary' group, 'espionage', 'leaking state secret' and illegal crossing. Kalsang was sentenced 18 years of imprisonment with the deprivation of political rights for 5 years.

After the trial, the Chinese government made a broadcast on the radio, television and newspapers claiming the collapse of secret 'Tibetan freedom movement' and 'splittist

group'. On 15 January 1990, they were shifted to Drapchi Prison. They were immediately given a severe beating in the prison. They were made to wear prison dress and all their clothes and personal belongings were burn in fire in the prison ground.

In the prison, Kalsang was always subjected to hard labour. He became very weak. But the prison authorities denied him of any proper medical treatment. On the morning of June 1996, he was taken for interrogation in Drapchi Prison. When he returned two hours later, he was unable to speak due to severe beating. He was rushed to a Public Hospital nearby, but died few hours later around 4 a.m at the hospital. He was only 50 years old when he breathes last. Kalsang's death body was taken by one of his known one and he in turn handed to Drepung Monastery for cremation. His body was later given a sky burial near the Drepung Monastery. While performing a traditional sky burial, it was observed that one of Kalsang testicles was brutally crushed. ■

Violations of Religious Freedom still continuing in Tibet

A 26-year old, Jamphel Nyima alias Dhondup from Meldrogungkar, Lhasa, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") has recently reached Dharamsala in February 2007. He testified with the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) about the ongoing repression on the religious freedom in Tibet. Jamphel testifies,

"I joined Meldrogungkar County elementary school at the age of seven and attended till Xth Standard. Later, I joined Lhasa Higher Secondary School and studied up to XIIth standard. While in school, I was interested in studying our own culture, history and religion, but never receive opportunity as most of the subjects in schools are taught in Chinese only. Moreover, Chinese government has issued a decree, which prohibits celebration of religious ceremonies and ritual in schools. Students were forbidden to wear amulet (holy religious thread) and barred from visiting temples. If anyone was found violating these norms, stringent actions were taken like expulsion from the school. Those studying Tibetan language will have dim job prospect in the future. Even for those Tibetans graduating with Chinese language find it difficult to find jobs. Hence, it is very rare to find young Tibetans in Tibet with good knowledge in their own language, religion and culture."

"I discontinued my formal education after completing XII standard, as I wished to join any of the three major Centres of the Buddhist learning - Sera, Drepung and Gaden Monastery. Hence, in 2000, I joined Drepung Monastery, which is located in the west of Lhasa City. Although, I was not registered as a regular monk, yet I stayed at the monastery for two years as unregistered monk. The maximum number of monk in the Drepung Monastery as fixed by Chinese authority was 720. In 2003, 120 new monks were regularized and I became a registered monk of the monastery."

"After regularization, I studied Buddhist Philosophy with full heart. But, to my utter surprise, every month about 15 to 20 personnel from Lhasa Religious Affair Bureau (RAB) would come to our monastery to conduct 'patriotic re-education' for around 18 days. During the campaigns, the monks were forcefully made to denounce the Dalai Lama, denounce separatist and "splittist

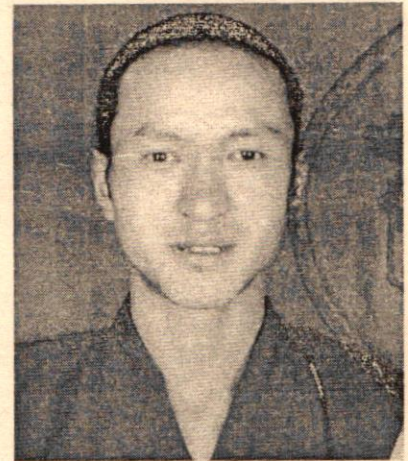
group" and accept Tibet as a part of People's Republic of China. In addition, the RAB officials would make monks to sign prepared document where the above statement is written. Monks were put in a catch-22 situation, wherein signing the statement would mean going against their conscience and refusing to sign ends up in punishment or expulsion from monastery. Thus, monks face lots of difficulties and anxieties in the monastery."

"Especially on 25 November 2005, around 30 work team officials from Lhasa came to Drepung Monastery. They called all monks of the monastery for a meeting in Drepung Loseling Prayer Hall. As all monks gathered for the meeting in the prayer hall, the officials raised five points and explained them to the monks. The five points were: 1. Denouncing the Dalai Lama. 2. Opposition to separatist group. 3. Accept Tibet as a part of China 4. Allegiance to the People's Republic of China. (PRC). 5. Feedback on the experience of the re-education campaign by the Work Team."

"During meeting, Lobsang Wangchuk, head of the Democratic Management Committee (DMC) of the Monastery, got up and said 'It is not acceptable for a monk to criticize one's principal tutors. Because by criticizing one's tutor, the monk will lose his monastic vows. Hence, it is not possible to criticize the Dalai Lama.' Due to that incident, Lobsang was interrogated several times afterwards."

"Later, work team officials splits the monks into smaller groups and made monks to accept above mentioned five points. When the monks refused to oblige the call, they were individually made to answer on the each question. During the session, Phuntsok Jangchup from Phenpo County was made to accept 5 points. He not only refused to accept their demand, even argued with the work team officials. After the session, Phuntsok went back to his room and work team officials decided to interrogate him again the next day."

"When the officials of the work team went to call him next morning, they found his room locked from outside. They all assumed that he ran away from the monastery. However after three days, when one of the monk from the monastery made a call on Phuntsok's mobile, he was



astonished to hear the mobile phone ringing from Phuntsok's room."

"Immediately the monk went to find a stairs and peeped through the window. He found Phuntsok lying on his bed. He then went to officials and narrated what he had seen. The work team officials and monks together rushed to Phuntsok's room and found his dead body lying on the bed with foul smell. It seems that Phuntsok's has committed suicide after the argument with work team officials a three days before. Fearing troubles in monastery after the suicide of Phuntsok, Work Team decided to postpone the 'patriotic re-education' campaign in the monastery for a while."

"However, the work team officials came again to our monastery after 15 days to conduct 're-education'. During the session, monks refused to denounce the Dalai Lama. Then one early morning, the work team officials secretly called Ngawang Namdol of Phenpo, Ngawang Nyingpo of Phenpo Paenag, Phuntsok Tharlam of Lhoka, Phuntsok Thubwang of Lhasa and Ngawang Phelgye of Gyaltse. These five monks were forcefully handed over to their respective family through the head of the local county government."

"On the same evening, the five monks made phone calls to their colleagues in the monastery and narrated the incident to them. After hearing the news about the expulsion of five monks, all the monks in the monastery immediately went to work team's place to demand the reason behind the expulsion and deportation of those five monks. The argument between Work Team officials and monks lasted from 3 pm to 6 pm in the evening."

"On the next day, the monks again gather in front of the Work Team and sat for a daylong hunger strike. The monks demanded a meeting with the head of Work Team. Sensing gravity of the situation, the officials called the higher authority. Later, on the same day, four-army trucks with armed personnels came to Drepung Monastery."

"On that night, after the return of monks to their respective room, the officials called the office bearers of the monastery and instructed them to control the monks in order to avoid the further escalations of the incident. During that period, devotees and pilgrims from outside were not allowed to visit the monastery for few days. All the peoples, who come to the Monastery for pilgrimages were sent back citing ongoing fire control training in the monastery as a reason for closing the monastery."

"There is no religious freedom in Tibet and moreover, there is constant mental harassment due to 'patriotic re-education' campaigns in the monastery. Due to such reasons, many monks leave the monastery. Since 2003, more than 100 monks were expelled or withdrew from the monastery. At present, there are around 500 registered monks in the Drepung Monastery."

"Due to the lack of religious freedom in Tibet, I left my monastery and escape into exile with the sole purpose of joining Drepung Monastery in South India to pursue my studies in Buddhist Philosophy. I reached Dharamsala in February 2007. After seeking an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I am going to join Drepung Loseling Monastery in south India." ■

Nancy Pelosi commemorate Tibetan National Uprising

United States' Speaker of the House of Representative, Nancy Pelosi issued a statement on 10 March 2007, during the 48th Anniversary of Tibetan National uprising commemoration. "On the 48th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, we honor the many brave Tibetans who sacrificed their lives fighting for freedom," she said.

She mentioned the United States Annual Human Rights report, which has raised

concern about the China serious abuse of human rights in Tibet. She also mentioned the dialogue between Tibetan government in exile and China as a positive sign but at the same time express her deep concern that Chinese government is stalling the negotiations with His Holiness envoys.

She states, "The U.S. Congress continues to be bedrock of support for the Tibetan people. Last year, Congress passed legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in recognition of his contributions to peace, nonviolence, and religious understanding. I was proud to be an original co-sponsor of that significant legislation."

She also expressed the need to pay heeds to the guidance of the Dalai Lama's message of peace and Tibet ongoing struggle. ■

UN Expert calls China to make public the result of Nangpa killing

On 28 March, during the Human Rights Council meeting, Mr. Philip Alston, the Special Rapporteur on extra judicial summary or arbitrary execution of UN Human Rights has asked the China to make public the findings of its investigation on Nangpa la shooting incident in September 2006. The statement was made in reference to earlier written letter on 18 October 2006 by Mr. Alston, demanding full public accountability for the actions of the State and of its border military patrols and further asked whether compensation has been given to the families of victims.

Mr. Alston's letter stated, "...without pre-judging the accuracy of the information received, I would note the relevance in such situations of the United Nations Basic principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. These Principles note, inter alia, that law enforcement officials should "as far as possible apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms" and that "in any event, intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life". I would also like to draw your Excellency's attention to the Code of Conduct for Law

Enforcement Officials, adopted by the General Assembly resolution 34/169 (1979) which more succinctly stresses the limited role for lethal force in all enforcement operations."

Mr. Alston also asked the Chinese authorities "whether compensation has been provided to the families of victims" and what legal steps have been taken against those responsible for the Nangpa La Pass killings. "Please provide the details, and where available the results, of any investigation, medical examinations, and judicial or other inquiries carried out in relation to the above mention killing."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman, earlier promised to investigate the claims of Chinese People's Armed Police shooting at Tibetans escaping through Nangpa La Pass on 30 September 2006. UN human rights expert called upon China to ensure that Nangpa La Pass Killings are "promptly, independently and thoroughly investigated in accordance with the United Nations Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Execution." ■

Three years sentences for possessing CDs.

According to Radio Free Asia report on 9 March 2007, the Shigatse Intermediate People's Court sentenced Penpa, a native of Tsakor Township, Dingri County, Shigatse Prefecture, "TAR" to three years of imprisonment for the mere possession of two CDs of Dalai Lama's teachings.

Penpa was earlier arrested in June 2006 on the suspicion of saving lives of hundred sheep for the long life of the Dalai Lama. The local police officials searched his house and found two CDs of the Dalai Lama's teachings. After his arrest, the Chinese authority confiscated all the 100 sheep he bought.

Penpa was initially detained at Dhingri and in December 2006 was taken to Ngari Prison in Shigatse. He would be serving his term in Ngari prison. He was a village leader and a successful businessman; in fact at the time of his arrest he was a village leader. ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

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TCHRD released 2006 Annual Report and Topical Reports

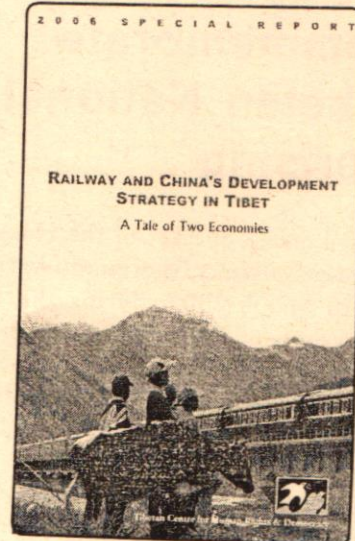
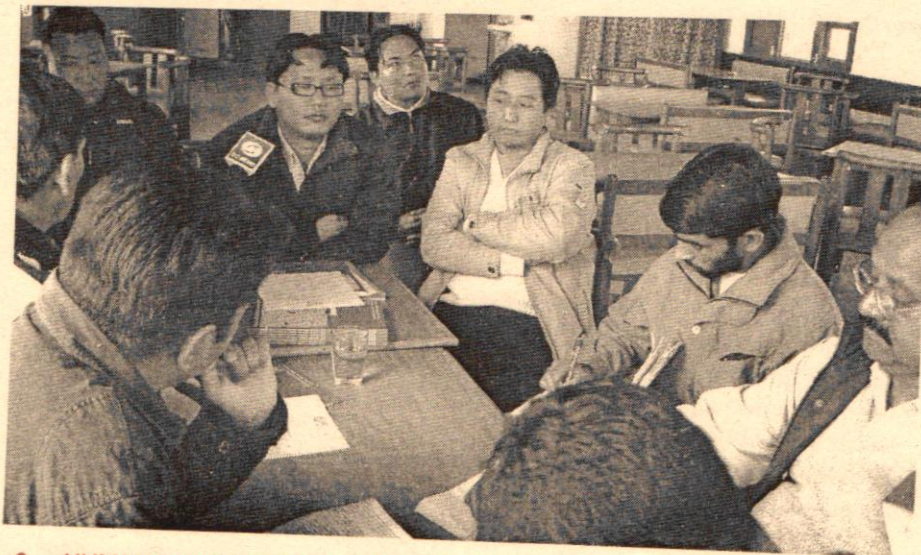
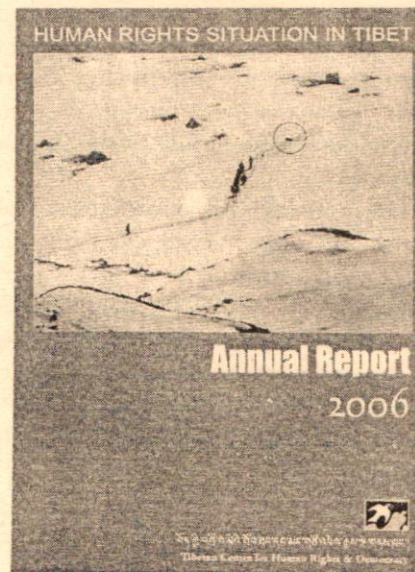
The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) released its 2006 Annual Report: *Human Rights Situation in Tibet* at a press conference held at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, DIIR on 1 March 2007. The report focuses on four spheres of human rights violation in Tibet: Civil and political liberties, Religion, Development and Education in Tibet. Tibetan medias - print and electronic media were present. At the conference the Director briefs the gist of the report. At the same time topical report - *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* was released. A copy of Annual Report and topical report were presented to the media personnels present at the conference.

On 2 March 2007, a separate press conference was also held for the Indian media by TCHRD on the release of its 2006 Annual Report at the Coffee House. The questions raised by the media were answered by TCHRD.



TCHRD released New Prisoners Report

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) releases a new report "Prisoners of Tibet". The report was launched during a side event at the ongoing 4th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. It highlights the tragic consequences Tibetans bear for exercising their fundamental human rights of expression, opinion and conscience. The report is available in both English and Tibetan language on the Centre's website.





TCHRD ACTIVITIES

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TCHRD attends UN Human Rights Council meeting at Geneva

Mr Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) attended the fourth UN Human Rights Council Meeting in Geneva from 20-30 March 2007. On 23 March, TCHRD along with three Tibetan NGOs - International Campaign for Tibet, Tibetan Women Association and the Gu Chu Sum Movement for Tibet held a Tibet panel event at UN Human Rights Council Meeting - "Nangpa Killings, An Eye Witness Account: China's Use of Force on Civilians, including Children". A Dutch eyewitness, Mr Frank Berkhout, was invited to brief the participants about his first hand account of Nangpa La killing of Tibetan escaping from Tibet by Chinese Border Patrolling Officers.

Mr Nick Howen, the Secretary General, International Commission of Jurist (ICJ) moderated the discussion. A presentations was also heard from Ms. Tsering Jampa, Executive Director, ICT-Europe; Mr. Phuntsok Wangchuk, Secretary, Gu Chu Sum Association; Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD; and Ms. Tsering Deckyi Ratutsang, Tibetan Women's Association.

During the event, a video-footage of the Nangpa La Pass killings was screened, while Mr. Phuntsok Wangchuk gave personal testimony about prison conditions in Tibet. Mr Urgen Tenzin released the Centre's new report, "Prisoners of Tibet" and Ms. Tsering Jampa informed the gathering about the content of ICT's "Dangerous Crossing: Conditions Impacting the



Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director of TCHRD delivering oral statement at the IV UN Human Rights Council Meeting in Geneva on 29 March 2007.

Flight of Tibetan Refugees, 2006 Report.

The Tibet panel was hosted at the United Nation by five International NGOs: World Organisation against Torture, Movement against Racism and for Friendship among Peoples, Society for Threatened Peoples, Interfaith International and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

On 26 March 2007, the Tibetan NGOs met Mr Jean Ziegler, the UN Special Rapportuer on Right to Food and explained in detail about the deplorable livelihood of political prisoners in Tibet.

On 28 March 2007, they also met Mr Philip Alston, UN Special Rapportuer on Extra Judicial Summary or Arbitrary Execution. They spoke to him about the Nangpa la killing and China should explain the details of the Nangpa la killing. They requested the Special Rapportuer to pressurize China to hold accountable for such arbitrary killing of

innocent civilian in order to stop such event in the future.

On 29 March, they met Ms Asma Jahangir, the UN Special Rapportuer on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The Centre's Director briefed the Special Rapportuer on the lack of religious freedom in Tibet.

Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD delivered oral statement on behalf of International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), Society for Threatened People's, MRAP and Asian Indigenous and Tribal People's Network (AITPN) in the UN Human Rights Council meeting. The joint statement was highlighted on the issue of culture genocide in Tibet. China's decade long policy of population transfer of Chinese settlers on the Tibetan plateau poses biggest threat to the very survival of the distinct national identity of the Tibetan people's as a race. ■

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

25

APRIL 2007

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VOLUME XII NUMBER 4

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Gedhun Choekyi Nyima the XIth Panchen Lama turns 18: Still missing

Today, 25 April 2007, marks the 18th birthday of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima- the XIth Panchen Lama of Tibet who along with his parents has been missing for the past twelve years.

In the last decade numerous governments and independent organizations have pressed the authorities in Beijing to disclose the whereabouts and well being of Panchen Lama and his family. Regrettably, the authorities have so far given various excuses for denying access to the Panchen Lama and his family. Last year in reply to questions submitted by Reuters, the State Council Information Office said China had not arranged meetings between the boy and foreign organizations or media out of respect for the family's wishes not to be disturbed. Similarly, since 1997, China has failed to provide written document as demanded by the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission on Human

Rights to support China's claim that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family wished not to be disturbed by outsiders. Moreover, in September 2005, Chinese authorities informed the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is in "good health and just like any other children is leading a normal, happy life and receiving a good cultural education". A year later, in an official communication from China claimed to a UN rights expert that Gedhun Choekyi is not the Panchen Lama but "merely an ordinary Tibetan child" but China has persistently refused an independent expert to visit him in order to confirm his welfare and well-being.

In the latest initiative, human rights group, Amnesty International raised concern about the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama with the Chinese government and asked the Chinese authorities

Continued at next page



Sonam Dorjee

Former Chushul Prisoner Arrives in Exile

Sonam Dorjee, 38, was born in Dasher Village, Gyama Township, Meldro Gungkar County. Born in a farmer's family, he went to village school for some years and later stayed at home working in the farm.

On 30 June 1992 a meeting was held at Gyama Township Administration office courtyard. At the gathering of more than 1,200 people Thupten Yeshi, Lhundup, Sonam Rinchen, Kunchok Lodroe and Sonam Dorjee raised a Tibetan national flag and shouted "Free Tibet, China Quit Tibet, Long live H.H the Dalai Lama". Their protest at the

gathering sent the crowd into panic and chaos. After 15 minutes of shouting the slogans and unfurling the Tibetan national flag, nine policemen reached the spot and arrested all the demonstrators. Additionally two trucks of army came at the spot to control the situation.

Upon arrest, they were taken to the county detention centre, where each one of them were interrogated and tortured with electric prod, stick and rope. The police demanded to know the main leader who plotted the event and who has instigated them to protest. Further they were asked whether there is any

Continued from page1

Gedhun Choekyi ...

to allow him freedom of movement. In addition, this year during the UN Human Rights Council meeting a joint statement was made by 15 NGOs describing the disappearance of the XIth Panchen Lama of Tibet a continuous crime.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, raised the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima to the Chinese authorities during an official visit to China from 29 August- 2 September 2005.

Likewise, the UN Special Rapporteur on Religious Freedom and Belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, on 9 January 2005 raised her concern, "about the grave interference with the freedom of belief of the Tibetan Buddhists who have the right to determine their clergy in accordance with their own rites and who have been deprived of their religious leader."

Last year, the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance of the UN Commission on Human Rights stated that it "would appreciate being provided by the Government of China with documents supporting its statement that he and his parents had appealed to the Government for protection and at present are "leading normal lives and enjoying perfect health."

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on 29 August 1990 and ratified it on 2 March 1992. China's continued detention of Panchen Lama is a clear violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as domestic and international laws. It also indicates the persistent religious repression inside Tibet. It is a matter of great concern that such prominent religious figure is denied and bereft of any traditional religious studies and training according to Tibet's religion and culture.

BACKGROUND:

On 14 May 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced that the then six-years old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the Xth Panchen Lama. Three days later, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents disappeared and have never been seen again. Beijing authorities were quick to refute the proclamation, and on 24 May 1995 issued a statement describing the Dalai Lama's proclamation as "illegal and invalid." China's response to the Dalai Lama's selection of the Panchen Lama has been to denounce the legitimacy of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and proclaim another child to be the real incarnation - an unprecedented and bizarre act of the officially atheist state. Shortly after this announcement Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family are reported to have been disappeared and since then there has been no credible information on their whereabouts and well-being for the past twelve years and it still remains a major concern.

In addition, Chadrel Rinpoche, a former abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery seat of Panchen Lama, and Chairman of the Search Committee for the reincarnation of the XIth Panchen Lama and his assistant Champa Chungla disappeared from Chengdu Airport in Sichuan Province on 14 May 1995. On 21 April 1997, the Shigatse Intermediate People's court sentenced Chadrel Rinpoche to six years of imprisonment. He was charged with "plotting to split the country" and "leaking state secrets". He was accused of working for and assisting the Dalai Lama in the search for the XIth Panchen Lama. Although his sentence ended on 13 May 2001 following the completion of a six-year prison term, there is no credible information on his whereabouts or on his state of health. Jampa Chungla, a former assistant of Chadrel Rinpoche, was arrested in 1995 for his participation in the search committee of the XIth Panchen Lama. He was sentenced to a four-year prison term and to a two-year deprivation of political rights. There is also no information on Champa Chungla after the completion of his original four-year prison term.



The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is gravely concerned at the continued disappearance and detention of the Panchen Lama and his parents and appeals for their unconditional release. TCHRD urges the International bodies to pressure the Beijing authorities to ascertain their whereabouts and well-being and to allow the relevant UN bodies to meet the Panchen Lama. The PRC should also ensure that the religious freedom of the Tibetan people be respected including their rights to identify religious leaders.

Continued from page1

Former Chushul

splittist group's hand behind the protest. The demonstrators told the police that the main objectives of staging the demonstration were to protest the forceful selling of fertilizer to the farmers at a very high price. Since the farmers use fertilizer twice a year, they would have to spend exorbitant amounts in order to have good crop yield. Each bag of fertilizer cost more than 200 Chinese Yuan. Another objective was to protest against the massive transfer of Chinese population into Tibet, which leads to an ever-increasing unemployment problem among the Tibetan. The markets in Tibet are taken over by the Chinese migrants, leaving very scare opportunity for Tibetans to do business.

All of them cited same reasons for the protest, making the police very frustrated and angry. The police beat them up and used electric prod everywhere on their body. They hit

Sonam Dorjee on his stomach so hard that he could not breathe. They were made to stand up with a nameplate on their chest and took pictures of them. On 30 June 1992, the police took them to Gutsa Detention Centre. At Gutsa he was interrogated twice every morning at 9 am and in the afternoon at 3.30 pm. He was subjected to severe beating and torture frequently.

During the interrogation, his hands were tied with rope at back and used electric prod on the fingers. The police officers also tied the hands and legs at their back and put broken glasses between the ropes in order to make it more painful. Sometime, they were beaten with iron rod till the officers were tired and they were interrogated and tortured for 12 days in Gutsa.

On 28 October 1992, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court charged them of "Counter-Revolutionary Propaganda" and sentenced Sonam Dorjee and Kunchok Lodroe to 13 years' imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for four years. Sonam Rinchen, Thupten Yeshi and Lhundup were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for five years. On 20 September 1992, they were transferred to Drapchi prison. In Drapchi, they had to do morning exercise, during which they have to run in line. They have to work also in vegetable green houses. In Drapchi prison, the prisoners can meet their family once a month but sometime even this opportunity is denied for no apparent reason.

On 1/4 May, 1998 there were major protests in Drapchi prison, all the political prisoners were tortured and despite bloodshed all around the prison compound, the police officers interrogated and tortured each prisoner throughout the night. It was during this interrogation and torture session that Sonam Dorjee developed a severe heart disease and since then, he used to become unconscious at least twice a day. On 23 November 1998, Sonam Dorjee was released on medical parole. His release was to avoid any medical

expense for his treatment by the government. Due to financial problem, he could not afford to get medical care and had to rest at home. Again on 22 November 2000, he was taken back to prison to continue his term.

On 13 March 1994, Kunchok Dorjee was also released on medical parole as he had become very weak due to severe torture and long suffering. Sonam Rinchen also was ill for a very long time due to torture and inhuman treatment in prison but he didn't receive any medical treatment till his condition became severe. On 23 September 1999, he died after ten days of medical treatment. After the post-mortem, it was found out that his brain was severely damaged due to using electric prod on his head and his ribs and lungs were also damaged. The postmortem indicated that he died due to the severe torture and inhuman treatment that he received in prison.

On the night of 12 April 2005, all the Drapchi political prisoners were transferred to Chushul prison amidst tight security. Three guards escorted each political prisoner and at that time about 100 political prisoners were transferred. Chushul prison is worse than Drapchi prison. The security arrangement is very strict with surveillance cameras put on the wall of each room. The rooms where the political prisoners were kept is very small with a tiny window and low roof and the only view that they can see is that of the sky and top of the mountain. Except five minutes break outside of their room, most of the time, prisoners were kept inside the small dark cell.

In Chushul prison, the political prisoners were divided into three alphabetical units - A, B and C. Unit A included prisoners who were obedient to prison authority and well-behaved and they have a green coloured batch on their chest with their name and unit. Those in unit A have the special privilege of sitting under the sun for whole day, and also during their family visits, they were given half an hour period of time.

The prisoners in unit B were allowed outside of their room only once a day and it was for five minutes and they have a yellow coloured batch with their name and unit. During their family visit, they can only talk through phone for five minutes and were allowed to keep only 1 kg of fruit or food that their family has brought. Sonam Dorjee was kept in unit B.

Unit C included those political prisoners who were considered worst behaved and they have a red coloured batch on their chest. They were never allowed outside of their room and were completely denied the rights to meet their family.

The living condition in Chushul prison is extremely poor. Though, daily budget of each prisoner is 5 Yuan, but in reality they were provided food worth less than 2 Yuan. The remaining 3 Yuan is used as prize money for those prisoner guards who had been strictest. The daily food for political prisoners is very poor and there is no fat or oil used in the food. Due to lack of nutritious food and warm place to sleep, most of the prisoners have kidney and gastric problem. Over the years, the prisoners have requested improvement in their food and proper medical treatment but the Chinese prisoner guards agree to do so only on the condition that they denounce the Dalai Lama. They were asked to denounce the Dalai Lama politically if not religiously and when they refused to do so; they tried every means to create grounds of suspension and enmities amongst the political prisoners.

On 29 July 2005, Sonam Dorjee has finally completed 13 years-term and released from prison. The continuous restriction on him even after his release made his life miserable. So he took permission for medical check from the local authority and secretly fled Tibet and arrived in exile safely. His friends, Thupten Yeshi and Lhundup are still serving their term of 15 years in Chushul prison and their term is due to expire on 29 June 2007. ■

The rural reconstruction campaign in Tibet against the will and wishes of the residents

A 24-year-old Kyilhu was born in Gangkar Village, Shelkar Township, Dingri County, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ('TAR'). He reached Tibetan Refugee Reception Centre, Katmandu on 1 April 2007. He testified to the TCHRD that his family is dependent on farming as the main source of livelihood. He has a large family with his two sisters and a brother in law and their children.

As for Kyilhu, he does not stay much at home. To earn his own livelihood most of the time he stays outside home working as a labourer and bus conductor of public transportation service between Shigatse and Dhingri. It is a well-known fact that construction labourers get the lowest pay. In particular, Tibetan labourers do not get the pay as much as Chinese labourers. Some times Tibetan labourers end up not getting paid after many days of work, since the contractor ran away with all their wages. For instance in April 2006, he was in Shigatse where he worked in a construction site. At that time he and around 10 Tibetans of Shigatse locality and six-seven Chinese workers were hired. It took around eight months to complete the construction of the two-storey building. When all Tibetan workers and some Chinese workers approached the building owner for the

payment, he refused, saying the Chinese construction contractor was given all the money. The owner said, if you need money go and search for the contractor. Most of the workers had to suffer without getting paid for many months of work. The workers were usually from very poor background with no formal education. When such injustice happened, they become helpless and do not know where and whom to approach for grievances. The incident was really a bad experience for Kyillu as it was the first time that he ventured out of his home to work and earn a living.

He further testifies that in the month of January 2006, administration officers of the town called a meeting of all the resident of Shelkar Village and ordered the villagers to dismantle old houses and reconstruct new houses. They further ordered that the entire new houses should be of same design and of same colour. The government has sanctioned 10,000 Chinese Yuan for the construction of new houses and is expected from the each household to contribute minimum amount of 10,000 Yuan. In order to build a new house, the family is required to spend at least 20,000 Yuan. The State will

provide 10,000 Yuan, remaining amount need to be spent by the family themselves. The authority announced prizes for those who would build houses according to the instructions and worth more than 20,000 are welcomed and will be given prizes also. Severe punishment will be meted on those who fail to comply with the State's order. The villagers felt threatened and have no other options, but to agree to the order. There are 34 families in Shelkar village, of which only two-three families can build new houses by adding more than 10,000 Yuan on top of an equivalent amount provided by the State. Rest of the families cannot afford to build a new house, as they are very poor. There is no way that they can build a new house.

Since the beginning of this year March, only four families were able to build new houses. Of these four, only one family could afford to build their own house. The other three families were not able to raise 10,000 Yuan by themselves and have to borrow from bank. The bank loans have to be repaid within two years, after which interests will be charged on top of the principle amount. The local town office ordered the village people to complete the construction of new houses before 2008. In response to the enquiry of construction of new houses, the town officials said "It is for the preparation of upcoming 2008 Olympic game, in Beijing China. Many tourists will visit Tibet in 2008 Olympic". China wants to show the tourist that they are bringing economic development in Tibet, therefore forcefully making Tibetan people build new houses, which in turn put them in debts. The new houses do not reflect the better living standards of Tibetan people, they are not happy in the new houses built upon debts, they are more worried than ever about how to repay the loans to banks.



New House constructed in rural Tibet.

New Minority Report on China slams its exclusion and marginalisation policies

A new report "China- Minority Exclusion, Marginalisation and Rising Tension" was brought out by Human Rights in China (HRIC) and Minority Rights Group International (MRG).

China's claim that its massive economic development strategy will benefit rural ethnic groups in its western regions. However, in practice it excludes, marginalizes, and masks the increased repression of ethnic minority groups such as Mongols, Tibetans, and Uyghurs, according to a new report. Instead of benefiting the rural ethnic minorities, China's economic development strategy implements a politicized policy agenda of resource extraction, assimilation through population transfers and militarization.

The new report also examines China's autonomy system, and how despite formal guarantees of self-governance and minority protections for ethnic groups, the system functions as a mechanism of exclusion and control. It claims, "Systemic violations of civil and political rights occur in tandem with increasing exclusion of ethnic minorities from a top-down policy of economic development, especially evident in Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uyghur autonomous regions."

The report contains information from a diverse pool of sources, including Tibetan refugees, students, farmers, trade professionals, unemployed persons, former political prisoners, and NGO field workers, as well as references to Chinese law, official documents and publications.

The report includes a set of recommendations to promote greater transparency, inclusive political participation, equitable development and the preservation of cultural identity. ■

Google now censors China criticism in U.S.

Internet search engine Google, which WoldNetDaily.com (WND) reported earlier, censors its search results in China to meet government demands, is now censoring criticism of China in the United States, according to one website owner.

Chris Langdon, the owner of new website has found out that Google is now censoring criticism of China within the United States, after he launched his site *ChinaIsEvil*. He just wanted to buy advertising for his work in google. But was denied permission to purchase advertising on the search engine.

His site lobbies against the continued financial support for China by the purchase of products and the location of business ventures there. He notes that his opposition is to the oppressive government in China, not the population itself.

"Not all Chinese people are evil, of course. Many in China want more freedom, as evidenced by Tiananmen Square. However, the Communist Chinese government has been, and is, a murderous one. The Communist Chinese slaughtered millions during the Chinese Revolution. After coming to power they murdered thousands of landowners after mock trials. Subsequently, Communist China invaded Tibet and murdered a million Tibetans," the site says.

The site also lists China's help in North Korea's invasion of South Korea, the estimates of up to 40 million dead during the "Great Leap Forward," the millions of deaths during the "Cultural Revolution," and the nation's influence in Vietnam.

"As long ago as 1971, in a study done for Congress, Professor Richard L. Walker, in 'The Human Cost of Communism in China' noted that Beijing was responsible for the deaths of between 34.3 million and 63.8 million people ... [in 1995] European historian Jean Louis Margolin ... stated

that Chinese Communism took the lives of 44.5 million to 72 million people..." the site notes.

"Communist China has murdered millions—boycott China," the website says.

"It is well known that Google and Yahoo! allow the Communist Chinese government to censor information that appears on their search results in China. Few know that Google censors its search results in America, and its advertising, in a decidedly arbitrary, unfair manner," said Langdon.

"They don't want to offend Communist China," he said. "I'm not talking about censoring in China. I'm talking about in America, they censor in America." ■

Liechtenstein Parliament Adopts Tibet Resolution

The Liechtenstein Parliament adopted a resolution on Tibet during its three day Parliament session from 25-27 April, despite the Chinese government's protest.

Earlier three members representing all the three political parties viz. Ms. Josy Biedermann of Progressive People's Party, Mr. Harry Quaderer of Patriotic Union and Ms. Andrea Matt of Free List submitted a joint motion on Tibet to the parliament on 2 April 2007.

Mr. Harry Quaderer, on behalf of other two colleagues, introduced the motion in the parliament on 25 April 2007. The resolution was subsequently adopted with the support of 18 votes and six votes against it and one abstention.

The resolution "expresses its solidarity with the European Parliament on Tibet Resolution adopted on 15 February 2007. It further urges the "Government of People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama to resume and continue the dialogue despite their differences on certain substantive issues without preconditions and in a

forward-looking manner that allows for pragmatic solutions which is in accord with wishes of the People's Republic of China's territorial integrity and takes into account the aspirations of Tibetan people."

The resolution also "instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President, Government and the Parliament of People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama through the Government of the Principality." This is Liechtenstein Parliament's second resolution on Tibet since June 1996. ■

Second Nangpa La captive managed to escape into exile

A 20-year old Gatsok, was one of the 31 people arrested by Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) during the Nangpa La shooting incident on 30 September 2006. The Chinese PAP without any warning fired at the unarmed group of Tibetan escapees who were crossing Nangpa pass, killing the 17-year-old nun Kelsang Nortso and injuring atleast one. Of them 41 people managed to reach India safely, while 31 people including a bullet wounded boy and 14 children were allegedly arrested by the Chinese Border Police for illegally crossing the border.

The fate of these captives remained unknown, until recently when 15-year-old Jamyang Samten, one of the detainee, escaped into exile during his second attempt and reached Dharamsala on 29 January 2007. He was able to shed some light on the aftermath of the shooting. Gatsok is the second Nangpa La captive to escape into exile.

Gatsok hails from Gagemo Village, Gatha Township, Tengchen County, Chamdo Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). He is farmer by occupation. He testified with the TCHRD that,

"Though I have never been to school, my purpose of coming into exile was to seek an audience with His Holiness the

Dalai Lama and to pursue monastic education. But unluckily, I was arrested by Chinese police along with 30 other Tibetan escapees during my first attempt. However, I did not lose heart and this time managed to escape into exile by trying a different strategy and route."

"During my first attempt, I was in the second group. We were moving slowly as our group was comprised of mostly small children. Suddenly, we heard the gun shot and we all began to run. At that time, I thought that we won't be able to escape since our group consist of many children. Later, it was known that the gun fire was made on the first group."

"However, the Chinese Police managed to arrest our group. We were 32 people including the children. I did not see the nun who was killed, but the boy from Kandze who was shot on leg by the Chinese PAP were in the same vehicle with us, during our deportation to the prison. They took us all to Shigatse Prefecture Detention Centre. We were detained there for more than month. In the prison, the adults from the group were interrogated many times. During the interrogation, we were subjected to severe beatings by electric rod and leather belt. The police officials even threatened that we will be 'mercilessly' killed. However, we were later released from the prison, probably due to international media coverage and condemnation by various organizations."

"At the time of our detention in the Shigatse Detention Centre, there were more than 100 Tibetans already in the prison, arrested for either trying to escape to India or returning from India. They were imprisoned for more than seven months and were fined hefty sum of money at the time of release. But we were all released and handed over to parents and relatives without imposing any fine."

"I was released after my relative gave the assurance to the police officials that I will not try to cross the border in future. After release, I went to Lhasa and then travelled in Kongpo region.

After staying there for a while, another way for my escape was arranged. I then escaped into exiled through Dram by paying a guide and came to Kathmandu." ■

Four Free Tibet Activist Protest at Mt Everest Base Camp

Four American Free Tibet activists protested at the Mt Everest Base Camp on 25 April, against China's proposal to relay the Olympic torch through Tibet. The activists from US- based Student for a Free Tibet (SFT) unfurled a banner "One World, One Dream, Free Tibet 2008". The Chinese border guards later arrested them.

The protest came in the wake of International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Beijing schedule meeting on China's plan to route the Olympic torch relay through Tibet. Lhadon Tethong, Executive Director of SFT said, "If Beijing wants to deserve the honour of hosting the Olympic Games, it must play by the rules of the international community - that includes tolerance of free speech and expression".

China has lodged complaint with the United States over the protest. After detaining the activists for two days, they were released on 27 April through Nepal border.

China is severely criticised of not complying with international human rights laws and accused of curbing the press freedom despite its assurance to IOC ahead of 2008 Olympic. ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

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Talk to Lower TCV students

Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director, TCHRD was invited to deliver a talk to the students of Lower TCV School on Human Rights situation in Tibet on 24 April 2007. Mr. Monlam spoke on the current human rights situation in Tibet. He also answered the questions posed by the students.

The talk was organised for the students in preparation of upcoming "Tibet Our Country Project" by the school. ■

Commemoration of 18th birthday of the XIth Panchen Lama

Mr Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD, attended the 18th Birthday of XIth Panchen Lama Gendun Choeyi Nyima, which was commemorated on 25 April 2006 at Staff Mess Hall, Ganchen Kyishong, Dharamsala. The function was organised by the Central Association for His Holiness the Panchen Lama (Tashi Lhunpo). Professor Samdhong Rinpoche, Kalon Tripa, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) presided over the function as the chief guest. Mr. Karma Choephel, Speaker, Tibetan parliament -in-exile and other dignitaries of CTA, representatives of monasteries, nunneries and NGOs also attended the function. In the morning session

of the program, the director of the Association gave an introductory speech. This was followed by speeches from Kalon Tripa and Speaker of Tibetan parliament-in-exile.

In the after noon session, Mr. Jampa Monlam took part in the panel discussion to formulate plans to intensify the campaign for the release of young Panchen Lama. He also delivered a speech regarding the activities that need to be organized in future for the release of the Panchen Lama. ■

Talk regarding the situation of political prisoners

Mr. Dawa Tsering, Field Officer, TCHRD, delivered a talk to the students of Lower TCV School. He gave a clear idea of the situation of political prisoners and the conditions of the prisons in Tibet. During the question-answer session, he also

answered all the questions posed by the students. ■

TCHRD set up book distribution stall

On the occasion of the XIth Panchen Lama's 18th birthday, TCHRD set up a book distribution stall at the main temple, McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala. The Centre's staff distributed TCHRD's publication free of cost including the Annual Report 2006 and Topical Reports. The monthly Human Rights Updates in Tibetan and English were also distributed to the visitors. The staff also explained the current situation of the XIth Panchen Lama to a large number of public including Indian and tourists present at the Temple. The Centre's staff Dawa Tsering, Palden Tsering and Dickyi Dolker took the charge of the book distribution. ■



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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Institute: A Special Report (2002)* • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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China intensifies prohibition of religious activities in Tibet during the holy month of Saka Dawa

According to a reliable information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Lhasa City Committee members called a meeting of the parents of school going children prohibiting them from participating in religious activities during the Buddhist holy month of Saka Dawa (the month during which the Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and passed away) which began on 17 May 2007.

On 14 May 2007, three days prior to the holy month of Saka Dawa, a meeting was called by Lhasa City Committee members among the parents of school going children of Ramoche and Lhubhug area of Lhasa City. In the meeting the school children were ordered to refrain from visiting monasteries, Barkhor area, from circumambulating and wearing amulet

thread during Saka Dawa. The committee members warned that those failing to abide by this order would be served with expulsion from school.

Religious ceremonies are restricted in Tibet. Prohibitions continue to be in place for important day like Saka Dawa and Gaden Ngyamchoe, birthday of the Dalai Lama and the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. Last year, a joint notice issued on 12 December by the Lhasa City Party Secretary Office and the Lhasa Governor Office which clearly prohibited the Party members, civil servants, staff, public institutions such as schools and banks etc, vocational centres, students and retired civil servants to participate or even see the activities of Gaden Nyamchoe anniversary. It was warned that those failing to abide by the official notice would be served with salary cut,

Continue at next page

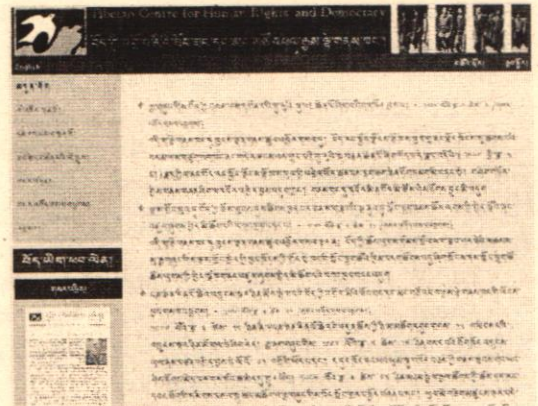
Tibetan website of TCHRD is now available online

A Tibetan version website of Tibetan Centre For Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is now available online at www.tchrd.org/tibetan. The new website contains all the centre's press releases, Tibetan Annual Reports, Tibetan Topical Reports, Biographies of former political prisoners, Monthly Tibetan Human Rights Updates and photo galleries of former and present political prisoners.

The Tibetan website is started with the sole aim of disseminating

information on human rights and democracy to the larger Tibetan and foreigner audiences who can read Tibetan satisfactorily. The website visitors can easily download all the publications of the TCHRD without any cost including the monthly newsletter and annual report.

TCHRD also plans to bring out the websites in Chinese and other languages in the coming years. ■



Continued from previous page

demotion etc. For the retired Tibetans this is especially difficult because of their faith in religion yet their faith restricted by official strictures and dictums. In the past, cadres were unofficially allowed to believe in and practice religion privately, but are now being subjected to closer scrutiny and are liable to punishments and demotions.

Severe religious restrictions were put in place especially in Lhasa City. Plain clothed Public Security Bureau officials were known to have stationed around the city and surveillance video cameras were installed around the major public routes and alleys in the city. In order to screen the incoming people into the city, major security check posts were installed on the roads leading into Lhasa City from surrounding counties of Phenpo Lhundrup, Taktse, Toelung Dechen, Meldrogungkar. Reports from Tibet confirm that small farmers engaged in petty businesses like selling incense and juniper leaves for religious purposes are banned from selling these items on religious days.

The Chinese authorities continue to reinvigorate the "patriotic education" activities for monks and nuns at a regular basis at monasteries and nunneries. There were several credible reports in the recent times about work teams conducting mandatory political training for monks and nuns at specific religious sites in advance of important anniversaries or other events. The government continued to oversee the daily operations of major monasteries. The government, which did not contribute to the monasteries' operating funds, retained management control of monasteries through the Democratic Management Committees (DMC) and local Religious Affairs Bureaus (RAB).

On 1 January 2007, a new "Measures for the 'Regulation on Religious Affairs'" with 56 articles was issued by the 11th Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region

People's Government on 19 September 2006 entered into force. The new regulation instead of providing the protection of religious affairs aimed at enforcing compliance with government regulations and policies on religious organizations, religious personnel, and religious citizen. In particular, this new regulation empowers the officials with legal backing to intensify restrictions and subjected to state control and repression.

The Chinese authorities recognize that freedom of religion represents a basic human right as provided in constitution and in the UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. The government's 2004 white paper on Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet states, "Tibetans fully enjoy the freedom of religious belief." However, the government maintained tight controls on religious practices and places of worship in Tibetan areas. Thus resulted in failing to respect right to religious freedom in practice. China maintained that freedom of religion is protected by its constitutions, in legislation and that these legal safeguards are consistent with the spirit and main provision of international agreements. However, the latest official prohibition particularly for school children during the holy month of Saka Dawa once again demonstrates that constitutional, legal and administrative provisions operate to restrict rather than protect and let the people enjoy religious freedom.

TCHRD expresses its deepest concern at the latest official order prohibiting students from participating in religious activities during the Buddhist holy month of Saka Dawa. The government of the People's Republic of China is using its iron fist policy to control religion in Tibet. The PRC should abide by the rights guaranteed in constitution and other major international covenants and treaties which she is party to. ■

New restrictions on foreigners traveling in Tibet

China tightened its restrictions on the foreigners traveling in Tibet following the four American Free Tibet activists unfurled a banner at the foot of Mount Everest Base Camp on 25 April 2007. The activists from US based Students for a Free Tibet (SFT) unfurled a banner "One world, One Dream, Free Tibet 2008", to protest against the China's plans to carry the Olympic torch to the summit of the world's highest mountain en route to the opening of the Games in Beijing on August 8 next year.

An official in the state-run China Travel Service in Lhasa said that, the new rules will be effective after the week-long May Day holiday. "We can't let foreign tourists just go anywhere by themselves," she said. "In the past they could be left alone to travel independently as they wanted for a few days. Now this is not allowed any more." The official also told that, "Management is tighter because of the Americans on Everest", referring to the Everest base Camp Protest.

The implementation of the restrictions marks a significant step back towards the early 1990s, when the entire region was effectively closed off to foreigners, except for a tiny number of officially organised tour groups.

Robert Barnett, a Tibet expert at Columbia University said, "It may seem strange if five students with a camera can have such an impact on Chinese policy. But, in fact, restrictions have been increasing in Tibet over the last year, with intensified campaigns against the Dalai Lama, renewed bans on religion for all officials and recently public warnings about 'Western hostile forces'. I think that the issue with these US students was not so much that they staged a protest in Tibet, but that they staged it in the middle of a rehearsal for the Olympic ceremonies. The fear of embarrassment during the Olympics seems to be increasingly a paramount concern for PRC [Chinese] officials." ■

200 Tibetan Nomads evicted from their land by Chinese authorities

According to the testimony given to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) by 24-year-old Jamyang Choedar, a native of Dhartso County, Tsolho Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Qinghai Province, more than 200 Tibetan nomads were forcibly evicted from their land in order to start mining activities in the village. He belongs to a nomad family.

According to him, "The natives of the Dhartso County are mostly nomads and their livelihoods are entirely dependent on animals livestock. In 1998, the Chinese government in the name of development implemented a policy of displacing the nomads who are settled in the region boasting rich minerals resources. Under that policy, many Tibetan nomads were forcibly evicted from their native place and relocated in the areas which are infertile, barren and dry."

"Serthang unit and adjoining areas covering more than two kilometers in Dhartso County boast a huge mineral deposit of gold, copper and other minerals. With the start of mining activities in the region, the Chinese government divided the 200 nomadic families' into groups and forced them to relocate in different places. And more than 1000 Chinese settlers were resettled near Serthang with the help of mainland Chinese Government. The main reason for the resettlement of Chinese settlers near Serthang and forced eviction of the natives' nomads is to explore and mine the rich mineral deposit present in the region."

"In 1999, the Chinese government started the actual mining work in Serthang region. At that time, 1000 Chinese migrants who were settled near Serthang, faced the shortage in temporary housing. Hence, additional tents were put up to accommodate Chinese migrants. Such large number of Chinese migrant transfer in the region was aimed by the government to employ them in mining."

"The Chinese government confiscated the lands of local Tibetan nomads comprising more than forty thousand *Mu* (a measure of land equal to 67 square meters) and were given to Chinese migrant for their resettlement and mining activities. The Tibetan nomads were forced by the government to sell their animal livestock. The Chinese government is forcibly relocating Tibetan nomads and herders to urban areas and farmland, destroying their traditional livelihood and way of life. They were even told by the officials that, 'nomad life is outdated and they need to move in accordance with time.' The officials further encourage the nomads to move to urban areas to do business, which will fetch more income than living in remote area. The officials also tell that, 'if you remain as nomads then the vicious circles of suffering will never end. The nomadic way of living is inherited from the old society and it is a sign of failure. Hence, this type of living needs to be abandoned'."

"On the whole, the government used every means and measures to evict the Tibetan nomads from the region. The outlook of Serthang changed drastically from a calm nomadic place to busy place with many Chinese migrants and mining activities. The number of Chinese migrants settled in the region gradually increases from 1000 to 7000."

"With the start of actual mining work, Tibetan peoples were barred from entering the Serthang region. Hundreds of Chinese migrants were given job at the mining site and extractions of minerals are continuously going in the region. Chinese migrant workers keep pouring into the region everyday, in addition to the already settled 7000 Chinese. In April 2003, the mainland Chinese government built hundreds of two-storey buildings in order to accommodate Chinese migrant workers in the area. The constructions of similar housing colonies are continuously going on even today."

"The Tibetan peoples of the Serthang region have appealed the Township and County level government respectively on numerous occasions against the Chinese government policy of forceful relocation of the Tibetans and re-settlement of Chinese migrant in the region."

"The Chinese government explains mining in the region as 'to develop' and 'modernize' the areas and the people living there. The local Tibetans were told by the authorities that, 'by appealing against the government, you are creating hurdles in the government developmental plan. Those defying the government directives and orders will be punished heavily'."

"The government further warned that, 'Government policy is for the peoples and laws were made to govern the people. Hence, those who opposed or hatch a conspiracy against the developmental plan of the nation will be punished as per law.' Therefore, native Tibetan peoples were left with no alternatives, but to follow the directives of the Chinese government orders and policies."

"Since the beginning of mining activities in Serthang, the environment has taken a great toll. The greenery - trees and plants in Serthang are depleting every year. Moreover, due to excessive use of explosive during the mining, the earlier greenish regions were now turned into grayish barren ground. The soils have lost its fertility and no grasses were able to grow there."

"There are numerous instances of death of animals due to the poisoning of water and grass by the explosive materials used at mining sites. During the rainy season, the explosives used at the mines get wash down to residential areas which contaminate the drinking water resulting in strange kind of diseases to the animals. The people in the region were always under the fear and anxiety that, they might also hit by such dangerous diseases in future." ■

Lack of opportunity in education drives Tibetan into exile

Every year thousands of Tibetans come into exile in search of a better life and freedom which is denied in their own land. Of these escapees, majority of them constitute of Children, whose sole purpose of coming into exile is to seek better education in exile which is not possible in Tibet. According to the figure available with Dharamsala based Tibetan Reception Centre, a total of 2445 Tibetans were registered as refugee in India in 2006 alone. Majority of these new escapees are children below the age of eighteen.

According to a record available with the Tibetan Reception Centre, Dharamsala, they received a two groups each comprising 40 recently arrived Tibetans from Delhi based Tibetan Reception Centre on 23 and 27 March 2007 respectively. Out of which 37 of them were 18 or below, 29 were between 19 to 25 year old and 10 were between the age of 26 to 30. From the groups only 4 people's were above the age of 30. From the above 80 recent escapees, 51 came into exile to seek education in exile schools while 23 came into exile for monastic education. Only 6 people came into exile for pilgrimage to holy buddhist sites and of them, 4 were above 30 years old.

If the education opportunities did exist in Tibet, then these refugees would not have made the treacherous and perilous journey into India. They would not have undertaken the risk of frostbite, starvation, death and loss, arrest and maltreatment by border security officials.

In September 2006, 75 Tibetan refugees crossed the glaciated Nangpa La pass to seek asylum in India. However, the Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) opened fire on the unarmed group without any warning on 30 September 2006. This resulted in the death of at least two Tibetans, including 17-year-old Kalsang Nortso. 41 of them were children below 18 years of age, who were sent by their parent for better education

opportunities in schools and monasteries run by the Tibetan government in exile.

It can be construed from the above facts and figures that the majority of escapees are children, who came into exile solely to seek better education opportunities that are unavailable in their native country.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) recent interview with 18 year old Dorjee, a teacher from Tsolung village, Ngari Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") highlighted the current state of education in Tibet and why Tibetan children come into exile. After reaching the Tibetan Reception Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal on 27 April 2007, Dorjee testified with TCHRD about his life and education in Tibet.

"Our family consists of 11 members. I am the youngest of the four brothers. My three elders brothers were married and each have 2 or 3 childrens from their wedlock. I am the only educated one in my family. The rest of the family members were engaged in farming. Our family owned an arable land of 30 *Mu* (*Mu is a measure of land equal to 67 square meters*) and cropped barley, wheat, peas and potatoes. We also had few goats which were taken care of at home. We were able to get a little money by selling wool. But our family's main source of income is agriculture farming. There is no alternative source on which our family can depend on."

"Both of my parents are in their late 60s, while my three elder brothers work on the farm during autumn and work as labourers at construction sites during winter in towns and cities. Our family has to rely completely on their hard labour. All my schools fees were also paid from their earnings."

"I joined the elementary school in County. at the age of 10 and finished my 6th standard. No fees were charged by the local Chinese government for elementary education. However, in

middle school, the school authorities charged 600 Chinese Yuan per semester, which included the cost of books and school uniform. We had to attend two semesters per year, which meant I had to pay 1200 Chinese Yuan per year in school fees. Since my school was located quite far from my home, I stayed in the school hostel. Hence, I had to pay 150 Chinese Yuan per year in hostel fees in addition to the school fees."

"Our school had around 800 students with 30 teachers. The major subjects taught in the school were Chinese, Tibetan, English, Mathematics, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, General Science, Political Science and Physical education. However, the Chinese language is given more importance by conducting teaching extensively in Chinese, while Tibetan was considered a secondary language. Moreover, the teachers tell the students that, 'without the proper knowledge of Chinese language, one will find difficulties in finding a job in future, hence one has to be proficient in the Chinese language.' They also say that, 'Tibetan being a secondary language, it is not of that much use in the future, hence it won't matter if you don't study Tibetan seriously.' The school authorities also cut the teaching session of Tibetan language down to thrice a week. The remaining sessions were allotted for teaching Chinese language and other subjects."

"After completing my three years in middle school on 1 July 2003, I joined high school at the same school. The fees for high school are much more than the middle school. The fees are as high as 1900 Chinese Yuan per semester and 3800 Yuan for one year."

"I completed my first year of high school education on 15 July 2004, however my parents withdrew me from the school. I was forced to discontinue my education, as my parents could not afford the exorbitant fees charged by the schools' authorities. I was unable to continue my education for my 2nd and

3rd years due to exorbitant school fees. Being one of the intelligent students in my class and possessing good knowledge of Tibetan, Chinese and Math, I easily got a job as a small children's teacher in the primary school in my village, through the help of one primary school teacher in Doepe Township."

"I stayed there for two years teaching Tibetan, Chinese and Math to more than 30 students. I was paid a meagre salary of 175 Yuan per month by the local Chinese government. The conditions of the school were highly pathetic. The class rooms were all in a dilapidated state. The chairs, desks and the black-boards were all broken and out of order. Even the staff quarters were all torn out, with cracks on the roof and wall."

"The Chinese government was only interested in the development of the regions which have natural resources. If they find that region has some natural resources, they will start a minor development program like road construction etc. The Chinese government has never made any development in my village, as the region was remotely situated with no natural resources. For example, there was no electricity in my village and the residents had to rely solely on solar energy for the light. Some families had no money to procure solar energy, so they were compelled to live without light."

"Most of the lands in my village were not fertile and barren. The residents faced lots of hardship in meeting their daily livelihood. It is also rare to find educated peoples in my village. Due to lack of natural resources in my village, the Chinese government never made any developments until date. The peoples in my village are experiencing an awful state of living conditions. Due to poor living standards in my village and lack of opportunity in education, I came into exile to seek a better education. I am fully committed in completing my education and afterward, I will return to my native village. I will work there as a teacher and will impart the knowledge I have gained from here to my fellow countrymen over there." ■

Dungkyab Monastery Abbot forced to step down

According to Radio Free Asia (RFA), a 70-year-old Khenpo Tsanor, the head of Dungkyab Monastery, Gade County, Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Qinghai Province, was recently forced by religious affairs department to step down after his refusal to sign documents condemning the Dalai Lama during one of the patriotic re-education campaign in the monastery.

"I spoke out loudly and refused to sign. I declared that I will not sign even at the cost my life, or risk of imprisonment, [or] death in a court," Khenpo Tsanor told RFA's Tibetan service. He also added that, he officially stepped down in mid-May.

"I saw the government documents... It was written that the Dalai Lama should be thoroughly criticized and his splittist behavior should be condemned," he said.

"I had no intention to sign. I knew very well that all who do not sign have to face trial in a Chinese court. They even threatened that the monastery would be shut down if we did not sign documents", he said.

"Some county officials came to the monastery [and] asked me whether I will agree to step down from the position of chief abbot," he said. "I agreed since I didn't have the option of not accepting it."

"It is so difficult for me to sit in such painful meetings," he said, referring to mandatory sessions with officials aiming to quash support for the Tibetan ex-

ile leader, the Dalai Lama.

However, the officials at the Gade religious affairs department declined to comment on the incident on several occasions. But another Gade County official, who asked not to be identified, confirmed Khenpo Tsanor's account.

The official also said that, county authorities were in the process of stepping up their patriotic re-education campaign and aiming to make Dungkyab a "model" monastery comprising only monks loyal to China.

"People are saying that the Dungkyab monks have refused to endorse the documents of the patriotic re-education campaign. This year I think the issue was discussed and it was decided to terminate his position," the county official said.

"It is well known that all monasteries under China must be converted into 'model monasteries,' which comply with government directives, the official said. "From the government's perspective, many monasteries must be evaluated and brought into compliance, although I don't know all the details." Dungkyab Monastery, some 12 miles (20 kms) from the Gade County seat, was established by the renowned Buddhist teacher Kyabje Wangchen Khenrab Dorje in 1837. It currently houses more than 200 monks, in addition to another 130 monks recruited by the Chinese authorities, according to local sources.



Chinese Leadership attacks Dalai Lama and vows to tighten control over Tibet

According to Reuters, the world's largest international multimedia news agency, the top Chinese leadership in Tibet continues with their rhetoric's against Tibet's spiritual leader the Dalai Lama. The news agency reported that, "in a speech to about 600 party members in regional capital Lhasa on 18 May, Zhang Qingli, Tibet's Communist Party secretary, claimed a 'transitional victory' over the influence of Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

"We must have a more vigorous will to fight, a more tenacious style and do a more solid job of uniting and leading the region's various ethnic groups and throwing ourselves into the struggle against splittism," the official Tibet Daily on Monday quoted Zhang as saying. In his address he said "From beginning to end... we must deepen patriotic education at temples, comprehensively expose and denounce the Dalai Lama clique's political reactionary nature and religious hypocrisy."

Zhang Qingli, a strong ally of President Hu Jianto has been appointed as party secretary in "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") since February 2007. After his takeover as a "TAR" party secretary, the patriotic education campaign in the monasteries and anti Dalai Lama campaign greatly intensified in Tibet. ■

Two foreign reporters warned by China for their writing on Tibet

China summoned two foreign reporters for their trip to Tibet in April 2007 and for their writing on Tibet. Harald Maass, China correspondent of the German daily *Franfurter Rundschau*, and Tim Johnson, the China correspondent of the US newspaper chain *McClatchy*, were summoned separately on 15 May by Zhang Lizhong, a division director at the foreign ministry's information department for questioning.

Zhang warned Maass that his reporting from Tibet was a "mistake" and that this was a serious matter. Accusing Mass of distorting

the facts and violating journalistic standards, he asked him to "correct his mistakes."

Zhang also told Maass that he had the right to travel to Tibet under the new rules for the foreign press, but he still needed to obtain an authorisation from the representatives of the ministry (Weiban) in Lhasa.

Zhang told Johnson that parts of his articles were "false" and "unacceptable." And according to Johnson, Zhang said the new regulations do not apply to reporting from Tibet. When Maass and Johnson arrived in Lhasa, they found themselves being followed and harassed by Chinese plain-clothes policemen. Tibetans they talked to were fined. And the police prevented Maass from travelling to the city of Shigatse.

On 25 May 2007, Paris based media watchdog, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) raised serious concern over the Chinese Foreign Ministry action against two western reporters.

The press freedom organisation said "The Beijing games organising committee has just published a very detailed report about all the benefits that foreign journalists will enjoy, so it is shocking to see foreign correspondents being harassed while out reporting and then lectured to when they write stories that displease the authorities,".

Reporters Without Borders further urged Liu Qi, the head of the Beijing Organising Committee for the Games, to come out publicly in favour of journalists being allowed to travel to Tibet and Xinjiang without hinderance and for this sort of harassment to stop. ■

French Parliamentarians presented declaration on Tibet

On 11 May 2007, Mr Lodi Gyari, Special Envoy of the Dalai Lama during his meeting with Mr Lionnel Luca, President of the Working Group on Tibet at the French National Assembly in Paris was presented a declaration of the French Parliamentarians urging People's Republic of China's government to continue the dialogue with envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in order to resolve the Tibet issue.

The declaration was signed by 171 MPs from the Lower House and 74 senators from the Upper House of the French Parliament. ■

China walked out on 'EU-China experts' Seminar on Human Rights

In a key development to 'EU-China experts' Seminar on Human Rights from 10-11 May, China walked out of seminar in protest against the inclusion of International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). FIDH and ITUC report that, "China's Foreign Affairs Ministry's Deputy Director-General for International Organisations, Dr. Shen Yongxiang, last Thursday ordered his entire delegation to leave the conference hall where the meeting was about to start, in protest at the EU's German Presidency's refusal to exclude two independent civil society organisations invited to take part as experts in the Seminar". The meeting was to issue recommendations on the right to a fair trial and on labour rights, ahead of the official EU-China Human Rights Dialogue.

It further states that China's attitude runs counter to a key principle of the EU's human rights dialogues, which is the demonstration by the concerned country of its commitment to engage positively in the dialogue and improve its human rights situation. The ITUC and FIDH now consider that China's decision to walk out of the Seminar, calls for a thorough assessment by the EU and its Member States on the usefulness of maintaining the Human Rights Dialogue with China. ■

German's Parliaments adopts resolution on Tibet

The Bundestag, Germany's Parliament, has adopted a unanimous resolution on 26 April 2007, condemning in the strongest terms the "the system of *Laogai* camps in China" and practices like the '*re-education through labour*' system (RTL) used by the regime. The Bundestag resolution on China, initiated by all major political parties, which passed through the Foreign Affairs Committee, also cites Tibetans, Mongols, Uyghurs and members of religious minorities amongst the victims of the RTL system.

The system is a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review. ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin 39

Assistant Director spoke on Panchen Lama issue

Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director gave a talk to a large Public gathering on 17 May 2007 in Tsuglagkhang, Mcleod Ganj, Dharamsala. The event was jointly organised by Regional Tibetan Women's Association (RTWA) and Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC) to commemorate the 12th anniversary of young Panchen Lama arrest and disappearance.



Mr Monlam gave a detail account of the young Panchen Lama and his parent arrest by the Chinese government after he was recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of Xth Panchen Lama. The young Panchen Lama and his family disappeared three days after the formal announcement by the Dalai Lama.

He also briefed the Public about, the arrest of Chadrel Rinpoche, the head of the China's search Committee for the Xth Panchen Lama's reincarnation. Chadrel Rinpoche was later sentenced to six year prison term on 22 April 1997 by Beijing authorities on charges of "plotting to split the country and "leaking state secrets" over the issue of Panchen reincarnation.

Mr. Jampa raised serious concern about the well being of the young Panchen Lama and China's unresponsive gesture over the whereabouts of XIth Panchen and his parent.

Mr Monlam also fielded the questions posed by the public on the issue of Panchen Lama and human rights situation in Tibet.

Executive Director addressed the candlelight vigil

Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director was invited by the Tibetan Women Association (TWA) to address the public on the evening of 17 May 2007 during the candle lights vigil organised by TWA at the Tsuglagkhang, Mcleod Ganj.

Mr Urgen spoke in length about the tragic fate met by the young Panchen Lama and his family. He also spoke on the need to work collectively for the early release of Panchen Lama Gendun Choekyi Nyima. ■

TCHRD attends Vth TSG Conference

Mr. Tsering Agloe, Researcher, participated in the fifth International Conference of Tibet Support Group (TSG) in Brussels, Belgium from 11 to 14 May 2007.

Over 315 participants from 56 countries and six continents gathered in Brussels to raise their voice and action for Tibet. They pledged to increase their efforts in support of Tibet and call on the international community, including governments, elected representatives of the people and civil society leaders as well as all freedom-loving

individuals throughout the world to support His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The participants were inspired by the unwavering loyalty of Tibetans in Tibet to the Dalai Lama and in safeguarding their culture and identity. The conference participants pledged to continue their unceasing efforts to achieve a political resolution to the question of Tibet in accordance with the wishes of the Tibetan people in determining their future.

Strategies and activities were proposed and discussed by the conference participants to support the Tibetan struggles. The conference agree to focus the attention of Tibet Support Groups on a number of areas of major importance. An immediate area of focus is the campaigns designed to focus attention on Tibet in relation to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, campaigns in which all Tibet Support Groups will enthusiastically participate.

The conference also focus on other key areas of concerns such as Olympic campaign, political support for negotiations, outreach to Chinese people, freedom of expression, water resources, compliance with international human rights standards and finally on the issue of China population transfer into Tibet.

The conference did send a strong message to the Chinese government. The Dalai Lama's absence stirred lot of media coverage and debate within in Belgium government. ■



Mr. Tsering voting for a action plan.

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • TCHRD 1996-2006: *A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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Colossal Guru Rinpoche's statue demolished in Tibet: China's new religious affairs regulations for "TAR" entered into force

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that, in mid May 2007 Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) demolished a colossal statue of Guru Padmasambhava popularly known as Guru Rinpoche of the Samye Monastery and that rubble from the statue's destruction is being transported to unknown location according to reports emanating from the area.

Coinciding with the Buddhist holy month of Saka Dawa, a convoy of Chinese PAP came to the Samye Monastery, Dranang County, Lhoka Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region 'TAR' and forcibly demolished a nearly completed huge gold and copper plated statue of Guru Padmasambhava. The statue was constructed with the fund of about 800,000 Chinese Yuan generously donated by two Chinese devotees from the highly industrialized Mainland city of Guangzhou in Guangdong Province. The sponsors and



The veiled head of the Statue of Guru Padmasambhava under construction in Samye Monastery prior to its demolition by PAP. The photo was taken in January by unknown person. ©TCHRD

the local people were reportedly highly disappointed and saddened by this unthinkable act of demolishing a structure of such religious importance.

Samye Monastery is located at the bank of Yarlung Tsangpo River at Dranang County in Lhoka Prefecture "TAR" and is believed to be the first Tibetan monastery ever built in Tibet in the year 779 under the able

Continue at next page

Grand Celebration of incense burning rituals in Tibet



Jokhang in Barkhor

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirm information from a reliable source that, a grand celebration of incense burning ritual was held on 19 June 2007 by the people in Tibet to mark the birth anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as per the Tibetan lunar calendar which falls on the fifth day of the fifth Tibetan month. In the early morning, Tibetan people assembled at Bharkor area in Lhasa and celebrated the day with grand incense burning ritual. A green prayer flag suiting His Holiness horoscope were also hoisted and the smokes from the burning incense filled the air.

People from the Lhasa vicinity county, Nagchu, northern Nyenchen Thangla, Kandze, Pelbar, Chamdo, Derge Joda, Tawu, Gyalthang, Keygudo, Golog, Ngaba, Ladang and Bayen also celebrated the occasion in their regions by burning incense and hoisting prayer flags. Almost entire Tibetan populace from three provinces in unity went for the traditional way of burning incense and hoisted prayer flags, and showed a sense of happiness and satisfaction.

In the morning of 19 June at around 4.30 a.m, people from all walks of life in various age groups in their elaborate traditional dress thronged the Bharkor for the incense burning

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Continued from page 1

supervision of Tibetan King Trisong Detsen. It was then handed over to the famous Buddhist master Padmasambhava continued the construction of the monastery.

In order to cover up the information from being leaked outside, the Chinese PAP accordingly quickly barred pilgrims, devotees and foreign tourists from visiting Samye Monastery. A huge network of Chinese PAP were deployed around the monastery area. Few local Tibetan devotees after questioning the monks of the monastery about the demolition did not dare to disclose any information. On being asked, the monastery officials told the devotees that the statue was demolished because a new religious structure cannot be built without official consent. One local Tibetan told TCHRD that, "Tibetans in Lhoka, particularly in Dranang County did not dare to challenge the officials openly but deep inside their heart, people fear and worry that the demolition of Guru Rinpoche's statue and transportation of its rubble bear a resemblance to the dark era of the Cultural Revolution."

On 1 January 2007, a new "Measures for the 'Regulation on Religious Affairs'" with 56 articles, issued by the 11th Standing Committee of the "TAR" People's Government on 19 September 2006, entered into force. This new regulation, instead of providing the protection of religious affairs, aimed at enforcing compliance with government regulations and policies on religious organizations, religious personnel, and religious citizens. In particular, this new regulation empowers the officials with legal backing to intensify restrictions and subjected to state control and repression.

Article 13 of the new "Measures for the Regulation on Religious Affairs", states that, "Religious organizations or venues for religious activities that plan to build a religious structure such as an open-air religious statue, stupa, or Mani Lhakhang [Prayer (wheel) Temple] outside a venue for religious activities petition the Autonomous Region's government religious affairs department for examination and approval after receiving consent from the prefectural (city) administrative office (people's government) religious affairs department where the venue is located. The

autonomous region's people's government religious affairs department shall put forth its decision on whether to grant approval within 30 days of receiving it.

Religious organizations and venues for religious activities that plan to build a large-scale, open-air religious statue outside a venue for religious activities handle [the matter] in accordance with the provisions in the State Council "Regulation on Religious Affairs." No group or individual outside of religious organizations and venues for religious activities may build religious structures such as a large-scale open-air religious statue or mani lhakhang [prayer (wheel) temple]"

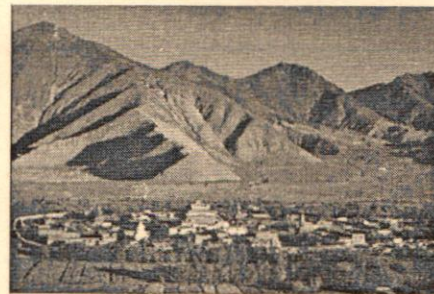
As a reinforcement, Article 48 states that, "Where, in violation of provisions in Article 13 of these measures, a religious structure such as an outdoor religious statue, stupa, or mani lhakhang [prayer (wheel) temple] is built without authorization outside of a venue for religious activity, the people's government religious affairs department at the county level or above orders redress, suspension of construction, and demolition within a specified time limit, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations."

TCHRD believes that this latest incident of demolishing Guru Padmasambhava's statue in the Samye Monastery not only highlights new measures being announced but also being forcibly implemented there by violating the fundamental human rights of Tibetan people's right to religious freedom. TCHRD fears that the same measure will be undertaken across religious institutions in Tibet in the coming days.

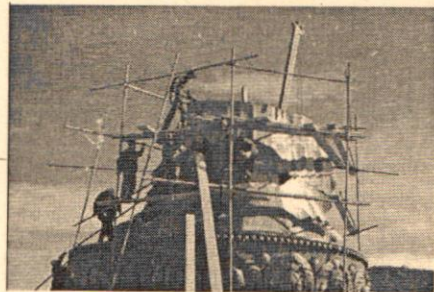
Severe restrictions on political and religious activities are authorized at the highest levels. The latest measures signal that a prospect for more religious freedom as gallantly pronounced in the Chinese constitution is bleak, considering China's record with respect to the religious freedom. While China's constitution provides its citizens with the "freedom of religious belief," it does not protect the right to manifest religious beliefs, highlighting the importance for China to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which contains explicit provisions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religions and which she signed on 5 October 1998.

As China continues to reach out to the world, beefing up scores of political contacts, emerging as an active player in the international arena, preparing to showcase her strength by hosting Olympic games next year, expanding her

influence and refining its diplomacy to become one of world's great powers, the free world must remind itself that it has a responsibility to ensure that China respects human rights of its own people, the Tibetans and others within its territory. ■



Samye Monastery, Dranang County, Lhoka Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") The monastery was believed to be the oldest Buddhist monastery in Tibet.



The gold and copper plated statue of Guru Padmasambhava at Samye monastery under construction. The photo was taken in January by an unknown person. ©TCHRD



Under construction site of the Guru Padmasambhava statue at Samye Monastery before its demolition in May. The photo was taken in January by an unknown person. ©TCHRD



Zung (inner relics) being prepared for the Guru Rinpoche's statue. The photo was taken in January by an unknown person. ©TCHRD

A farmer released after serving 15 years in Prison

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that a farmer Lhundup; a former farmer, imprisoned at Chusul Prison was released from the Chinese prison after completing his 15 years prison term on 29 June 2007.

Lhundup who hailed from Dashang Township, Gyama County, Meldrogungkar is a humble farmer. He is now 38 years old. He was arrested along with four other farmers Thupten Yeshe, Sonam Rinchen, Kunchok Lodoe and Sonam Dorjee.

On 30 June 1992, a large assembly of around 1200 people including prominent leaders of Gyama Township and County were gathered for a meeting. During the meeting, the four farmers, Lhundup, Sonam Rinchen, Konchok Lodoe and Sonam Dorjee, suddenly came forward with a huge Tibetan National Flag and stormed the stage while the meeting was in progress. On the stage they shouted slogans such as "Free Tibet", "Chinese Leave Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama".

Their protest created disruption and chaos amongst the crowds and the meeting was unable to continue. After fifteen minutes of protest, the police came to the scene and immediately arrested them. Later during the interrogations, they were subjected to severe torture and beatings.

When polices asked them about the reasons for their protest, they replied in unison that, "the Chinese government is forcing the Tibetan farmers to buy fertilizers at an exorbitant price which resulted in putting tremendous burden on the livelihood of Tibetan farmers."

They also cited that, "the implementation of birth control measures and forced sterilization of women, huge influx of Chinese settlers into Tibet and Tibetan people fast losing hold of their jobs and employment prospects" as other reasons for the protest.

In addition to that the Tibetan people were subjected to bully and their market areas were forcibly taken away. The implementation of unfair polices by the Chinese government and Tibetan people unable to determine their own affairs and opportunities as prime reasons for their protest.

Their bold reply angered the Chinese polices calling them as "separatist" and landed flurry of inhumane and severe beatings on them with electric prods and batons on the scene of arrest.

On the same day, they were then taken to Gutsa Prison, located east of Lhasa city and imprisoned them in separate cells. In Gutsa Prison they were again subjected to numerous torture sessions.

Later on 4 July 1992, four days after the protest, Thupten Yeshe, a farmer from Gyama County was also arrested on charges of being the prime plotter as well as the 'ring leader' of the group. He was then taken to Gutsa Prison and received similar torture sessions.

After period of thorough interrogations and tortures in Gutsa prison, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court on 18 October 1992 convicted all five of them of offenses ranging from "counter revolutionary plot", "inciting reactionary propagandas". Thupten Yeshe, Lhundup and Sonam Rinchen were sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment and Sonam Dorjee and Konchok were sentenced to 13 years of imprisonment.

On 20 November 1992, they were shifted to Drapchi Prison. Immediately after their arrival in Drapchi, Thupten Yeshe was put in a solitary confinement cell.

In back drop of inhumane and severe beatings and tortures inflicted to five of them, farmer Konchok Lodoe became very weak and ill. In order not to bear for his medical expenses, he was released from prison and made his relatives to take care of his well-being and health. On 13 March 1994, it was announced through out Tibet that he was released on a medical parole and currently he is in a state of poor health.

Likewise, his mate Sonam Rinchen's health deteriorated in prison due to beatings and torture he was subjected to. In course of time, his health worsened alarmingly and on 23 September 1999, he died in the prison due to lack of timely treatment and medication.

Sonam Dorjee also received inhumane torture and beatings in the prison and was reported to have fainted numerous times during the torture sessions. Due to his poor state of health, he too was released on medical parole on 22 November 1998. However, on 21 November 2000 Sonam Dorjee was again arrested and put in Drapchi Prison.

Lhundup while in prison regularly suffered from kidney illness and chronic headaches due to numerous torture and beatings received in prison. In April 2005 he was shifted to Chusul Prison. At present he heavily relies on medicines and treatments to keep him alive and healthy. ■

Tibetans clash with Chinese over mining activities

According to the information received from Tibet, hundreds of Tibetans rioted against a Chinese mining project in Pamenchu, Tawu [Ch: Bamei] Township, Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan Province.

The riot erupted in the town after amid protest over the Chinese authorities' decision to start extraction of lead and zinc from a Shak Drak Lha Tse mountain which the natives considered as one of nine sacred mountains in the region.

On 27 June 2007, a large numbers of Chinese government geologist came to inspect the presence of mineral resources in the region. When they begin to extract the sacred mountain in Pamenchu, the people in the regions protested against their decision. They told the officials that, "by starting the extraction work in the mountain, they are destroying the environments as well as hurting the sentiment of local peoples." They resented against their policies. However, the officials did not heed to the request of local inhabitants. Due to which the local people clashed with county and security officials along with members of the mining company. The riot lasted for several hours.

Local Tibetans worship Shak Drak Lha Tse mountain, which they believe is a home to a god that protects the local lands, local sources say. "We always knew it was rich in minerals, but we never touched it because it was sacred," one local source said.

The Chinese government later arrested most of the Tibetan protestors and there whereabouts are not known till date. The numbers of injured person in riot were also not known and currently the region was placed under high security alert. ■

TCHRD commemorates the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

As 26 June 2007 marks the tenth anniversary of the UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) commemorates the day in support of victims of torture throughout the world.

Torture is one of the severest forms of human rights abuses, taking a terrible toll on millions of individuals and their families across the globe. In Chinese occupied Tibet, torture is endemic in the network of prisons and detention centres across the plateau. According to TCHRD documentation, the Chinese authorities' systematic use of torture has resulted in the death of 89 known Tibetan political prisoners since 1987. According to TCHRD's database, there are currently 116 known Tibetan political prisoners languishing in various prisons in Tibet. Torture being a regular feature in the Chinese administered prisons and detention centres, the Centre is highly concerned about the well-being and safety of the political prisoners upon whom the worst of torture is afflicted.

Electric shocks, pricking cigarettes on the face, beating, hand or thumb cuffs, feet manacles, aerial suspension, exposure to extreme temperature, long period of solitary confinement, deprivation of food, water and sleep, forced labour and forced exercise drills are few of the commonly used techniques employed by the Chinese authorities to defeat the nationalist spirit of the Tibetans and to break down an individual's personality. As terrible as the physical wounds are, the psychological and emotional scars are usually the most devastating and the most difficult to repair. A subtle form of mental torture is being used on former political prisoners in Tibet. Life after prison for these prisoners are made extremely difficult as they are denied readmission into their monastery or nunnery, ostracized socially, are constantly harassed by officials and have no prospect of finding employment. Many Tibetan torture survivors suffer recurring nightmares and flashbacks.

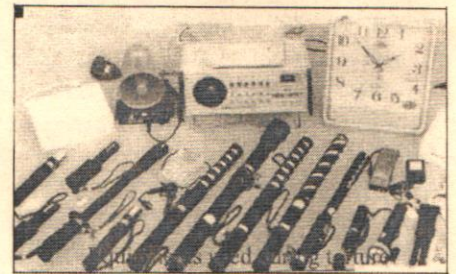
In 1984, the General Assembly adopted the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), which entered into force on 26 June 1987. It was an important step in the much-needed process of globalising human rights and acknowledging that

torture, and all forms of inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, are absolutely and universally illegal. In 1997, the United Nations General Assembly decided to mark this historic date and designated 26 June each year as International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The Convention obliges States to make torture a crime and to prosecute and punish those guilty of it. It notes explicitly that neither higher orders nor exceptional circumstances can justify torture.

As of June 2007, the Convention has been signed by 74 States. These States parties are required to report to the UN Committee against Torture, a human rights treaty body set up in 1987 to monitor compliance with the Convention and to assist States parties in implementing its provisions. The Committee is composed of 10 independent experts who serve in their personal capacity and are elected by States parties.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is a state party to the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment since 1988. The Chinese constitution does not contain an express prohibition of torture. The relevant provisions of the constitution in this context are Article 37 and 38 that protect the personal dignity of Chinese citizens. Chapter two of the constitution of the PRC covers several fundamental civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights but contains no explicit prohibition of torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Although PRC outlawed certain forms of torture in the revised Chinese Criminal Procedure Law that came into effect in 1997, systematic torture is still endemic in the Chinese administered prisons and detention centres in Tibet.

UN member states which sign the Convention render themselves accountable under international law to take action to prevent torture and to support the victims when torture takes place. In order to uphold the principle of accountability for the perpetrators of gross human rights abuses, the culture of impunity should be eradicated and perpetrators should be brought to justice. Clearly therefore a country like PRC under the communist



Torture tools on display.

rule, which resorts to torture routinely as a measure of coercive control over minority population, is not going to accept the principle of accountability, let alone agree to support and succour the victims.

In view of the current situation, TCHRD urges the government of the PRC to implement the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture to eradicate torture and "to ensure torture survivors' right to full reparation with special attention to medical and psychological needs". The Centre also urges the PRC to release Jigme Tenzin, Jigme Gyatso, Lobsang Tsultrim (all serving lengthy sentences and currently imprisoned in Chushul [Ch:Qushui] Prison) as per the appeal of the UN expert since they have "been convicted of a political crime, possibly on the basis of information extracted by torture". No tangible progress has been reported since the UN expert's report (E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.6 dated 10 March 2006) and the aforementioned prisoners of concern still remain incarcerated. The Centre also urges the international community to pressure the PRC to ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment. ■

Continue from page 1

ritual and hoisted the prayer flags. Same incense burning rituals also took place at Gephel Uatse hill, Sera Uatse hill and Bumpa hill which are located at the back of Drepung Monastery where a large crowd gathered early in the morning to burn incense and to hoist prayer flags.

It is well known that, Tibetans inside Tibet were always restricted from performing their religious rituals, which were integral part of Tibetan culture and tradition. The recent destruction and demolition of a colossal Guru Rinpoche statue is an evidence to the outside world. Earlier on 14 May 2007, three days before the holy month of Saka Dawa, Lhasa City Committee members called a meeting of the parents of school going children, where school children were ordered to refrain from visiting monasteries, Barkhor area, from circumambulating and wearing amulet thread during Saka Dawa. The committee members warned that those failing to abide by this order would be served with expulsion from school. On 11 June 2006, the Chinese government in order to refrain students from visiting monasteries, asked schools to remain open even on Sunday as Saka Dawa falls on that day.

The Chinese government imposed severe restriction on the religious activities and those violating the orders were subjected to punishment, expulsion from job and were made to pay fine. Prohibitions continue to be put in place for important day like Saka Dawa and Gaden Ngyamchoe, birthday of the Dalai Lama and the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. Last year, a joint notice issued on 12 December by the Lhasa City Party Secretary Office and the Lhasa Governor Office which clearly prohibited the Party members, civil servants, staff, public institutions such as schools and banks etc, vocational centres, students and retired civil servants to participate or even see the activities of Gaden Nyamchoe anniversary.

It was warned that those failing to abide by the official notice would be served with salary cut, demotion etc. For the retired Tibetans this is especially difficult because of their faith in religion yet their faith restricted by official strictures and dictums. In the past, cadres were unofficially allowed to believe in and practice religion privately, but are now being subjected to closer scrutiny and are liable to punishments and demotions.

Severe religious restrictions were put in place especially in Lhasa City. Plain clothed Public

Security Bureau officials were known to have stationed around the city and surveillance video cameras were installed around the major public routes and alleys in the city. In order to screen the incoming people into the city, major security check posts were installed on the roads leading into Lhasa City from surrounding counties of Phenpo Lhundrup, Taktse, Toelung Dechen, Meldrogungkar. Reports from Tibet confirm that small farmers engaged in petty businesses like selling incense and juniper leaves for religious purposes are banned from selling these items on religious days.

However, on 19 June 2007, some people were caught unaware of the significance of the day as it does not fall on the Chinese government prohibited day list. According to hearsays, a section of Tibetan explained that the Dalai Lama received US congressional gold medal award while some people even told that the Dalai Lama was ill and some said that it is an obstacle year for the Dalai Lama. Irrespective of different versions, the Tibetan people took to burn incense, and hoisted prayer flags in frenzy manner. After the rituals, people spent their day marvelously which seems like a celebration of Tibetan New Year.

Chinese Government had no clue about the activities until around 5 to 6 a.m, when the Chinese police officials at Kuru Bridge blocked the people going to participate in the Bumpa hill incense burning rituals.

Despite all restrictions, Tibetans from three provinces were able to commence the rituals ceremony in a very organized manner. On 14 March this year, Tibetans in Tibet secretly performed the incense burning ritual and prayers for the Dalai Lama corresponding to the offering of long life ceremony for H.H. Dalai Lama held in Dharamsala.

Severe restriction and control by Chinese authorities were common during the Dalai Lama's birthday. However, Tibetans inside Tibet have resorted to skillful ways of evading restriction and went on to celebrate the occasion. Tibetan reflects, 19 June 2007 as a birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as it falls on fifth day of fifth month as per Tibetan Lunar Calendar. Despite Chinese authorities' restriction, threat and warning, Tibetan peoples were able to celebrate the occasion in a traditional manner by burning incense and hoisting green prayer flags as it relates to His Holiness horoscope. ■

The Impoverishment of Tibetan Nomads

In recent times, the Chinese government has undertaken large displacements and relocation of Tibetan Nomads from their traditional grassland pastures in the name of the so called development and infrastructure enclaves. The displacement of nomads has resulted in depriving their traditional livelihood. The abrupt changes to the nomadic livelihood pattern have put their future in uncertain terms.

The Human Rights Watch (HRW), in their 79-page report, *"No One Has the Liberty to Refuse: Tibetan Herders Forcibly Relocated in Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan and the Tibet Autonomous Region"* criticized the Chinese government policies of forced relocations and resettlement where native Tibetan nomads were forcibly moved from their ancestral habitats. They also criticized Chinese government for forcing the Tibetans nomads to slaughter their livestock. In return the government officials paid minimal compensation and failed to protect Tibetans' legal rights. Due to which hundreds of thousands of Tibetan people were affected.

HRW urged Beijing government to suspend the resettlements of Tibetan nomads until a review system is put in place and to allow Tibetans to return to their land if they were forcibly moved or received no compensation. The China's ongoing developmental drive and modernization in Tibet has resulted in jeopardizing the livelihood of thousands of Tibetan nomads. Moreover, the Chinese government's policy of displacement and infrastructure developments projects were not consulted with Tibetan nomads.

HRW expressed their hope that the Chinese government would immediately put a halt to the ongoing relocation programme of the nomads and at the same time appealed to the Chinese government to provide adequate compensation to the displaced nomads. They recommended that those nomads who were forcibly displaced must be rehabilitated to their traditional dwelling place. A displaced nomad, who refused to give his name testified that, "the Chinese government is bent on to destroy the grassland pasture and the nomadic lifestyle and at the same time to annihilate the nomadic tradition from its roots." ■

China intensified its crackdown in Tibet after journalists' visit

Following the visit of two western journalists in Tibet in April 2007 and their subsequent writing on Tibet, China has intensified its crackdown in Tibet.

Tim Johnson, China correspondent of the US newspaper chain McClatchy Tribune, and Harald Maass, China correspondent of the German daily Frankfurter Rundschau, traveled to Tibet on tourist permits to avoid restrictions placed on journalists visiting the region.

While on his trip, Johnson wrote on his blog that the people he had talked to were picked up for questioning and a Tibetan was given 'an extraordinary fine on trumped-up charges'.

He also said that, the Chinese official at the main Chinese-run travel service asked him against talking to any Tibetans because of his status as a 'tourist' and blocked his attempts to travel within the region, making him switch to a local travel agency in Lhasa. Johnson had filed a report on how China had ordered thousands of Tibetans to relocate.

In the aftermath of the above incident, the Chinese authorities closed down that local travel agency in Lhasa, for facilitating two western journalists' tours in Tibet. One Tibetan was fined and those who had come in contact with the visitors were questioned.

Tibetan teens forcibly taken for propaganda indoctrination

Tibetan teenagers between the ages of 8 to 13 were forcibly taken to China for propaganda indoctrination. An eyewitness from Dartsedo County, Kandze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan Province, while speaking to phayul.com, a Tibetan news portal, gave a detail account of Chinese government forceful indoctrination propaganda.

"If a family has 3 sons aged between 8 and 13, all three are being forcibly taken to China by the Chinese military personnel," says the informer. "Every Tibetan child within those age range is trucked into China; there is no

choice, the Chinese are forcibly transporting to China Tibetan kids en mass. Kids from all the nomadic regions are being taken forcibly by the Chinese," the witness said.

The witness added with the reason for the mass transportation of Tibetan kids that, "The Tibetan teens are going to be brainwashed down in China. This is a major preparation for the Games (referring to Beijing 2008 Olympics) propaganda."

The witness said that China is taking great precaution to paint a rosy picture of situation inside Tibet. "The Chinese are offering money to some poor Tibetan families with the condition that the locals parrot the official pretty lines to any foreign visitors during the upcoming Beijing Games."

These nomadic areas are within a day's bus ride northeast of the historic crossroad-town of Dartsedo (Chinese: Kangding), in the eastern fringes of Tibet. According to the same source, what the Chinese are doing to Tibetans is "very dirty." "There is immense tension here and the facts about what are happening inside Tibet have to be extracted from talking to the nomads. They will tell you the truth," the witness says.

A group of International associations made demands before the 2008 Olympic

"Collectif Chine JO 2008", a group of nine French and international associations, launched a campaign "Huit revendications pour Pékin" or 'Eight demands for Beijing' before the Beijing Olympics in August 2008.

Marie Holzman, Solidarité Chine and one of the co-founder of the campaign said in Paris, that "since 2001, after China got the rights to host the Olympics there has been a concerted effort to launch a pacific and rational campaign to highlight the lamentable conditions in China."

"Thus we propose to the Chinese authorities eight realistic demands which could be implemented immediately if there is a political will," said the communique.

The eight demands are:

- 1) Release of those imprisoned for Tiananmen protest, and to liberate all prisoners of opinion in China.
- 2) Abolition of death penalty not only in China but all over the world.

- 3) Putting an end to the control of information, including on Internet.
- 4) Abolition of administrative detention.
- 5) To stop the systematic practice of torture.
- 6) To allow free and independent trade unions.
- 7) To delete article 306 of the Penal code, which allows the repression of lawyer.
- 8) To put an end to forced expulsions of citizens from their housing or, their lands

The nine associations are, Action des Chrétiens pour l'abolition de la Torture (ACAT-France), Agir pour les Droits de l'Homme (ADH), Amnesty International (AI - France), Comité de Soutien au Peuple Tibétain (CSPT), Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM), Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH), Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (LDH), Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), Solidarité Chine.

Historic Resolution on Tibet passed in Mongolia

A historic resolution on Tibet accepting Tibet as an independent state was passed at the recently concluded three-day International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) Asia - Pacific Committee Meeting held in the Mongolian Capital, Ulaanbaatar.

The five point resolution accepts Tibet as an independent State and condemns the illegal occupation of Tibet by People's Republic of China (PRC), call to stop the demographic transformation policy of China which results in the large influx of Chinese into Tibet particularly after the Gormo - Lhasa Railway network, call upon the United Nations to resume the debate based on its resolution passed in 1959, 1961 and 1965 on Tibet, to pressurize for the boycott of 2008 Beijing Olympic as China continue genocide in Tibet and pursue it's imperialist ambitions threatening peace in Asia and the world at large and to help restore human rights in Tibet and support the freedom movement of Tibetan people and to put pressure on China for the unconditional release of all political prisoners in Tibet including Panchen Lama and Tulku Tenzin Delek.

More than 25 delegates representing around 10 different Countries from the Asia - Pacific Region participated the meeting, which was held from June 8 to 10, 2007. The meeting was hosted in the Official Meeting hall of Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building in Ulaanbaatar.



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TCHRD talk series

Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director gave a talk to the college students who came to attend a workshop organised by the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) on 6 June 2007. The Executive Director briefed the students about the functions of the Centre and its role. Similarly, Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director, briefed the workshop participants about the current human rights situation in Tibet and answered the questions posed by the students.

On 15 June 2007, Mr. Jampa Monlam was invited by Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) to give talk about Democratization of the Tibetan community in exile and future prospects to the participants of the workshop at Sarah Institute of Higher Studies.

On 20 June 2007, Mr. Chukora Tsering Agloe, Researcher, was invited to deliver a talk on "Cultural Genocide in Tibet" to American students from Miami University at Sarah College for Higher Tibetan Studies. The talk was followed by an interactive question and answer session.

On 22 June 2007, Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director and Mr. Tashi Choephel, Researcher, briefed a group of international students at Chonor House, McLeod Ganj, on human rights situation inside Tibet and condition of Tibetan political prisoners in Prison. They also answered the questions posed by the students.

On 26 June 2007, Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director gave a talk on the present scenario of human rights situation inside Tibet to the Tibetan Fulbright scholars who are going to pursue their Master's programmes in American universities. ■

TCHRD attends fifth session of the UN Human Rights Council

The fifth session of the UN Human Rights Council took place at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 11 – 18 June 2007. This important session marked the end of one-year transformation from the defunct UN Commission on Human Rights to the UN Human Rights Council.

Mr. Tenzin Norgay, Personnel for UN Affairs, attended the session to observe the conclusion of the transformation period. During the eight-day session, several mandates of the Special Procedures on promotion and protection of human rights presented their reports followed by interactive dialogue sessions. Since the fifth session marks the end of the transformation in the UN human rights body, majority of the meetings were dedicated on institution building of the new Human Rights Council. The session was marked by the presence of a four-member Tibetan delegation, Mr. Ngawang Choephel (UNPO), Mr. Tenzin Norgay (TCHRD), Mr. Tenzin Samphel (OOT, Geneva) and Mr. Jan Willem den Besten (ICT Amsterdam). The Tibetan delegation approached several mandates of the Special Procedures in light of the current situation of human rights in Tibet and on recent developments in some of the thematic issues as well as communication of updates on information transmitted earlier. ■



UNHRC in session

TCHRD recruits new staff

Mrs. Tenzin Migmar joined TCHRD on 15 June 2007 as the General Assistant. She has Bachelor's Degree from Mysore University. She hails from Kollegal Tibetan Settlement in Mysore, Karnataka State. The TCHRD staff would like to convey best wishes and a pleasant stay in the Centre. ■



Two TCHRD staff resign

Ms. Tsering Choekyi, General Assistant, and Ms. Dicky Dolker, Field Officer, tendered their resignation on 10

January 2007 and 15 June 2007 respectively. The resignations come before the completion of their minimum of three years contract with TCHRD and are thereby deemed in violation of the Centre's rules and regulations.

Ms. Choekyi joined TCHRD on 1 September 2004 after completing her Master's Degree from Madras Christian College. In December 2006 she went to the United States and tendered her resignation by email.

Ms. Dolker after completing her Master's Degree from Ethiraj College, Madras University, joined TCHRD on 1 December 2006. Upon receiving a scholarship to study in the United States, she tendered her resignation on 15 June 2007. ■



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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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China intensifies restriction in Trulku Tenzin Delek's Monastery

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that on 18 July 2007 the Chinese authorities in Lithang County has detained an elderly Tibetan supporter of Trulku Tenzin Delek and prohibited the monks of Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling Monastery from carrying a reception ceremony of Trulku Tenzin Delek's portrait during the inauguration of newly built assembly prayer hall.

It all began on 18 July 2007 coinciding the Buddhist ceremony of Choekor Duechen (the day on which Buddha Shakyamuni preach the first Sermon), when a large gathering of Tibetans in nomadic area of Othok Village in Lithang County, Kardze Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Prefecture "TAP" organized a traditional annual horse race. The horse race was held near Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling



Trulku Tenzin Delek © TCHRD

Monastery with large gathering of Tibetan devotees and spectators alike for the occasion. The monastery was built by Trulku Tenzin Delek and named Kham Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling Monastery by the late Panchen Lama.

Continue at next page

China releases a Tibetan Political Prisoner, Thupten Yeshe, upon completion of 15 Years' term

The Chinese authorities in Tibet have released a long-serving political prisoner, Thupten Yeshe upon completion of his 15-year imprisonment term on 5 July 2007, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). Thupten Yeshe was arrested on 6 July 1992 on alleged charges of being the main plotter of demonstration by a group of four

farmers during a meeting at Gyama Township, Meldrogungkar County, "Tibet Autonomous Region" "TAR" earlier on 30 June 1992.

According to reliable sources, Thupten Yeshe, 58-year old, was released on 5 July 2007 from Chushul Prison (Ch: Qushui) after completing his 15-year prison sentence. Born to a humble farming family, in Gyama Township, Thupten Yeshe married and joined his bride's

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Thupten Yeshe. ©TCHRD

Continued from previous page

China intensifies....

On the same day 18 July 2007, a newly constructed assembly prayer hall (Tib: Dhukhang) of Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling Monastery was inaugurated with monks carrying the portrait of Trulku Tenzin Delek onto the throne during a reception ceremony. According to the information received by the Centre, the concerned Chinese government officials entered the monastery and banned monks from carrying out such activities and probed into the carrier of the portrait. It was reported that a large number of general public present during the ceremony have exhibited a clear sign of disapproval of authorities' decree and highhandedness in handling the matter.

A day later on 19 July, the local Chinese government official came to Othok Village and detained an elderly Tibetan lady whose name could not be identified, for her alleged 'crime' of motivating people to go and meet Trulku Tenzin Delek. The officials were also known to have warned and issued order to the village committee to manage their people and be responsible for their action.

In the backdrop of the incident, the authorities of Lithang County sent People's Armed Police (PAP) and put the monastery and surrounding areas un severe restriction. Because of which a group of local people from Lithang went to lodge their complaint to the higher authorities in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, "TAP". They were also reported to have barred from going there. Another group of ten Tibetans from Nyachuka County while on their way to lodge complaint regarding authorities' highhandedness were also said to have been detained.

Trulku Tenzin Delek (a.k.a A ngag Tashi), a highly respected Tibetan monk who vociferously spearheaded the activities for environmental protection, culture and preservation of

Tibetan Buddhism was arrested on charges of series of bombing incidents in 2002 in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture "TAP"

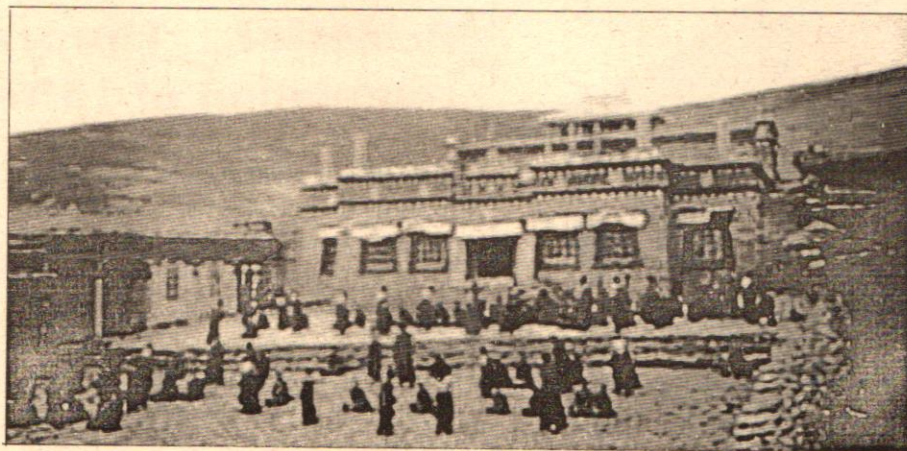
On 7 April 2002, Kardze Intermediate People's Court in Kardze "TAP" of Sichuan Province "TAP" found Trulku guilty of conducting "terrorist bombings and inciting secession activities." On 2 December 2002, Trulku was sentenced to death with two-year reprieve along with Lobsang Dhondup, a disciple of Trulku for "causing explosion" and "inciting separatism"

Both Trulku and Lobsang Dhondup refused to accept the court verdict and appealed to Sichuan Higher People's Court to revoke their death sentence, which rejected their appeal and upheld the original verdict in the second-instance trial and on January 26, 2003 handed down the same verdict. Lobsang Dhondup was given an immediate death sentence and executed on the same day of the court's verdict.

On 25 January 2005, the Higher People's Court in Sichuan province, in Southwestern China, commuted the death penalty with two-year reprieve for a Trulku to life term and deprivation of political rights for life. There has been no credible information on the current whereabouts and condition of Trulku Tenzin Delek since the court verdict and it remain a matter of great concern given his poor health condition prior to his arrest and other health complication during the period of detention.

It is widely believed that Trulku Tenzin Delek is framed with false allegations of involvement in bombing incidents. He has been under close scrutiny by Chinese authorities for his strong support of Tibetan culture and religion, his rising popularity in the local Tibetan community, his staunch support for Tibet's leader in exile, the Dalai Lama and his teachings, and his social welfare activities in Lithang County including setting up schools, old people's home, constructing monasteries and resolving community disputes.

TCHRD believes that Trulku is innocent and was wrongly implicated in the bombing incidents and urged the Chinese authorities to ascertain his whereabouts, well-being and release him immediately. TCHRD also request for a free and fair retrial as per the international standard legal norms and practices. ■



Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling © TCHRD

family in Gyama Township before his arrest in 1992 by the Chinese authorities for leading the demonstration.

Arrest:

On 30 June 1992, a large assembly of around 1200 people including prominent leaders of Gyama Township in Meldrongkar County were gathered for a meeting. During the meeting, the four farmers Lhundup, Sonam Rinchen, Kunchok Lodroe and Sonam Dorjee suddenly came forward with a huge Tibetan National Flag and stormed the stage while the meeting was in progress. On the stage they shouted slogans such as "Free Tibet", "Chinese Leave Tibet" and "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama". Their protest created disruption and chaos amongst the crowds and the meeting was unable to continue. After fifteen minutes of protest, the police came to the scene and immediately arrested them.

Later on 6 July 1992, Thupten Yeshe was also arrested on charges of being the prime plotter as well as the 'ring leader' of the group. He was detained in Meldrongkar County Detention Centre for about 13 days. During that time, his wife Tsering Yangchen, was allowed to see him once but they were not allowed to talk. Later he was secretly transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre, in east of Lhasa, where he was detained for almost three months and suffered inhuman treatment and torture during interrogation sessions.

Sentence:

After period of thorough interrogations and repeated torture in Gutsa prison, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court on 20 October 1992 convicted all five of them of offenses of "counter revolutionary plot", and "inciting reactionary propagandas". Thupten Yeshe, Lhundup and Sonam Rinchen were sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for 5 years and Sonam

Dorjee and Kunchok Lodroe were sentenced to 13 years of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for 5 years as well. On 20 November 1992, they were shifted to Drapchi Prison. Immediately after their arrival in Drapchi, Thupten Yeshe was put in a solitary confinement cell for reciting mani(prayer) and his failure to 'reform'. They were later transferred to Chushul Prison in April 2005. The length of the sentences handed down to all five Tibetans who peacefully demonstrated against the Chinese rule, clearly indicates the determination of the authorities to crack down on the political activists.

Death due to torture:

One of the group members, Sonam Rinchen, then in his twenties, died in 1999 while in prison, after being ill and part of his body paralyzed as a result of repeated torture whilst in prison and detention centre. The fifth member of the group, Kunchok Lodroe, was released on medical parole in 1996 and is still reportedly in poor health.

TCHRD fears that Thupten Yeshe is in poor health due to lengthy imprisonment and maltreatment in the prison. While in prison in February 1999, Thupten Yeshe suffered from renal problem and had blister all over his body that he was admitted to Xizang Military Hospital (Ch: Zong yi yuan) near Drapchi for seventeen days for treatment. Before being fully recovered he was taken back into prison in his poor physical condition. Torture and maltreatment being a regular feature in the network of Chinese administered prisons and detention centres, the Centre is highly concerned about the well-being and safety of the political prisoners upon whom the worst of torture is afflicted. According to a former Drapchi inmate who recalls Thupten Yeshe's patriotism and audacity, "He is very hard, robust and never easily gives up his stand even after lot of punishment. He is patriotic to the core."



Sonam Rinchen who died in 1999 while in prison as result of repeated torture in prison and detention centre. ©TCHRD

TCHRD expresses serious concern over China's treatment of (political) prisoners. The deaths of more than 89 political prisoners as result of torture and ill treatment—inflicted by prison officials are alarming, requiring serious investigation by independent bodies.

TCHRD does not recognize release of high-profile Tibetan political prisoners as a mark of improvement in human rights situation in Tibet. The Centre also urges the PRC to release Jigme Tenzin, Jigme Gyatso, Lobsang Tsultrim (all serving lengthy sentences and currently imprisoned in Chushul [Ch:Qushui] Prison) as per the appeal of the UN expert since they have "been convicted of a political crime, possibly on the basis of information extracted by torture". In 2007 TCHRD documented 116 known Tibetan political prisoners languishing in a network of prisons in Tibet. China must release all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience if it is sincere about improving its human rights record. ■

Commotion between two communities lead to arrest of 30 Tibetans

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that a commotion between the migrant Chinese Muslim traders and Tibetan youths on 27 June 2007 in Yagra neighborhood in Sog County, Nagchu Prefecture "TAR" and subsequent protest by Tibetans against the highhandedness of the traders has led to the arrest of around 30 Tibetans.

On 27 June 2007, a commotion between the migrant Chinese Muslim traders and Tibetan youths broke out in the Yagra neighborhood of Sog County while transacting medicinal plant caterpillar fungus (Tib: Yartsa Gunbu, Botanical name: *cordyceps sinensis*). According to sources, during the initial commotion two Tibetan youths were said to have been tied-up and beaten by a group of migrant Chinese Muslim traders of the area. After the incident hundreds of Tibetans gathered to protest against the treatment meted out to the two Tibetan youths. And the subsequent protest incident in Yagra neighborhood has led to the arrest of 30 Tibetans by the Chinese authorities.

The local authorities of Sog County in order to bring the situation under control sought the intervention of a high ranking Rinpoche of Sog Tsenden Monastery. "Without the help of Rinpoche the situation could have taken an ugly turn. It was due to his intervention in the matter that helped to bring an end to the situation" a local told TCHRD. The Chinese migrant shops around the Yagra neighborhood remained closed for a day after the incident.

Resentment towards the migrant traders and settlers are palpable and only a spark is needed to trigger protests. Often official indifference and disregard to local inhabitants' problem provides this spark. Today in many parts of Tibet, the collection and sale of Yartsa Gunbu is a lucrative business although it is looked down upon as an unwholesome activity. However, many inhabitants are left with no alternative other than to engage in this business with shrinking grassland and restriction put on by the authorities on the number of livestock that each family can raise which have failed to provide sufficient subsistence to mostly nomadic inhabitants. Over the years with migrant Chinese settlers

entering the lucrative trade, it has further aggravated the problem of local Tibetan inhabitants.

This is not the first incident of its kind to have taken place in Sog County, the first major conflict happened in 1993 when local Tibetans and migrant Chinese Muslim traders came face to face and later a large number of Tibetans protested against their presence in their locality. While in the same vein, in year 2004, a large number of local Tibetans of Tsaray Village in Yagra neighborhood of Sog County protested for two consecutive days against the Chinese mining activities in their area. The protest had resulted in a scuffle between the officials and the local Tibetans. Since there has been no information on the 30 Tibetan arrestees, TCHRD expresses its deepest concern on their condition and whereabouts. ■

Foreign Journalists Face Restrictions in Reporting from China

According to Asia Bureau, the foreign journalists reporting in China still experience intimidation, harassment and arrest despite the Chinese government promised to allow reporters to report freely in China. The new rules and regulations came into effect when Chinese government won the race to host the 2008 Olympic games. In their victory the Chinese government made the commitment to give free run to reporters reporting in China.

According to reports, the Chinese government continues to intimidate foreign correspondent by questioning their sources and threatening reporters when they publish stories and articles in newspapers.

The Foreign Correspondents Club of China (FCCC) released a new survey that more liberalized regulation came into effect on January first allowing foreign journalists the freedom of movement and to report freely in China. A noted Newsweek columnist and China specialist Melinda Lui who is currently the president of FCCC said that, "however, we urge the Chinese government to accelerate efforts to eliminate all media restrictions... A nation where

citizen who speak to foreign correspondents face threats, reprisals and even bodily harm, does not live up to the world's expectation of an Olympic host".

Recently, much to the surprise of many, the Chinese government closed down a prominent Beijing based newsletter on environment, health and labour issues published since 1995 by a British journalist Nick Young. Young's reporting and his paper was widely regarded as highly authentic, unbiased, informative and non-controversial. The Chinese government accused his newsletter for conducting illegal surveys and hence closed it down.

The foreign correspondents face particular difficulties while they report in sensitive regions of China such as Tibet, Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia. Despite promises made by the Chinese government, China still has a long way to go in fulfilling the pledges of 2008 Olympic games in Beijing. ■

Confrontation between Huis Chinese Traders and Tibetans in Sog County, Nagchu

On 27 June 2007, in Sog County, Yagra Village, a fight broke down between a Huis Chinese trader and two Tibetan youth. It was said that the two Tibetan youth were bound by rope and severely beaten. In aftermath of the incident, around eight hundred Tibetans gathered to launch a protest against the ill treatment to the Tibetan youth. Eventually, the Sog authorities sought the intervention of a respected religious lama of the locality to intervene to settle the tension amongst the two communities.

The local religious Lama appealed to the Tibetans requesting them to put an end to the protests which was respectfully heeded by the Tibetans. According to the report, the shops owned by Huis Chinese were made to shut down and Huis Chinese traders involved in the fight disappeared after the incident.

The Incident was not the first of its kind. Usually the two communities have never had healthy relationships. For instance, in 1993, there was a major showdown of anger and animosity. ■

Creation of New Socialist Countryside bringing havoc to the traditional nomadic lifestyle

Jigme Lhunthok, a monk who came from Gansu Province, Tibet, recently testified to TCHRD about the threats and challenges faced by the Tibetan nomads in the region under China's campaign of "Creation of New Socialist Countryside".

According to his testimony, the local authority of the region introduced new rules and regulations on the distribution of grassland pastures for the nomads. At the same time, the Chinese authorities have also started constructing houses for the nomads in order to sedentarize them.

The introduction of new rules and regulations on pasture. It has led to unfortunate incidents of disputes, feuds and confrontations between the nomads, nomadic groups, monasteries and within the general public. A dispute over grazing of animals has led to the Tibetans from Zogey Chor township and Gungtso township clash over the ownership of the pasture. Soon a petty dispute, escalated into a violent incident between the two nomadic communities.

Later, the heads of the two communities intervened to settle down the dispute. Although the tense situation was brought under control, the two communities since then never enjoyed harmonious relation they were known to enjoy in the past. They continue to loom under the prospects of future pasture disputes.

In another development, since 2005 onwards, the Chinese government has embarked on the construction of new housing blocks in the Mewo Township. So far, around eighty houses have been constructed to shelter nomads. There were other housing blocks under construction that were later supposed to be filled by the nomads. The government has a long-term plan of sedentarizing the nomads into settlement enclaves in the attempt to facilitate the nomads to give up their traditional lifestyle.

According to the most recent development, Gesar nomadic community, which comprised five families, has already sold its animal livestock in the wake of the re-settlement.

As part of the Creation of the New Socialist Countryside, the Chinese government has vociferously persuaded the Tibetan nomads to give up their ancestral lifestyle calling it as primitive and unproductive to embrace "prosperous urban lifestyle". As a result hundreds and thousands of Tibetan nomads have moved to settlement enclaves in search of China's new urban paradise.

Ironically, for nomads the abrupt change of lifestyle has been proved traumatic and disillusioning. In order to start a new life in urban environment they took up menial jobs in construction sites to make a living. However, they soon found out that they were paid lesser than the Chinese labourers and discriminated. Disillusioned by such prospects of life in urban environment, they once again returned to their traditional nomadic lifestyle.

The Chinese government initially told the nomads that they would not have to pay a single penny but later onwards they were made to pay for housing schemes that amounted to 10,000 to 20,000 Yuan. In the light of the prevailing circumstances, the Tibetan nomads were filled with anxiety and fear about their future. The nomadic lifestyle treasured for centuries had to be abandoned abruptly. Unfortunately, the new urban life does not seem to give them a new hope and prospects for their future. These are the sentiments and impressions that now prevail among the Tibetan nomads. Nonetheless, the Chinese government's introduction of a new pasture distribution and regulation coupled with the so-called "Creation of New Socialist Countryside" has proved disastrous and tragic for the Tibetan nomads both in the immediate and long-term scenario. ■

The Chinese authorities ordered festival-goers to wear fur or face fines

The Tibetan festival goers in Yushu region of Tibet were ordered by the local authorities to wear traditional Tibetan fur-trimmed robe during the annual Yushu horse-racing festival. The enforcement of wearing animal skin and fur was issued in the back drop of the Dalai Lama's mass appeal to Tibetans to abstain from wearing animals skins on their

clothes last year in India. It is reported that those Tibetans festival goers who failed to obey the order will be met with fine and punishment.

This is yet another attempt by the Chinese leaders inside Tibet to assert their power and influence to counter what they called the "separatist forces and the Dalai Clique".

Macartney writes in TimesOnline, "Tsedang is reluctant to don his traditional Tibetan fur-trimmed robe at the Yushu annual horse-racing festival. It is not what the Dalai Lama would want.

But the 20-year-old student has no choice. The command has come down from the Government of the remote Chinese county that he must defy his spiritual leader. I don't want to wear this skin but we have to," he told The Times. "It's an order from the Government. I hate wearing this. It's a terrible thing. The Dalai Lama said we must not wear skins." He dropped his voice to a whisper: "The Dalai is our king, you know."

Thousands of Tibetans traveled for days, converged at the plains to pitch their tents on the slopes surrounding the festival grounds in a remote corner of western Amdo [Ch: Qinghai] province) to celebrate the annual horse-racing festival. Festival goers who fail to obey the order would face fine up to 3,000 yuan (£200), an enormous sum for ordinary Tibetans.

During the Kalachakra Teaching (The Wheel of Time) in January last year at the Indian town of Amravati, Andhra Pradesh, the Dalai Lama asked thousands of Tibetans attending the Kalachakra Teaching to abstain from wearing and decorating clothes with animal skins. It was followed by a massive show of obedience to the Dalai Lama's call inside a restive Tibet when thousands of Tibetans voluntarily burnt animal skins worth millions of dollars. The incident inside Tibet simply shocked the Chinese authorities. To counter the Dalai Lama's influence and presence, the Chinese authorities ordered Tibetans to wear animal skins as a gesture of defiance to the Dalai Lama. There was also a cases of Tibetan State Television anchor freed to wear fur were ordered to wear fur on their dress by the Chinese authorities.

Today the photos and pictures of the Dalai Lama are banned from display and possession. The latest development is to be seen as one of China's continuing "anti-Dalai Lama" campaign inside Tibet. ■

UN Secretary General silent on Tibet question

According to a UN Watch report, on 31 July 2007, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in a diplomatic silence ignored a question asked to him by Jean-Claude Buhrer, a former correspondent for *Le Monde* and the author of several books on the United Nations and human rights. The question was asked to him during the first Geneva press conference Mr. Ban held since taking the office on 2 July 2007.

After the session, Buhrer approached the Secretary General with a group of journalists and posed his question on Tibet. He asked the Secretary General, *"Mr. Secretary General, the UN is working on the independence of Kosovo. At the same time, one of the oldest nations of the world, Tibet, is still under foreign occupation and is one of the last countries under colonial rule since it was invaded by China in the 1950s. What about the implementation of the UN resolutions on self-determination for Tibet? And what will you do as Secretary General to facilitate a peaceful settlement between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama? Are you ready to meet the Nobel Peace Prize laureate who advocates non-violence, or is the UN more keen to reward those resorting to violent means."*



Mr. Ban Ki-moon, eighth United Nation Secretary General

Mr. Ban after listening attentively to Buhrer's question, came out with a response but was immediately cut off by his spokesperson, Michèle Montas. ■

Tibetan literary website closed down by Chinese authorities

The Radio Free Asia (RFA) reports that the Chinese authorities in the northern Chinese city of Xian have closed a literary website run by a Tibetan for apparently posting "political" content. The popular site, known as "The Lamp", was believed to have more than 800 registered forum users. The website was closed down on 4 July by the Internet police. The editor of the website told RFA that, *"When we called the office where we bought the Web site, they thought perhaps it was due to the detection of political content by the Chinese Internet police."*

However, the Chinese service provider has no clue for the closure. The official at the state-owned Xian Technology Ltd (which sells and distributes websites) declined to comment when asked about the closure.

The Tibetans who contribute to the site have expressed their anger and frustration. One of them said,

"The sudden closure of this Web site has disappointed many young Tibetan readers. Many have already expressed their disappointment on another Web site called 'Tibetan Language.' Several college students called and informed me how they miss our Web site".

China maintains strict control and regulation on free flow of information. ■

Human Rights Commission Chairman highlights Human Rights abuses in Tibet

Stephen Crabb, MP, Chairman of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, has written to Mark Malloch Brown, Gordon Brown's new Minister for Africa, Asia and the UN at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to highlight international human rights issues.

He wrote in the letter to Lord Malloch Brown,

"You have a large number of responsibilities in your new Ministerial position, including human rights, global issues, the UN, the Commonwealth, Africa and Asia. I would like to begin by asking what assurance you can give that human rights will be a priority for you amidst a wide range of significant responsibilities?"

"Given your responsibility for the UN – and the wealth of experience you have of that institution – may I ask what plans you have to promote and defend human rights within the UN mechanisms, and whether you can offer new proposals for reforming and strengthening the UN's ability to promote and defend human rights?"

Mr Crabb highlighted human rights abuses in North Korea, Burma, Sudan, Tibet, Iran, Cuba, Belarus, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, and the caste-discrimination against the Dalits in India. ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

HBF pays visit to TCHRD

Director of Heinrich Boell Foundation (HBF) India Office, Dr. Michael Koberlein, and Asia Programme Coordinator in HBF Berlin Head Office, Ms. Christiane Molt, paid a visit to the TCHRD office in Dharamsala, India. During the two-day visit (25 - 26 July), they interacted with the staff members of the Centre. Both of them were visiting TCHRD for the first time and it was especially significant for Dr. Michael as it is his first official visit after being appointed as the Director in December 2006.

The Executive Director, Mr. Urgen Tenzin, and the Personnel for UN

Affairs and Resource Mobilisation, Mr. Tenzin Norgay, briefed the visiting HBF delegation about the activities of the Centre with the SWOT analysis recently conducted by the staff members as a background. The visit was significant in planning future collaboration between the HBF and TCHRD in promoting the human rights of the Tibetan people.

Apart from TCHRD, the delegation also paid visits to other partners in Dharamsala both past and current. They include the Tibetan Centre for Conflict

Resolution, Dolmaling Nunnery and the Audio Visual Section of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR).

The staff members of TCHRD are grateful to the Boell Foundation for its consistent trust and collaboration for the past many years. The Centre looks forward to further collaboration in the future in highlighting and bringing positive change to the grave human rights situation in Tibet. ■



Dr. Michael and Ms. Christiane with TCHRD staff during their visit at the Centre

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report (2002)* • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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Please e-mail us at dsala@tchrd.org or write to us on our postal address for further information.



HUMAN RIGHTS update
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Tibetan Centre for
Human Rights and Democracy.
www.tchrd.org

update

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TCHRD ACTIVITIES BULLETIN

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A Tibetan arrested in Lithang for political demonstration

According to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Ronggay Adrak, a Tibetan nomad from Lithang was arrested for staging political demonstration yesterday during an official anniversary function.

On 1 August 2007, an official function for the 80th Founding Anniversary of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was organized by the Lithang County government. A large number of people from different walks of life from Lithang area converged to witness the official function and the famous annual horse race. Just before the start of the official function at around 11 a.m., when the Chief guest, the officials and the general public were present, Ronggay A'drak, a 52-year-old Tibetan nomad from Youru Village, Lithang County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") Sichuan Province, went up to the stage to offer a traditional Tibetan scarf to Lithang Kyabgyon- the Chief Lama of Lithang Monastery. Ronggay A'drak then



Ronggay A'drak © TCHRD

seized the microphone and shouted the following slogans in front of the large gathering - "The Dalai Lama should return to Tibet", "Release Panchen Lama", "Tibet wants Independence". He then went to call for the people to stop fighting among themselves on the land, water dispute and on the collection of Yartsa Gunbu caterpillar fungus (Tib: Yartsa Gunbu, Botanical name: cordyceps sinensis).

Continue at next page

China arrest two Tibetan women for expressing support for Trulku Tenzin Delek in Lithang



Apha Bhomo

Two Tibetan women, O'dho and Apha Bhomo, both in their late 50's and residents of Othok Village, Nyagchuka County, Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture "TAP" Sichuan Province, were arrested on 19 July 2007 by the Nyagchuka County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials on alleged 'crime' of instigating people to join their call for Trulku Tenzin Delek's release, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). Both women are currently detained at Nyagchuka County PSB Detention Centre and authorities are

known to have denied visitation right to their relatives. O'dho, a mother of nine children, was born in Sholong Township, Nyagchuka County, Kardze "TAP", Sichuan Province. In addition, it was learnt that both O'dho's sons, Kalsang Sungrab and Tenzin Tsoknyi were barred from attending their respective schools. Tenzin Tsoknyi who was studying at a private school in Lithang County was barred from attending the school and authorities even put restriction on their movement.

The protests were sparked after reception ceremony at Kham Nalanda Thekchen

Continue at page 2

Continued from previous page

Later Ronggay A'drak climbed down from the stage and went straight to Naglu Tenzin, a monk who was actively involved in the Chinese "Patriotic education campaign" to denounce his double standard in dealing with the religious affairs of the monastery in presence of the chief guest and the general public. He later climbed the stage again and continued shouting slogans which the general public joined in unison before he was arrested by Kardze local police and taken away to an unknown place. Sensing fear for the safety of Ronggay A'drak, scores of people from Lithang Yonru Village went to Lithang County Office to call for his immediate release and to ascertain his whereabouts and condition. They even demonstrated inside the compound of the County office calling for his immediate release and respect of Tibetan people's right to freedom of expression and opinion.

According to a reliable source, a few people even broke into the County Office to demand for his immediate release. Sensing the further escalation of tension, the police officer even threatened the villagers with firing pistol into the air. The Tibetan people unmoved by the threats, weathered incessant rain on that day proceeded forward with their demand. It was learnt that the villagers finally returned to their place only after the officials agreed to release Ronggay A'drak the next day at 2



p.m. According to another source, "While returning to their place, the villagers called for Tibetans, followers of the Dalai Lama and pro-independence to join them. They even said that if the authorities did not release Ronggay A'drak today by 2:00pm they will organize a mass demonstration in front of the detention centre no matter how much restriction officials put on them." The situation in Lithang County is known to be very tense. Strangely this time the local officials compliance with the demands of local Tibetans was unprecedented. However, it is difficult to predict the future course of the case.

TCHRD expresses its deepest concern at the arrest of Ronggay A'drak for exercising his political rights and demands his immediate release. The People's Republic of China (PRC) should abide by the rights guaranteed in the constitution and other major international covenants and treaties which she is party to. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right which is a prerequisite to the enjoyment of all human rights. TCHRD seeks the support of human rights groups and the international community in securing his release. The Centre deems the case as an outright clampdown on the freedom of opinion and expression. TCHRD will continue to monitor the situation and will update on the issue as and when further information surfaces. ■

Continued from page 1

Jangchup Choeling Monastery was interrupted by Chinese officials objecting to placing a portrait of Trulku Tenzin Delek on to the throne of a newly constructed assembly prayer hall (Tib: Dhukhang). The monastery was founded by Trulku Tenzin Delek in 1987 and named Kham Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling by the late Panchen Lama. It was reported that a large number of general public present during the ceremony have exhibited a clear sign of disapproval of authorities' decree and highhandedness in handling the matter.

In the aftermath of the incident, a huge public protest was held by the local Tibetan people while some went to lodge their complaint to the higher authorities in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, while other group of Tibetans from Nyagchuka County who went to lodge a similar complaint regarding authorities highhandedness in dealing with the matter were known to have been detained by Nyagchuka PSB officials. O'dho and Apha Bhomo, like other locals of Lithang and surrounding areas are ardent



O'dho © TCHRD

supporters of Trulku Tenzin Delek and called upon the authorities that Trulku, was wrongly convicted and is innocent.

The current situation in Lithang and other surrounding areas are reeling under high tension following recent spate of public protests. The authorities are known to be taking no chances by keeping constant surveillance on any suspects. The recent cases of arbitrary arrest and detention were recorded from the area highlighting a clear violation of fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people.

TCHRD expresses its deepest concern at the recent series of arbitrary arrest and detention of Tibetans in Lithang area for exercising their fundamental human rights in peaceful and non-violence means. The Centre calls for the immediate and unconditional release of O'dho and Apha Bhomo, arbitrarily detained solely for having participated in peaceful demonstrations during which opinions were expressed peacefully and the readmission of O'dho's children to their respected schools and also to lift the ban on their movement.

TCHRD calls upon the People's Republic of China (PRC) to stop the practice of arbitrary arrest and detention and urgently seeks the intervention and support of the international civil society groups and the relevant UN mandates on promotion and protection of human rights in securing their early release.

TCHRD once again calls upon the PRC government to give Trulku Tenzin Delek a free and fair re-trial as per the international standard legal norms and practices. The Centre believes that Trulku is innocent and was wrongly implicated in the bombing incidents and urges the Chinese authorities to ascertain his whereabouts, well-being and release him unconditionally. ■

Ronggye A'drak's fate remains uncertain

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is highly concerned at the well being of Ronggye A'drak who has been arbitrarily detained since 1 August 2007 for staging a public protest during the official function organised by the Lithang County Government on 1 August 2007 for the 80th Founding Anniversary of People's Liberation Army (PLO) and annual Lithang horse race. He is known to have been detained at the Lithang County Public Security Bureau Detention Centre. The center is fearful that the authorities will use torture upon Ronggye A'drak during detention, as it is a regular feature in all Chinese administered prisons and detention centers.

In the aftermath of the arrest of Ronggye A'drak and the severe restrictions imposed thereafter for fear of massive popular uprising, TCHRD obtained exclusive pictures depicting the tension in the area. According to sources, the local authorities of Lithang County have beefed up the security by sending large number of armed police forces to the area and barred people from traveling. The situation in Lithang in eastern Tibetan Kardze Province "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") still remains tense after Ronggye A'drak's arrest and authorities' long impasse over people demand for his immediate release since his arrest on 1 August. Although the local officials had promised to release him the next day at 2:00 PM so far there has been no positive response regarding his release. According to some media reports, local Tibetan supporters of Ronggye A'drak in Lithang who have been protesting outside the government office in Lithang for the past weeks have withdrawn after local Tibetan leaders begged them to leave in order to avoid a violent crackdown.

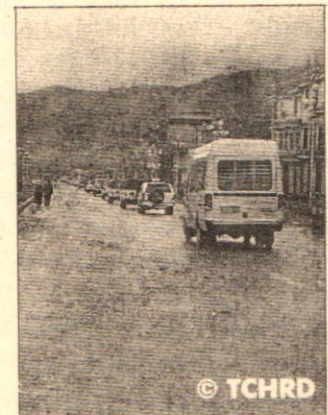
In light of the strong appeal made earlier by his son and nephew who are in exile, the Centre urgently seeks the intervention and support of the

international civil society groups and the relevant UN mandates on promotion and protection of human rights in securing his early release. The Centre deems the case as an outright clamp down on the freedom of opinion and expression. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human rights which is prerequisite to the enjoyment of all human rights. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Article 35 of the Constitution of the PRC guarantees "freedom of expression, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration".

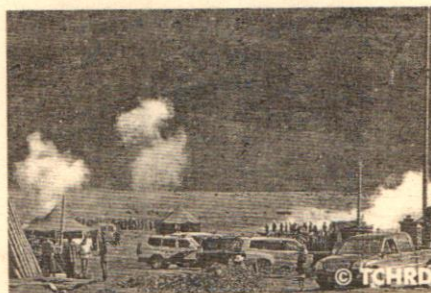
TCHRD also calls upon the PRC government to release all political prisoners who have been arrested and detained for exercising their fundamental human rights enshrined in the UDHR, her constitution and many other international covenants and treaties that she is party to. TCHRD consider Ronggye A'drak's call a genuine expression of local Tibetans' concern and despair that continue to exist in Tibet as a result of China's repressive policies. The PRC should immediately address these genuine concerns of local Tibetan people rather than tightening noose around the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights. ■



A group of PAP forces marching with the full protective armour in the aftermath of Lithang protest



A convoy of PAP vehicles in one of which Ronggye A'drak is known to have been taken after the protest



A convoy of PAP vehicles at the Lithang Horse Race Ground. A group of PAP forces can be seen at the background



The remains of tear gas shell which was used on Tibetan demonstrator

China arrest three nephews of Ronggye A'drak in Lihang

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that three more Tibetans were arrested from Yonru Kharshul Village, Ponkar Township, Lihang County in connection with Ronggye A'drak's case following continued mass protest by his supporters.

In the aftermath of Ronggye A'drak's arrest, severe restrictions were imposed in Lihang and surrounding areas for the fear of massive popular uprising. Supporters of Ronggye A'drak are known to have stationed outside the County Public Security Bureau (PSB) Office for weeks after his arrest on 1 August 2007 demanding his early release. In an attempt to intimidate the supporters of Ronggye A'drak, the Lihang County government sent additional contingents of People's Armed Police (PAP) as a reinforcement to monitor and restrict the activities of his supporters.

According to the source, "Lihang PSB officers along with PAP forces as per the order given by the higher authorities, arrested a few leading supporters who have been demanding the release of Ronggye A'drak for the past few weeks."

"On the evening of 21 August 2007, a large number of Lihang PSB and PAP forces suddenly stormed into A'drak's native village, Yonru Kharshul Village, Lihang County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" (TAP), Sichuan Province and arrested three of his nephews. It was confirmed by the source that the Lihang PSB and PAP forces first stomped into the house of A'drak and

enquired about Adruk Lopoe, a monk of Lihang Monastery who has been leading the call for his release. In the absence of Adruk Lopoe, the PSB officers and PAP forces arbitrarily detained two of his brothers, Adruk Gyatso and Adruk Nyima and forcibly took them to the local PSB Detention Centre. The PSB officers and PAP forces even ransacked their entire house looking for any evidence that they could charge them with."

The source further told the Centre that "Adruk Lopoe after learning about the arrest of his two brothers went to Lihang County PSB Office after a few hours and told the officer that 'I am the person you are looking for and I demand the release of my two brothers'. However, the PSB officers arrested him without complying with his demand." TCHRD is highly concerned about the well being of Ronggye A'drak and three of his nephews who are all being arbitrarily detained by the Lihang County PSB officers and PAP forces. Torture being endemic and a regular feature in the Chinese administered prisons and detention centres, the Centre expresses its deepest concern about the well-being and safety of Ronggye A'drak and three of his nephews.

As the present situation in Lihang is still known to be tense after the authorities' arrest of Ronggye A'drak and three of his nephews, the Centre calls upon the People's Republic of China (PRC) to stop the practice of



Adruk Lopo ©TCHRD

arbitrary detention and urgently seeks the intervention and support of the international civil society groups and the relevant UN mandates on promotion and protection of human rights in securing their early release. The Centre deems the case as an outright clampdown on the freedom of opinion and expression and deprivation of liberty by arbitrary detention.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right which is prerequisite to the enjoyment of all human rights. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Article 35 of the Constitution of the PRC guarantees "freedom of expression, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration".



Adruk Gyatso ©TCHRD



Adruk Gyatso ©TCHRD

Tibetan people in Lhasa reel under influx of Chinese migrants

According to reliable information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the Tibetan people in Lhasa City reel under massive influx of Chinese migrants now pouring into Lhasa City in wake of unprecedented flooding in lower plains of Mainland China.

Unprecedented rain in South Asia, particularly in China, have caused massive floods and water logging in the lower plains of China causing massive damages and washed away the homes and dwellings of hundreds and thousands of Chinese people.

The source also said that in light of millions left homeless and without future prospects in Mainland China, thousands of Chinese people affected by floods in large number were pouring into Tibet on the recently built Qinghai-Tibet Railway. This unprecedented movement of Chinese migrants to Lhasa has put pressure on the local Tibetans and their day-to-day livelihood.

The Chinese migrants were known to do any kind of work they were given by their clients. However, since the beginning of July 2007, the population of Chinese migrants in Lhasa city has increased in mammoth proportion. Thousands of them remain jobless in Lhasa. They were now beginning to express their anger and frustration amongst themselves over the lack of jobs and employment prospects.

Due to the unprecedented pressure of population density caused by large influx of Chinese migrants, the Lhasa city, particularly the local Tibetans were now reeling under a difficult situation they have never faced or anticipated. The price of commodities and essential goods were skyrocketing and the inflation has reached apogee of height. The prices of essential food and commodities such as meat, butter and cereals were increasing at frenetic pace. This development has stirred the anxiety of local Tibetans about their day to day livelihoods. Since the beginning of July 2007, the Chinese

officials have ordered the Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) to round up the beggars in the streets and to send back to their respective hometowns and regions. The beggars were issued with severe order not to ever return to Lhasa streets.

Today there are numerous unemployed Chinese migrant workers and fortune seekers straying the streets of Lhasa. Ironically, the Chinese officials are doing nothing to look after the issue of mushrooming unemployed Chinese migrants in Lhasa City while on the other hand the Tibetan beggars were high-handedly evicted from Lhasa streets and dispatched to hinterland countryside.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) expresses its grave concern over the situation of ongoing influx of massive Chinese migrant workers and fortune seekers into Tibet. We also request the Chinese government to address threats and challenges posed to the livelihood of Tibetan people in and around Lhasa. Turning blind eye to such situation is a blatant violation of the human rights of the native people and a stark contradiction to the spirit of Chinese Constitution and those of international laws. ■

Vigilance and restriction stepped up in and around Lhasa City

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information from reliable sources that in light of the ongoing hunger strike by the Tibetans in Delhi, India for the last twenty six days and the convergence of thousands of Tibetan from all walks of life in Delhi in next few days for staging a massive demonstrations has stirred the sentiments of Tibetan people inside Tibet.

According to a reliable source, it seems that the Chinese authorities in and around Lhasa City have issued terse instructions to travel agencies in and around Lhasa City that they were not

suppose to provide help or assistance to any of expatriate Tibetans coming to Lhasa city during the coming days. If they do so they would be dealt with dire consequences of facing closure of their travel agency business if any untoward incident takes place.

The travel agencies were particularly directed to pay extra attention and vigilance on those Tibetans who come from America. In wake of heightened vigilance in and around Lhasa city, the Chinese officials ordered the Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) to round up the beggars in the streets and to send back and handed them back to the officials of respective hometown and region from where they had come from. The beggars were issued with severe order not to ever return to Lhasa streets.

The tea shops, Internet cafes and telephone booths etc in all streets and alleyways of Bakhor (central market) were infiltrated by security police men in civilian dress. It is also reported that the number of police forces in civilian dress were also increased significantly to deal with any untoward incident. Moreover, restriction and vigilance was also stepped up in offices, schools, homes of ex-political prisoners and those of people whom the government deemed suspicious or normally held suspicious.

It is also said that the Chinese officials have already carried out investigations and tapped on the movements of these Tibetans but so far no one is reported to have been arrested or detained.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) expresses its serious concern over stepping up of restriction in and around Lhasa City. Such restriction and vigilance often give way to serious violations of Tibetan people's fundamental human rights in the name of maintaining "stability and security" by the Chinese authorities. We appeal to the Chinese authorities to recall the imposition of restriction and vigilance and not to hinder the normal life of the Tibetan people. ■

The Chinese authorities transfer Adruk Lopoe to an unknown location, arrest another Tibetan nomad

The current fate and whereabouts of Adruk Lopoe, a 45-year old monk who was arrested by the Lithang County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials on the evening of 21 August 2007, still remain unknown. According to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the Lithang County PSB officials released Adruk Gyatso and Adruk Nyima- two brothers of Adruk Lopoe six hours after their detention but they are still known to be under close surveillance. Following a brief detention at Lithang County PSB Detention Centre, Adruk Lopoe was known to have been transferred to other an unknown location by the authorities.

Adruk Lopoe was born in 1962 to Adruk Wangdue (father) and Ronggye Tsewang Dolma (mother) in Yonru Kharshul Village, Ponkar Township, Lithang County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") Sichuan Province. He was the eldest among seven children of Adruksang family. At the age of eight, Adruk Lopoe was ordained as a monk and joined the Lithang Monastery. Over the years, Adruk Lopoe excelled in Buddhist studies that he was later appointed a chant master (Tib: Omzey) of the Monastery. Adruk also worked as the disciplinary master (Tib: Geykoe) at Yonru Rabgyeling Monastery for few years, one of the 113 smaller monasteries affiliated to Lithang Monastery. It is also learnt that Adruk just before his arrest on 21 August 2007 was on a short break after a yearlong meditation retreat at Yonru Rabgyeling Monastery, Lithang County. Adruk Lopoe has been arbitrarily detained after calling for the release of Ronggye A'drak, who is still in the custody of Lithang PSB Detention Centre after speaking about the importance of the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet to a large Tibetan crowd gathered for the horse-race festival earlier this month.

Adruk Lopoe was also a very strong proponent of the need of education for the youth and a leading advocate against deforestation, lumbering and wildlife hunting in Kardze. The local populace believe that, his genuine calls and concerns over the years may have infuriated the authorities that he was put under a close watch and thus arrested him. Adruk Lopoe is a well-known and respected figure in the area.

During 1997-98, at the height of 'Patriotic re-education' campaign launched by the Chinese authorities across monasteries and nunneries in Tibet, Adruk Lopoe was appointed a

Deputy Director of the Democratic Management Committee (DMC) of Lithang Monastery. The DMCs (Tib: Mangtso Dak nyer uyon lhan Khang) are administrative organs established in 1962 in religious institutions in Tibet and reconstructed under the 1996 "patriotic re-education" campaign. He, however, resigned from the post fully understanding its spiritual and political ramification that it goes against religious vows in denouncing his spiritual leader-the Dalai Lama.

The DMC carries out the "patriotic re-education" campaign along with County PSB and government officials. The patriotic re-education campaign was started in 1996 in Tibet and carried out across all the religious institutions in Tibet. The campaign introduced a series of political texts into monastic studies as a mandatory requirement. The requirement also stressed allegiance to the State and the denunciation of the Dalai Lama. The patriotic re-education campaign was also meant to target and suppress any sign of political unrest in religious institutions, which the Chinese authorities deem as a source of political dissidence.

In yet another incident, on 19 August 2007, Lothok, a 36-year old Tibetan nomad and a father of five children from Drakar Latse Village, Lithang County was arbitrarily detained from a guesthouse in Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan Province. At the same time, the proprietor of the guesthouse was also briefly detained and released after short interrogation. However, the authorities have given no specific reason for the arrest of Lothok, and no particular information on his whereabouts. This is the fourth known detention in the series of arbitrary detention in connection with the arrest of A'drak since 1 August 2007 although two of his nephews were released, however, Adruk Lopoe, Lothok and A'drak still continue to be detained by the concerned Chinese authorities.

Since the beginning of 2000, Kardze remains a hotspot of peaceful political protests from where a large number of Tibetans were arrested for their open defiance of calling for freedom and their courage to demonstrate unflinching faith in their spiritual leaders. The latest arrest of Ronggye A'drak, his nephews, Lothok and two female supporters of Trulku Tenzin Delek this month clearly demonstrates the political unrest in Kardze particularly in Lithang County. The situation still remains to be tense.

TCHRD considers the recent calls of the Ti-

betan people in Lithang area a genuine expression of their concerns and despairs that continue to exist in all other part of Tibet as a result of China's repressive policies. The government of People's Republic of China (PRC) should immediately address the concerns of local Tibetan people rather than suppressing them with iron fist.

TCHRD calls upon the PRC government, a member of the UN Human Rights Council to put an end to the rampant practice of arbitrary detention and respect the Tibetan people's right to freedom of expression, faith and peaceful expression of their aspirations which are enshrined in the constitution and major UN human rights treaties and covenants that she is party to.

List of arrests and detentions in Lithang in chronological order:

a) China intensified restriction in Trulku Tenzin Delek Monastery. On 19 July 2007 the Chinese authorities in Lithang County prohibited the monks of Kham Nalanda Thekchen Jangchup Choeling Monastery in Lithang from carrying a reception ceremony of Trulku Tenzin Delek's portrait during the inauguration of a newly built assembly prayer hall.

b) Two Tibetan women, O'dho and Apha Bhomo, both in their late 50's and residents of Othok Village, Nyagchuka County, Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture "TAP" Sichuan Province, were arrested on 19 July 2007 by the Nyagchuka County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials on alleged 'crime' of instigating people to join their call for Trulku Tenzin Delek's release.

c) 1 August 2007, Ronggye A'drak was arrested for staging a public protest speaking about the importance of the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet to a large Tibetan crowd gathered for the annual horse-race festival. Currently known to be detained at Lithang County PSB Detention Centre.

d) 19 August 2007, Lothok, a Tibetan nomad and father of five children from Dakar Latse Village, Lithang County was arbitrarily detained from a guesthouse in Chengdu, Sichuan.

e) 21 August 2007, a large number of Lithang PSB and PAP forces suddenly stormed into Ronggye A'drak's native village, Yonru Kharshul Village, Lithang County, arbitrarily arrested three of his nephews Adruk Lopoe, Adruk Nyima and Adruk Gyatso. Although Nyima and Gyatso were released six hours after their arrest, Adruk Lopoe still continue to be detained and shifted to an unknown location.



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

The Executive Director greets Tibetan hunger strikers

On 4 August 2007, Ugen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD greeted the Tibetan hunger strikers in Delhi in a gesture of support and solidarity. Along with the Director, other staff members comprising assistant director Jampa Monlam, researcher Tashi Choephal and office assistant Bugahgah distributed Centre's publications; annual report, special reports and posters to the Tibetans and local people who participated in the peaceful protest. The protest rallies and processions "The People's Movement" in Delhi was organised by the four prominent Tibetan NGOs in Dharamsala, Himachael Pradesh, India. The Centre made its presence felt by disseminating crucial information on the human rights situation inside Tibet on the occasion.



New Delhi: TCHRD staff members distributing Centre's publications

The Executive Director addresses protest rally

Mr. Ugyen Tenzin, the Executive Director of the Centre gave an addressal speech to the Tibetans who have participated in a candle light vigil on 8 August 2007, at McLeod Ganj town, the residence of the Dalai Lama. The Director spoke on the occasion about the state of the Human rights situation inside Tibet.

Earlier in the morning, the peaceful protest rally was carried out and was organized by four prominent Tibetan NGOs. The peaceful protest rally proceeded from McLeod Ganj town to Kacheri town in lower Dharamsala. ■

Assitant Director gives a talk at LTCV School

On 14 August 2007, the assistant Director, Mr. Jampa Monlam was invited to deliver a talk to the teachers and the students of Lower TCV School on the topic the "Qinghai-Tibet Railway" and its consequences for the lives of ordinary Tibetans in Tibet. ■



Wworkshop on progress

TCHRD gives a talk to Trichy college students

The Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC) of Tiruchappali, Tamil Nadu, invited researcher Chukora Tsering Agloe to deliver a resource talk for participants of the Workshop. The Tibetan College Students of Trichy organized the Workshop on Universal Declaration of Human rights (UDHR) and the Human rights situation inside Tibet. On 18 August 2007, Mr. Tseing Agloe gave an introductory talk on Concepts and Principles of Human rights, its origin and the legal history behind the drafting of Universal Declaration of Human rights (UDHR). He also gave a talk on United Nations and its functions. Later in the afternoon, the students were given insights into Human rights situation in Tibet. The students also undertook peer-learning session among themselves on 18 cases of human rights violations reported in this year alone. Later the students undertook group discussions and group presentations on all the 30 Articles of UDHR. Mr. Tsering Agloe presented a general picture of China's ongoing development initiatives and its impact on the lives of the native Tibetans. The

workshop concluded with a heated question and answer session. ■

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • TCHRD 1996-2006: *A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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TCHRD deplores China's new religious measures on reincarnation

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) deplores the government of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) new religious regulatory measures on the selection of reincarnates that come into force from today.

The China's State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) official issuance of 14-article measures on reincarnation which came into effect from today, clearly demonstrates the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) adamant attempt to undermine and tarnish the centuries-old Tibetan tradition of religious practice. It also attempts to weaken the authority of legitimate Tibetan religious leaders including the Dalai Lama. The new measure bars any Buddhist monk living outside China from seeking reincarnation for himself or recognizing a "living Buddha" thus effectively ending the centuries-old Tibetan Buddhist practice.

According to the official statement issued by the China's state Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), "All the reincarnations of living Buddha of Tibetan Buddhism must get government approval, otherwise they are 'illegal or invalid'". It is understandable from this new measure that the centuries-old traditional Tibetan system of recognizing reincarnate lamas is irrelevant from now on and the Chinese CPC decides the legitimacy of the reincarnate figure.

In addition, according to the new measures, "All the reincarnation applications must be submitted to the religious affairs department of the SARA, and the state council, respectively, for approval in accordance with fame and influence of the living Buddha in the religious circle." The new measures intend to bypass and completely deride the traditional procedure of selecting

Continue at next page

China conducts massive Patriotic Education Campaign in Lithang

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received confirmed information that the Chinese government has just unleashed a massive patriotic political campaign in Lithang.

According to confirmed information, in the first week of September 2007, the Chinese government summoned the leaders of townships and monasteries in and around Lithang to commence the Patriotic Political Education Campaign.

Similarly, the concerned offices and officials summoned the Tibetan people from the Lithang Monastery to receive

political education. The Tibetan people were made to learn by the Chinese officials about how the aristocrats, officials and serfs of the old pre-1959 Tibet subjected the Tibetan commoners to oppression, torture and servitude. The campaign included telling Tibetans how the Chinese liberation of Tibet has empowered the Tibetan commoners to rise up and to hold denunciation sessions (Tib: Thamzing) to those serfs who had oppressed and suppressed them.

In the patriotic education classes, the Chinese officials taught Tibetans about how the Chinese government has developed, improved the living standards of Tibetan people and how they are now entering a prosperous era. The Chinese officials advised Tibetan people that Trulku Tenzin Delek and Runggye A'dak were ungrateful to the Motherland for all the progress and development made by the Chinese government. They also explained how Trulku Tenzin Delek, Runggye A'dak and a group of evil Tibetans made serious mistakes. Pictures

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Continued from previous page

TCHRD deploras ...

reincarnate lamas which does not require the application being submitted to any religious department or the state council for approval and completely violate the right to freedom of religion.

In a subtle yet conspicuous message, emanating from the new measure issued by the SARA, reincarnates, after following centuries-old tradition of selecting reincarnate lamas by their religious heads including the Dalai Lama in exile, can no longer considered valid unless approved by the Chinese authorities. The statement further articulates that, "the selection of reincarnates must preserve national unity and solidarity of all ethnic groups and the selection process cannot be influenced by any groups or individual from outside the country." This new regulation measure is a striking display of the PRC government determination to tighten control over Tibet's centuries-old religious tradition of selecting reincarnate lamas who are most revered by the faithful Tibetan Buddhist followers. The new measure tries to assert that the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) is the sole arbiter in the selection of the reincarnates and commands citizens to respect the authority of the Party thereby completely bypassing traditional procedure.

Apart from the implementation of the new measure, the Chinese authorities continue to reinvigorate the "patriotic re-education" activities for monks and nuns on a regular basis at monasteries and nunneries. There were several credible reports in the recent times about 'work teams' conducting mandatory political training for monks and nuns at specific religious sites in advance of important anniversaries and other events. For example, the recent intensification of prohibition of religious activities during the holy month of Saka Dawa in Lhasa city. The government continued to oversee the daily

operations of major monasteries in Tibet. The government, which did not contribute to the monasteries' operating funds, retains management control of monasteries through Democratic Management Committee (DMC) and local Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB).

Prior to this measure, a new "Measures for the 'Regulation on Religious Affairs'" with 56 articles was issued by the 11th Standing Committee of the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") People's Government on 19 September 2006 and entered into force on 1 January 2007. Such measures instead of providing protection of religious affairs are aimed at enforcing compliance with government regulations and policies on religious organizations, religious personnel, and religious citizen. These regulations and new measures empower the officials with legal backing to intensify restriction and exercise state control and repression.

China maintained that freedom of religion is protected by its constitutions, in the legislation, and that these legal safeguards are consistent with the spirit and main provision of international agreements. However, the latest official measures requiring reincarnate lamas a state approval, once again demonstrate that constitutional, legal and administrative provisions operate to restrict rather than protect religious freedom and act as a means to hurt the religious sentiment of Tibetan Buddhist followers. TCHRD urges the Chinese authorities to conform to international human rights obligations, commitments that were reaffirmed on the occasion of her election as member of the new United Nations Human Rights Council. ■

Continued from page 1

China conducts

and pamphlets denouncing Trulku Tenzin Delek and Runggye A'dak were distributed.

The Chinese authorities have not only banned the display of the picture of the Dalai Lama in monasteries but also in the monks' residences. The Chinese

authorities forcefully ordered the monks below the age of eighteen to leave the monasteries and to return to their respective homes. In addition, a school, which falls under the administration and management of the Lithang Monastery, was closed down and the school children were sent back to their respective homes.

Meanwhile, in another development, thirty People's Armed Police (PAP) raided a monk's residence with no warning during the night and was beaten and tortured. Along with that incident, the PAP also forcefully seized a few residences of monks who have no connection with political activities.

In an outrageous violation of religious freedom, the government civil servants and those retired civil servants were barred from circumambulating around the Monastery, and barred from keeping and performing rituals on their altars. It was concluded that an intensive patriotic education campaign was to be carried out over a period of three months by the Chinese government in the Lithang.

In addition, the display of the picture of the Dalai Lama was banned both in homes and in monasteries. In light of the political unrest and tension in Lithang in the last few months, the Chinese government resorts to imposition of restriction and curbs in a bizarre course of events in Lithang. The restriction and implementation of patriotic education campaign of this kind is unprecedented in Lithang in last few decades.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy expresses its serious concern and worry about the scale of human rights violations and the disruption of the day-to-day traditions of Tibetan people in Lithang. TCHRD appeals to the Chinese government to respect the human rights of Tibetan people in Lithang. ■

A former political prisoner comes to India

A former political prisoner, Ngawang Dripsel was released from prison after completing his prison term on 6 November 2000. He hails from a humble background in Tsodoe Township, Phenpo Lhundup County, Lhasa Municipality, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). Ngawang Dripsel spent much of his life in Drepung monastery studying and doing odd jobs. He didn't receive modern education when he was young. He spent much of his early childhood helping parents in household chores until he was 20 years old.

He joined Drepung Monastery, one of the three centres of learning after his parents advised him. He learnt to read, write and other basic religious training and studies for four years in Drepung Monastery. However, he always preferred to work in the monastery's tea stall instead.

His connection to the world of political activism began on 13 May 1992 when he along with eight monks came to stage a peaceful pro-independence protest in Lhasa against Chinese rule. Later, eight more monks joined them. During the peaceful demonstration, the monks carried Tibetan National Flag from Lhasa Mentsekhang, (Lhasa Tibetan Medical Institute) to Lhasa's main Cathedral shouting slogans calling for "Tibetan Independence", "China quits Tibet", "Long live the Dalai Lama" in a loud voice. The peaceful pro-independence movement lasted about 20 minutes.

Immediately the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People's Armed Police (PAP) came to the protest scene and swiftly taken them to Gutsa Detention Centre. While in Gutsa Detention Centre, they were tortured and interrogated by an electric prods and other torture weapons.

They were subjected to all kinds of inhumane tortures and beating during their interrogation period. They were forced to undress, to stand still and lashed with belts worn by the prison guards turning their bodies into wounds and bruises. Later, for a half-day they were hung by a rope from a roof and made to face a sewage flowing below them. During their five months detention in Gutsa, they were kept in separate cells.

On 13 September 1993, they were brought to Intermediate People's Court for trial. They were convicted for "counter-



revolutionary crimes" and "instigating reactionary propagandas". All of them were given sentences of varying prison terms.

In the prison, from 1992 till 1994 they were made to work in vegetable farm. In the prison cells, they were made to do hard labour, force exercise drill from morning to afternoon with poor diet and hygiene. They were mal-treated, tortured and subjected to degraded punishments.

Ngawang Dripsel further testified to the TCHRD that, the Chinese prison guards repeatedly beaten him with electric cattle prod and as a result he suffered from chronic headache in prison. Ngawang Dripsel says he was never admitted to clinic in prison even though he was sick and in poor physical condition.

His cellmate, Joden after his release from prison set up a Tibetan restaurant in midst of Ramoche in Lhasa. He employed Ngawang Dripsel in his restaurant. Ngawang met his cellmate Joden who has set up a Tibetan restaurant in Lhasa after his release from prison.

Ngawang Dripsel stirred by nationalistic sentiments once again involve himself in political activism by writing and exposing how Tibetan political prisoners were tortured and persecuted in the prison. He sent many of his prison memoirs and write up to the Tibetan government in exile.

Ngawang dripsel was again arrested and detained on 7 November 1997 in Samye County Detention Centre in Lhasa for his political activism. He was given another 3 years imprisonment term in Toelung County Detention Centre, Tibet Autonomous Region ("TAR").

On 6 November 2000, he was released from prison after completing his prison term. After realizing that life of his prison was not easy for a former political prisoner, seeing bleak

future ahead of him if he continues to stay in Tibet, he escaped to India on 1 August 2007 and reached Kathmandu Tibetan Reception Centre safely.

The list of monks who participated in the pro-independence movement at the time of their arrest and imprisonment:

1. Phuntsok, 26 years old, Lhasa, handed with 8 years of imprisonment.
2. Phuntsok Sig-gey, 27 years old, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 8 years of imprisonment.
3. Paljor Dorjee, 22 years old, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 7 years of imprisonment.
4. Phuntsok Leksang, 20 years old, Nagchu County, Damxung, handed with 7 years of imprisonment.
5. Jorden, 22 years old, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 5 years of imprisonment.
6. Ngawang Lungtok, 19 years old, from Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 5 years of imprisonment.
7. Penpa, 23 years old, Toelung Dechen County, handed with 5 years of imprisonment.
8. Ngawang Dripsel, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 4 years of imprisonment.
9. Phuntsok Samten, 20 years old, Nagchu prefecture, handed with 4 years of imprisonment.
10. Drapa (nickname), 24 years old, Toelung prefecture, handed with 4 years of imprisonment.
11. Samdrup, 27 years old, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 3 years of imprisonment.
12. Ngawang Choegyal, 21 years old, Penpo Lhundrub County, handed with 3 years of imprisonment.
13. Thinley Tenzin, 30 years old, Meldrogungkar County, handed with 3 years of imprisonment.
14. Jampa Tenzin, 26 years old, Meldrogungkar County, handed with 2 years of imprisonment.
15. Tenzin Nyima, 24 years old, Meldrogungkar County, handed with 2 years of imprisonment.
16. Lobsang Ngawang, 26 years old, Lhasa, handed with 1 year of imprisonment. ■

Restriction in Golog Tongkyab Monastery

In mid July 2007, the Chinese Government arrested number of Tibetans in Golog region, Qinghai Province, Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP). On 16 July 2007, a large number of Chinese soldiers suddenly entered the Tongkyab Monastery and arrested an abbot and a monk.

In related to the above incident, Thupwoe and Rigphel from Gonma Toema Township, the People's Armed Police (PAP) also arrested Kundo and Rigkyab from Donkha Township and a large group of local Tibetans in a surprise raid. The main reason for the arrest of Tibetans was due to a construction of mosque by Hui Chinese businessman and since then the mosque's construction remained severely opposed by the local Tibetans.

According to the local Tibetans, the mosque was apparently built without procuring permission from the local officials. A wealthy Hui Chinese businessman sponsored the construction of mosque.

In response, the local Tibetans protested and damaged the mosque and restaurants owned by Hui Chinese in the area. The local Chinese authorities blamed the local Tibetans' fury and rampage as one instigated and fanned by the monks of Tongkyab Monastery. Later, the Chinese authorities ordered the Tongkyab Monastery to pay the compensation to restaurants and mosque for the damages and losses. However, the monks from Tongkyab Monastery strongly denied their involvement and refused to accept charges leveled by the Chinese authorities.

The Tongkyab monastery has been under the close scrutiny of the Chinese authorities for some time. Previously the Democratic Management Committee (DMC) conducted Patriotic Education campaign in the monastery to denounce and condemn the Dalai Lama but was met with stiff resistance from the monks of Tongkyan Monastery. During the Patriotic Education campaign, the monks were taught and forced to accept the Dalai Lama as the chief splittist and the enemy of the state. However, the campaign was met with little success.

In the aftermath of those events, the Tongkyab Monastery is at present put under close scrutiny and vigilance. According to the reports, heavily armed People's Armed Police (PAP) surrounded the monastery when the report last came in.

In addition, the local Chinese authorities summoned the local Tibetans and clergy for a meeting. In the meeting, the local Chinese authorities ordered the monks not to leave the Tongkyab Monastery and issued instruction not to use mobile phones.

Meanwhile, in another development, the People's Armed Police (PAP) arrested about 60 Tibetans in Golog "TAP" after a confrontation between Tibetans and Hui Chinese during the annual horse racing festival.

The tensions between the two communities have been reported frequently in the past. In this case, the confrontation was spark off by an incident where the Tibetans found human teeth and fingers in the dishes served by Hui Chinese restaurants. There have been numerous incidents of such types in the past.

The Tibetan people have been long complaining about the discrimination, humiliation and ill treatment at the hands of Hui Chinese. The deep-seated resentment came to surface after human body parts was found in the dishes. The incident took place during the annual horse racing festival in Sog. The Tibetans went rampage over the Hui Chinese restaurants and brought significant damages to their property.

In order to put the situation under control, the Chinese security polices were sent to the area to quell the demonstration. The Chinese security polices lobbed tear gas to disburse the protestors. In the process, many Tibetan protestors were arrested.

There were local Tibetan officials and local Tibetans in the list of detainees detained in the detention centre. Not long after, some of them were conditionally released from the detention centre. However, the two Tibetans protestors Nyiwoe and Rigkyab were still detained in the County prison. In addition, Woebar and Kundhor from Bod Monastery were imprisoned in the Golog Township prison.

In related to the incident, the local Chinese authorities issued terse order to the security personnel to arrest two prominent Tibetan Lamas from Tongkyab Monastery namely Dunlo and Palden Sangpo. The Chinese security personnel attempted to arrest two of them but they some how escaped to unknown places. The Chinese authorities

pronounced two of them as the ringleaders who spearheaded the demonstration.

At the present, there were around 150 monks in Tongkyab Monastery. Since the outbreak of the protest, the monks were virtually put in a state of house arrest surrounded by heavily Chinese security personnel.

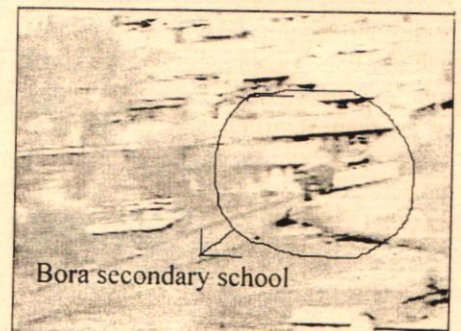
Tibetan boys missing after graffiti calling for the Dalai Lama's return

Seven teenage Tibetan boys have been detained in Gansu Province, formerly a Tibetan territory, now under China's Gansu region after Tibetan boys missing after graffiti calling for the Dalai Lama's return

Seven teenage Tibetan boys have been detained in Gansu Province, formerly a Tibetan territory, now under China's Gansu region after their graffiti called for the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet was found scribbled on walls, human rights watchdog reported.

Human Rights Watch said the boys were aged between 14 and 15. They were largely believed to be detained in Gannan prefecture in Gansu province on 7 September 2007. One detainee, 14 years old boy was reportedly beaten badly during or after the arrest. He was bleeding profusely when seen by his relatives, Human Rights Watch said in a statement. According to the latest Human Rights report, the names of the five of the seven missing boys as Lhamo Tseten, age 15; Chopa Kyab, age 14; Drolma Kyab, age 14; Tsekhu, age 14; and a second Lhamo Tseten, age 15. The names of two other boys still remain unknown.

The boys were transferred to Xiahe (Labrang) County on 10 September 2007. There is no information on their present



Bora secondary school

whereabouts. They were from nomad families studying at a secondary school in Amchok Bora village.

Human Rights Watch further said that police refused to allow relatives to move the injured boy to a hospital unless they returned him within two days and paid 5,000 yuan (\$600) in advance. The family was unable to pay the ransom demanded by the police.

On 21 September 2007 Human Rights Watchdog urged Chinese government to release seven Tibetan teenagers. When the report last came in on 22 September 2007, the boys were still said to be missing. This is yet another evidence of how Chinese deprive and violate the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people, particularly in light of China hosting 2008 Summer Olympics Games in Beijing. ■

A Tibetan music teacher arrested in Lithang

Lithang areas continue to reel under intense restriction and control even after the arrests of Ronggye Adrak and other Tibetan protestors. According to reports, the control and vigilance now penetrates into the socio-economic fabric of Tibetan people.

On 22 August, the Chinese authorities arrested a talented music teacher, Kunchen from Latse Village, Lithang, Sichuan Province. The arrest took place in the evening and at the moment there has been no information about his whereabouts and well-being. The local Tibetans and his relatives remain deeply concerned about his sudden disappearance.

A 32-year old music teacher hails from a nomadic family and lives with his mother and aunt. His father passed away when he was 20 years old. His family was a nomad by occupation.

The musician Kunchen is a man of many tastes; he is not only a talented musician, but also a painter too. He spent his childhood nurturing and shaping his artistic and musical career. He learnt the art of playing Tibetan guitar from a well-known teacher Dunbel.

The musician Kunchen performed many stage performances to the local Tibetans. He has earned a good reputation as a musician with huge fan following in his own native place. The local Tibetans loved his musical compositions and melodies. His versatile

contributions in areas of music and art left a lasting impression on his people from their day-to-day life.

The walls and murals of Lithang Monastery are adorned with his Thangka paintings of Buddha and Bodisattvas. He has also erected a reliquary statue of Buddhas and adorned the walls of the Lithang Monastery with a mural of Dharma Protector Nechung Oracle. The Tibetans in Lithang pay their daily respects and devotions to the statues and wall paintings he has painted and constructed for them.

Some of his best hits were "Oh! White Crane", "Sweet Melodies of White Crane". The songs have become well-known hits both inside and outside Tibet.

During the time of his arrest, he was working as a professional music teacher in a Middle School in Lithang. He was arrested in connection with the recent en mass protests in Lithang following Ronggye Adrak's protest. The sadness and sorrow loomed large over the Lithang Middle School with his arrest. With his absence, the songs, dance and music lessons in the school came to an end. At the present, his students are waiting for his return and the music classes to commence once again. ■

Tibetans arrested in Sog, Nagchu County

A confrontation broke between two Tibetans and several Hui Chinese over selling and buying of Yartsa Gunbu, a medicinal plant caterpillar fungus (Tib: Yartsa Gunbu, Botanical name: cordyceps sinensis) in Sog Township, Nagchu County, Tibetan Autonomous Region ("TAR"). Soon the petty dispute turned into an ugly fight. The outnumbered Hui Chinese severely beaten up the Tibetans. The two Tibetans were severely beaten by the outnumbered Hui Chinese. The local Tibetans witnessed the scene and soon joined the fight in support of the two Tibetans. The entire incident abruptly turned into a major commotion between two communities.

During the fight, the dozens of people were seriously injured from both sides. The critically injured were brought to public hospital in Sog County and to Lhasa city for treatment.

Just after the scuffle, the local Tibetans in Sog County took the matter in their hand by expelling Hui Chinese restaurant and shop owners. Along with them other ethnic Hui Chinese were also banished from the Sog County. Three Hui Chinese who apparently intermarried with Tibetans were allowed to stay. They usually behaved well with Tibetans and had a close bond.

Dozens of security personnel from Sog county and Nagchu came to calm the tensions however their efforts were in vain. Eventually, a respected local religious lama, Ngawang Jigdrel Rinpoche intervened and addressed the local Tibetans and brought the angry Tibetans under control. Order and peace was restored in Sog and Nagchu area.

Resentment towards the migrant traders and settlers are palpable and only a spark is needed to trigger protests. Often official indifference and disregard to local inhabitants' problem provides this spark. Today in many parts of Tibet, the collection and sale of Yartsa Gunbu is a lucrative business although it is looked down upon as an unwholesome activity. However, many inhabitants are left with no alternative other than to engage in this business with shrinking grassland and restriction put on by the authorities on the number of livestock that each family can raise which have failed to provide sufficient subsistence to mostly nomadic inhabitants. Over the years with migrant Chinese settlers entering the lucrative trade, it has further aggravated the problem of local Tibetan inhabitants.

In aftermath of the scuffle, security polices from Public Security Bureau (PSB) arrested Tibetans who played key roles in the fight. Finally, about 13 local Tibetans were arrested and People's Intermediate Court handed down imprisonment ranging from one year to three years by late July 2007.

The names of known arrestees were Kunsang, Sangpo and Norbu Lamsang. According to the report, a 60 years grandmother was also in 13 Tibetans who received imprisonment. At present the 13 Tibetans were imprisoned in a prison in Nagchu Prefecture, Tibetan Autonomous Region "TAR". ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

TCHRD XVIth Workshop on Human Rights and Democracy

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) organised its XVIth Workshop on Human Rights and Democracy at Podrang Hall, Leh, Ladakh from 10 September to 14 September 2007. Over 45 participants from remote Changthang area, Choglamsar Tibetan Settlement and Leh Town attended the workshop. The participants comprise representatives of Local Tibetan Assembly, village heads, community leaders, members of the Tibetan Freedom Movement, Tibetan Co-operative Society, Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, Local Tibetan Trader's Association and teachers of the schools.

The resource persons for the workshop include three Tibetan Parliamentarians, a former Election Commissioner and six staff of the TCHRD. They spoke on various topics ranging from human rights to the issues concerning Tibetan people and polity. The participants had a productive interaction and question and answer session with resource persons. TCHRD extends its heartfelt thanks to resource persons who took time out of their busy schedule to educate the participants, who in turn will share the knowledge with the Tibetans in their locality when they return to respective communities. The topics discussed and covered by concerned resource persons were as follows:

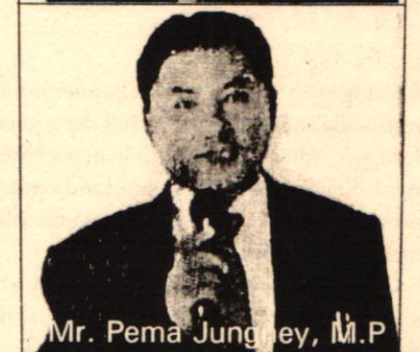
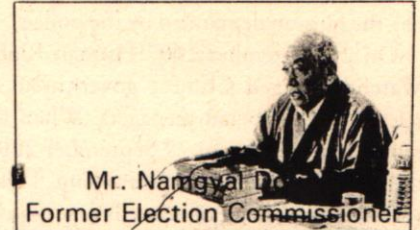
1. "The roles of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Tibetan polity" by Mr. Karma Yeshe, Parliamentarian.
2. "Importance of Electioneering in a Democratic Country" by Mr. Namgyal Dorjee, Former Election Commissioner.
3. "Policies and Functioning of three organs of Tibetan Government in Exile" by Mr. Pema Jungney, Parliamentarian.



4. The role and responsibilities of Member of Parliament" by Mr. Dawa Tsering, MP, Parliamentarian.
5. "Evolution of the Tibetan democratic system" by Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD.
6. Human Rights Situation in Tibet" by Mr. Jampel Monlam, Assistant Director, TCHRD
7. "Concept of Human Rights and Universal Declaration on Human Rights" by Tashi Choephel, Researcher, TCHRD
8. "Functioning of United Nation" by Mr. Tenzin Norgyal, UN Affairs Personnel, TCHRD.
9. "State of Education in Tibet" by Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Information Officer, TCHRD
10. "Testimony of former political prisoner" by Mr. Dawa Tsering, Field Officer, TCHRD.

On 14 September 2007, a public talk was organised at TCV School Hall, Leh, Ladakh. The talk aimed at educating the public about the Tibetan polity and functioning of Tibetan Government in exile.

Mr. Pema Jungney, MP spoke on the occasion about the Democratisation of Tibetan in Exile while Mr. Namgyal Dorjee, former Election Commissioner, illustrated the importance of People's participation in voting and fair election. Mr. Dawa Tsering, MP gave an insight view of the Middle way approach and its implication. The talk was followed by question and answer sessions. ■



Group Photo Session with workshop participants.



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

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TCHRD organised a Panel discussion on Tibetan Democracy Day

On 2 September 2007, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) celebrated the 47th anniversary of Tibetan Democracy Day by organising a public discussion on the functioning of the Tibetan legislative body or the parliament and the role of the Kashag or the Executive Body of the Tibetan government in exile.

Every year the Tibetans in exile commemorated 2 September as a Tibetan Democracy Day. On this day the Tibetan Parliament in exile was born and since then subsequently celebrated as a Tibetan Democracy Day. Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD initiated the public discussion with a brief introductory speech.

Over two hundreds participants from all walks of life attended the public discussion with active interest. The keynote addresses were given by Mr. Pema Jungney, a veteran parliamentarian on the functioning of the Tibetan legislative body and Ven Tsering Phuntsok, Kalon for Department of Religion and Culture on the role of Cabinet in the Tibetan democratic processes in exile.



The chairmen of the local assemblies from Dickyiling Tibetan Settlement Dehradun, Tibetan Cholsum Industrial Settlement Poanta Sahib, Sakya Tibetan Society Puruwala, Phuntsokling Settlement Dalhousie, Tibetan Bonpo Foundation Solan and Dhoeguyugyaling Hebertpur Settlement were the special invitees for the public discussion. Each of them highlighted and raised couple of key questions regarding challenges and difficulties they face while practicing democracy at the grassroots level.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) called upon the Tibetan people to participate and take more of people's initiative in the democratization of Tibetan democracy in exile. The publications, pamphlets and reports were distributed to the public on that day. Eventually, the discussion was ended with an active debate amongst the audience. ■

The Executive Director attends WFDA Conference in Philippines

The second biennial conference of the World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA) took place in Sofitel Philippine Plaza Hotel, Manila, Philippines from 19 to 21 September 2007. The conference was organized in the wake of increasing challenges face by many of fledgling democracies in many Asian countries. The conference was convened by the "WFDA" Steering Committee and hosted by the Initiatives for International Dialogue, with generous support from the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD).

During the three-day meeting, the conference identified and addressed pressing issues towards achieving 'democratization' in Asia. A special focus was given to evaluating the first framework for Action in the light of developments in the region since the biennial conference in Taipei in 2005.

On 19 September 2007, a Concurrent Working Groups consisting of Burma, China, Laos, North Korea, Vietnam and Tibet was convened on Assisting Democratization in Closed Societies. The Executive Director of Centre, Mr. Urgen Tenzin was one of panelists for the discussion representing Tibet. The Executive Director spoke on the current political status of Tibet, the present scenario of human rights situation inside Tibet as well as the democratization processes in exile Tibetan communities. The conference issued two documents, i.e. Manila Declaration and 2007/09 Framework for Action. ■



Panelists from the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and Kashag

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Institute: A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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Freedom at last after 18 years- China releases Ngawang Phulchung

One of the longest serving Tibetan political prisoners, Ngawang Phulchung, who was one of the key leaders of the famous peaceful pro-independence demonstration of 27 September 1987, in Lhasa, was released from Chushul Prison (Ch: Qushui Prison) around 21 October 2007.

According to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Ngawang Phulchung, a 48 year-old prominent member of the Drepung "Group of Ten" was released after completion of his eight years and six months of prison sentence in various Chinese administered detention centres and prisons in Tibet. Ngawang was released by the Chinese authorities around 21 October 2007 from Chushul Prison. He was incarcerated for 18 years and six months of his 19-year sentence before receiving a six-month sentence reduction on 22 September 2005. The current physical condition of Ngawang Phulchung is said to be frail and have deteriorated over the years due to torture and inhuman treatments he suffered in the prison. Reports indicate that he is currently at his home with his family in Toelung Dechen County.

"Ngawang Phulchung is an exceptional case in the Tibetan struggle for human rights and justice. His dauntless efforts in voicing his opinion against the Chinese government's oppressive regime resulted in his repeated prison term extensions apart from the solitary confinements, beatings and torture that he sustained," said Jamphel Monlam, the Assistant Director of the Centre and one of the members of the "Group of Ten". He further elaborates by saying, "This release is yet another token gesture by the Chinese government before any major international events. The fact remains that he has spent the best part of his life in prison with physical and emotional scars that will last for the rest of his life," said Jamphel Monlam.

Brief Biography:

Ngawang Phulchung (lay name Anu) was born at Yamda Village in Toelung Dechen County, Lhasa Municipality. He joined Drepung Monastery in 1984. Ngawang was first detained in 1987 in connection with his participation on a peaceful demonstration. He joined Drepung Monastery at an early age and reached an advanced level study in Buddhist philosophy. He was just a short step from attaining the degree of Geshe (Doctorate of Philosophy in Buddhism), but felt compelled to concentrate his energies on the Tibetan struggle for political and religious freedom.

On 27 September 1987, Ngawang Phulchung and 20 other monks of Drepung Monastery staged a peaceful demonstration in central Lhasa demanding respect for human rights, including religious freedom and the right to self-determination for Tibetans. This was a turning point in the Tibetan struggle and sparked off a series of public protests. Prior to this day, few Tibetans had dared to express their concerns for fear of ruthless Chinese reprisals. The Chinese violently suppressed the demonstrators who were beaten and detained. Ngawang was held without charge for four months in Gutsa Detention Centre and was finally released on 22 January 1988 following intense international media attention and pressure and the personal intervention of the late Xth Panchen Lama. After his release, he rejoined the monastery 1988. Soon after his release, Ngawang said he had participated in the 1987 demonstration in support of the Dalai Lama and in order to protest against the Chinese government condemnation of the Dalai Lama's Five Point Peace Plan which they claimed was an attempt to split the motherland. When he was questioned by the Chinese authorities whether he and the others were afraid to demonstrate, his reply was "No, we were not frightened ... we were already prepared to give



Ngawang Phulchung

China steps up vigilance and control in Tibet prior to Congressional Gold Medal award ceremony for the Dalai Lama

Credible and confirmed information coming from Tibet indicates that the Chinese authorities in Tibet have heightened the security measures and intensified control prior to impending U.S. Congressional Gold Medal Award Ceremony for the Dalai Lama on 17 October 2007.

According to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the Chinese authorities of Lhasa City on 15 October issued an official order stating students and Tibetan employees in the government to refrain from seeking leave from their schools and office or participate in customary Sangsol ritual (incense burning ceremony that involve offering tsampa in the air for success and good fortune) this week or face expulsion from school, salary cut and even termination of their job.

In the same wavelength, on 14 October 2007, many elderly and retired Tibetan people who usually gather outside the famous Ramoche Temple in Lhasa City to offer Mani prayer were ordered to terminate the prayer session and vacate the place immediately for an indefinite period.

According to confirmed information, an official notice was issued by the Lhasa City government office to all the heads of neighborhood committee directing people under their respective area to refrain from taking part in any religious activities such as customary observance of Sangsol, holding group prayer at the monastery or any act of revelry this week in the light of US Congressional Gold Medal Award Ceremony for the Dalai Lama to be held in Washington DC on 17 October 2007. The regulation and control over monasteries in the surrounding areas of Lhasa City are intensified more than it had been in the past.

According to other sources, the stationed officers of Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) rounded up many former political prisoners residing in and around Lhasa at the Local



Police Station for questioning. They were even known to have been ordered to refrain from participating in any activities in the coming weeks. Since 25 September, it was reported that the number of People's Armed Police (PAP) and PSB officials were also increased significantly to deal with any untoward incident. Moreover, restriction and vigilance was also stepped up in offices, schools, homes of ex-political prisoners and those of people whom the government deemed suspicious or usually held suspicious. The Chinese authorities are taking every precautionary measures to ensure that no untoward incidents happen during the week. These measures have resulted in violation of fundamental human rights of Tibetans in Tibet.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) authorities have over riding paranoia about maintaining stability in the region. Hence, in order to avert any upheavals by Tibetans during major celebrations and events, Chinese authorities resort to various precautionary measures including heightened vigilance, closer supervision of suspected individuals and former political prisoners, even resorting to arbitrary arrest and detention. Tibetans with background in political activities in the past are especially susceptible for being rounded up and interrogated, made to sign surety letter and their family members are made to stand as guarantor that the individual will not carry out any political activities. All these restrictive measures and heightened vigilance have created an atmosphere of fear in different parts of Tibet, according to information received by TCHRD.

In light of recent protest by the Tibetan people in Kardze region particularly in Lithang County, the Chinese authorities have beefed up the security measures and vigorously carrying out "Patriotic Education" campaign across all the monastic institutions and in villages. According to a Tibetan in Lithang County who wish to remain anonymous due to security reasons told TCHRD that, "Since the past one week, a group of two to three local government officials were coming regularly to each and every villages, outlawing activities such as public gathering, or people talking in group and conducting prayer session for the next twenty days. When we asked the officials about the reason behind such measures, we were told that they would let us know later without giving any particular reason."

In view of the recent heightened of security and vigilance and past records depicting increase

in number of arrest during important events, most noticeably in the wake of the Dalai Lama's address to the US Congress in 1987 and the conferment of the Noble Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama in 1989, TCHRD fears that there will be numerous arrest of joyous celebrating Tibetans this time also. The Centre will continue to rigorously monitor the situation in Tibet.

TCHRD expresses its serious concern over the stepping up of restriction and vigilance in Tibet. Such restriction and new regulative measures often give way to serious violation of Tibetan people's fundamental human rights in the name of maintaining stability and security by the Chinese authorities. TCHRD appeals to the PRC authorities to recall the official order and imposition of restriction and not to hinder the normal life of the Tibetan people in Tibet. ■

Ronggye A'drak indicted by the Chinese court

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, (TCHRD) today received reliable information that Kardze People's Intermediate Court indicted Ronggye A'drak with four accounts of "crimes" ranging from disruption of law and order to state subversion.

According to the source, on 29 October 2007, a handcuffed Ronggye A'drak was brought to Kardze People's Intermediate Court, for a trial. During the trial, the court indicted Ronggye A'drak with four accounts of "crimes":

(1) Indicted of seeking to "split" the country and subvert state power on 1 August 2007 during the horse racing festival by shouting "Long Live the Dalai Lama" and asking for the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet.

(2) Indicted of instigating a large crowd of agitating Tibetans rallied and forced entry into the government compounds after his arrest. Since he caused the incident and therefore he must bear the complete responsibility for these actions.

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up our lives for the six million Tibetans. Anyway, sacrificing your life is not against Buddhism”.

Ngawang was also one of the ten members from the Drepung Monastery who clandestinely produced political literature and distributed it extensively at the end of 1988 after their release on 22 January 1988. He was unanimously elected as the leader of the “Group of Ten”.

On 22 April 1989, Ngawang Phulchung and three other monks were arrested from Drepung Monastery for forming a “counter-revolutionary group” which had clandestinely produced political leaflets. All four were detained at the Sangyip Prison or popularly known as “TAR” Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Centre. Amongst the “reactionary literature” published by the group was a complete Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The group had also reported on political unrest in Tibet, criticized human rights violations by the Chinese authorities, listed the names of persons arrested or killed by the Chinese police and military, and alerted Tibetans to the international support for their cause. A further document published by the group was entitled “The Meaning of the Precious Democratic Constitution of Tibet”. It described a parliamentary system for an independent Tibet, relying on the traditional principles of Buddhist dialectics to analyze the concept of democracy and called upon Tibetans to fight “with inner strength”. The group was labeled as “the scum of religious circles” and, in order to make an example of those involved, the Chinese authorities staged a show trial.

Other remaining members of the “Group of Ten” were subsequently arrested on 18 July 1989 and detained at “TAR” PSB Detention Centre. All the members had undergone a severe torture and ill-treatment from the prison officials with Ngawang Phulchung having been particularly targeted for being the ring leader of the group.

On 30 November 1989, when the group was sentenced before a forced public gathering of 1500 Tibetans, Ngawang was denounced as the leader of the group and sentenced to 19 years’ imprisonment and five years’ deprivation of political rights. At his sentencing, Lhasa Intermediate People’s Court accused him with “organising and joining a counter-revolutionary clique and spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda and inflammatory

disinformation”, “seriously undermining national security” and “collecting intelligence and passing it on to the enemy”. The people gathered were told that the monks had “venomously slandered our socialist system characterized by the people’s democratic dictatorship”.

The Chinese government broadcast the sentencing on TV, with following warning: The crimes committed by Ngawang Phulchung and other criminals demonstrate that the so-called human rights, freedoms and democracy played up by separatists both at home and abroad are nothing but a pack of deceitful lies ... Let the sentence of Ngawang Phulchung serve as a stern warning for separatists both at home and abroad that those who split the motherland will come to no good end.

On 30 March 1991, an American delegation visited Drapchi prison and a group of prisoners handed the diplomats a petition allegedly protesting against the conditions of detention. The petition was confiscated, and after the visit, prisoners, including Ngawang were reportedly severely beaten and placed in the solitary confinement. Undeterred, Ngawang and other prisoners have continued to protest against the ill-treatment of prisoners, with the inevitable result that they have been beaten or placed in dark isolation cells. Ngawang Phulchung was transferred to Drapchi Prison along with the rest of the members of his group on 15 January 1990. Ngawang was later known to have been transferred to newly operational Chushul Prison, where he remained incarcerated until his release this month.

All the members of the “Group of Ten” were now known to have been released after serving various prison terms ranging between five years to eighteen years and deprivation of political rights for a number of years. Over the years Amnesty International, the UN Human Rights Commission and many concerned individuals have strived hard to secure an early release of Ngawang Phulchung.

While TCHRD is happy that Ngawang Phulchung has been released, it maintains that he and all the Tibetan political prisoners do not deserve to be in prison at all in the first place. According to TCHRD documentation, there are 140 known Tibetan political prisoners currently languishing in a network of Chinese administered prisons in Tibet. Out of the 140 known political prisoners, 51 are serving prison term of more than 10 years and 97 prisoners out of the total are monks. TCHRD remains skeptical and would like to warn the international community not to be misled by

such well-calculated gestures of the Chinese government for its own benefits, particularly, in light of upcoming Beijing Olympics next year.

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) is a state party to the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment since 1988. Although PRC outlawed certain forms of torture in the revised Chinese Criminal Procedure Law that came into effect in 1997, systematic torture is still endemic in the Chinese administered prisons in Tibet. In view of the current situation in Tibet, although complete eradication of torture remains a distant dream, TCHRD urges the government of the PRC to implement the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture to eradicate torture and “to ensure torture survivors’ right to full with special attention to medical and psychological needs”.

TCHRD calls upon the government of the People’s Republic of China to release all the prisoners of conscience who are still languishing in various prisons and detention centres in Tibet for peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights enshrined in the constitution and various International human rights treaties and covenants. ■

Continued from page 2

(3) Indicting of disrupting the law and order in Lithang region and of economic losses resulting from his protest and subsequent arrest in deploying Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People’s Armed Police (PAP) personnels.

(4) Indicted of colluding with the splittist Dalai Clique based outside Tibet and moreover his daughters were honoured by the “Dalai Clique” at a public event.

According to the source, it is reported that Ronggye A’drak was taken to Dartsedo detention centre after his trial at Kardze People’s Intermediate Court, Sichuan Province. It is widely understood from the insider source that Ronggye A’drak will be formally charged the aforementioned “crimes” and the court will pronounce the verdict in the coming few days.

The TCHRD strongly condemns the indictment of Ronggye A’drak as his freedom to expression and opinion does not violate any of the constitutional components of Chinese law. TCHRD also expresses its doubts concerning the transparency of the

Continue at page 5

Two Tibetans arrested in Lithang after "Patriotic Education" Campaign

In the aftermath of massive "Patriotic Education" campaign launched by the Chinese authorities in Lithang area since the beginning of September this year, cases of arbitrary arrests and detention of Tibetans who openly defied and challenged the authorities for violating their rights have begun to surface from the area.

According to confirm information, on 2 September 2007, the Chinese authorities summoned a meeting of the general public of Youru Kharshul and Kayta Villages in Lithang County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"), to receive political education telling Tibetans how the Chinese liberation of Tibet has empowered the Tibetan commoners and how Tibetans under the Chinese Communist Party's patronage are leading a happy and content life. However, not everyone agreed with that, Adruk Kalgyam, a Tibetan nomad from Youru Kharshul Village, stood up from the gathering and challenged the Chinese authorities by telling, "How can you say we are happy and content under the communist rule, when the tears of sorrow of the Tibetan people have not dried up yet. And when the Dalai Lama-who is savior of Tibetan people for this and next life-had to lead a life in exile and Panchen Lama continued to be under Chinese detention. In addition, Apho A'drak (Pet name used for Ronggye A'drak by his friends and relatives) and the likes were arrested for speaking their mind and their whereabouts still remain unknown."

Adruk Kalgyam left the gathering by shouting slogans "May the Dalai Lama live for thousands of years and may the wishes of Apho A'drak and others be fulfilled." On the next day, a group of Lithang County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers came to Youru Village and arbitrarily arrested Adruk Kalgyam from his resident without citing any reasons. There has been no information on the current fate and whereabouts of Adruk Kalgyam.

Adruk Kalgyam, a 26-year-old nomad was born to Adruk Wangdu (father) and Ronggye Tsewang (Mother) at Youru Kharshul Village, Lithang County, Kardze, 'TAP'.

In a similar incident, on 3 October 2007, the Chinese authorities summoned abbot and monks of Youru Geydenling Monastery (a small branch monastery under the umbrella of Lithang Monastery), and conducted a 'Patriotic education'. During the session, Jamyang Tenzin, a monk of the monastery, stood up and

challenged the officials openly saying "The Chinese government's proclamation of right to religious freedom enjoyed by the Tibetan people stands ghastly contradictory as we cannot place a portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at our residence and monastery. The people of Lithang County including its' nomads still continue to face livelihood problems although government boast of rapid development." Jamyang Tenzin even raised the question on the arrest of Ronggye A'drak and other Tibetans and expressed his concern on their whereabouts. He later concluded by shouting, "May the Dalai Lama live for thousands of years." Jamyang was however, arrested right away by the local PSB officials after the conclusion of the 'Patriotic education' session at the monastery. Jamyang Tenzin, a 33-year-old monk of Youru Geydenling Monastery was born to Thinley Tsering(father) and Tsering Dolma(mother) and was a native of Youru Sakhor Village, Lithang County, Kardze, 'TAP'.

In the light of recent open public protests initiated by Ronggye A'drak in Lithang and subsequent arrests and detention of his supporters, the Chinese authorities have resorted to imposing restrictions and beefing up the security measures in Lithang and surrounding counties. The authorities have even summoned the leaders of townships and monasteries in and around Lithang to commence the Patriotic Education Campaign in the first week of September 2007, which will be carried out over a period of three months. On 15 September, Lobsang Phuntsok, a monk of Lithang Monastery was arrested following the "patriotic education" campaign and his friend Kunkhen was arrested by Lithang County PSB officials on 22 August for unknown reason.

The Chinese authorities under the banner of "Patriotic education" campaign in religious institutions across Tibet are violating the Tibetan people's right to religious freedom and continues to detain and arrest those who speak their mind and wishes of the common people.

TCHRD is highly concerned about Adruk Kalgyam and Jamyang Tenzin and seeks the support of human rights groups and the international community in securing their early release unconditionally. The Centre deems the case as an outright clamp down on the freedom of opinion and expression in



Kalgyam

Tibet. Freedom of Expression is a fundamental human rights which is a prerequisite to the enjoyment of all human rights. Article 35 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) guarantees "freedom of expression, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration." Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. The Centre calls upon the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo, to intervene on their case and others who were earlier arrested in connection with Ronggye A'drak.

TCHRD also call upon the PRC government to release all political prisoners who have been arrested and detained for exercising their fundamental human rights enshrined in the UDHR, constitution and many other international covenants and treaties that she is party to. The Centre also calls upon the PRC to immediately put an end to "Patriotic Education" campaign across all religious institutions in Tibet and considers Adruk Kalgyam and Jamyang Tenzin's call a genuine expression of local Tibetans' concern and despair that continue to exist in Tibet as a result of China's repressive policies. The PRC should immediately address these genuine concerns of local Tibetan people rather than tightening noose on the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights. The government of the PRC should ensure that they are not subjected to ill treatment and torture which are common features in Chinese administered detention centres and prisons in Tibet. ■

A Statue of Guru Rinpoche demolished and construction of another suspended in Tibet

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) expresses its deepest anguish at the China's recent outrageous interference in the religious affairs of Tibetan people in Tibet. According to the latest information emanating from Tibet, another statue of Guru Padmasambhava or popularly known as Guru Rinpoche was demolished and construction of another Guru statue was reportedly suspended by the local Chinese authorities in two different regions of Tibet.

According to confirmed information, about two meter high statue of Guru Rinpoche built with financial contribution by the faithful local Tibetans was demolished in the first week of October by the local Chinese authorities from Ngari Darchen, Burang County, Ngari Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ('TAR'). The statue built with clay was completed a month ago with religious consecration done by the local religious heads upon its completion.

In a similar incident, on 14 August 2007, a statue of Guru Rinpoche, which was under construction at Rongpatsa Village, Kardze County, Kardze "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ('TAP') was suspended following the local authorities' issuance of order prohibiting construction of the statue.

These are not the isolated cases surfacing from Tibet, in mid-May this year, the Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) forcibly demolished a nearly completed gold and copper plated colossal statue of Guru Rinpoche of the Samye Monastery in Dragnag County, Lhoka Prefecture, 'TAR'. TCHRD highlighted the demolition of the statue on 4 June 2007 after which the official Chinese statement issued by the Democratic Management Committee of Samye Monastery on 8 June said that the construction of the statue "disobeyed the Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics and the Notice of Illegally Building Open Statue of Buddha....Samye Monastery then self-moved the open-air statue forwardly [sic]."

Earlier, in the beginning of this year, the Chinese authorities issued 56 articulated new measures for the "Regulation on Religious Affairs" entered into force. The new regulation, instead of providing the protection of religious affairs, was deliberately aimed at

enforcing compliance with government regulations and policies on religious organizations, religious personnel, and religious citizens. In particular, this new regulation empowers the officials with legal backing to intensify restrictions thus subjecting Tibetans to state control and repression.

The Centre also recorded that a new restrictive measures on religious practices were being enforced on general public. Prohibitions continue to be in place for important religious days like Saka Dawa and Gaden Ngyamchoe, birthday of the Dalai Lama and the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima in Tibet.

Since the beginning of September this year, China's State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) issued 14-article with measures on reincarnation which clearly demonstrates the Chinese Communist Party's (CPC) adamant attempt to undermine and tarnish the centuries-old Tibetan tradition of religious practice. It also attempts to weaken the authority of the legitimate Tibetan religious leaders most prominently that of the Dalai Lama. The new measure bars any Buddhist monk living outside China from seeking reincarnation for himself or recognizing a "living Buddha" thus effectively ending the centuries-old Tibetan Buddhist practice. It further adds that, "All the reincarnations of living Buddha of Tibetan Buddhism must get government approval, otherwise they are 'illegal or invalid'". It is understandable from this new measure that the centuries-old traditional Tibetan system of recognizing reincarnate lamas is irrelevant from now on and the Chinese CPC decides the legitimacy of the reincarnate lamas.

In addition, the Chinese authorities have reinvigorated the "Patriotic education" campaign across religious institutions and general masses since the beginning of September this year and which will go on for three months in Lithang and Kardze region. Under this campaign, many Tibetans were arrested and detained for their open defiance and confrontation with the authorities.

TCHRD believes that this latest incident of demolishing Guru Padmasambhava's

statue in Ngari Darchen and the forced suspension of construction work of Guru's statue in Rongpatsa not only highlights the new measures being forcibly implemented and carried out in Tibet but also show authorities adamant attempt to undermine the religious sentiments of Tibetan people.

The latest measures and restrictions imposed on religious activities signal that a prospect for more religious freedom as gallantly pronounced in the Chinese constitution is bleak, considering China's record with respect to the religious freedom. While China's constitution provides its citizens with the "freedom of religious belief," it does not protect the right to manifest religious beliefs, highlighting the importance for China to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which contains explicit provisions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religions and which she signed on 5 October 1998. The PRC should abide by the rights guaranteed in constitution and other major international covenants and treaties which she is party to. ■

Continued from page 3

legal proceedings-whether or not Ronggye A'drak was entitled to a fair trial. TCHRD calls upon the People's Republic of China to implement and follow all the required domestic and international legal norms and practices in the case of Ronggye A'drak's trial, to ensure that he receives fair hearings in the court, further in no case should his legal counsel be subjected to any forms of intimidation or pressure. The Centre is highly concerned at the blatant violation of international legal norms in courts in China where in summary and arbitrary judicial process is highly prevalent. ■

Nangpala Revisited- Shooting left nine Tibetans missing and three arrests

According to a confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), a group of 46 Tibetans while attempting to flee Tibet via Nangpala Pass in October were shot by Chinese border People's Armed Police (PAP) resulting in the arrest of three Tibetans and missing of nine.

According to a TCHRD source in Kathmandu, on 18 October 2007, a group of 46 Tibetans while escaping to Nepal via Nangpala Pass through Solukhumbu were shot by the Chinese Border PAP. The group while taking rest on the Nangpala Pass, after days of grueling walk over the high pass covered with freezing snow were shot several times by the Chinese Border PAP. Although nobody was shot dead at this time, but the firing live ammunitions on the group led the escaping people run for the cover leaving all their belongings behind in the snow. However, they were chased by the Chinese Border PAP, which resulted in arrest of three Tibetans and nine missing. The whereabouts and condition of nine people from the original group of 46 Tibetans still remain unknown. The details of three people arrested are:

1. Ngawang Tsultrim, 21-year-old from Amdo Labrang, Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe) County, Kanlho "Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP")
2. Lobsang Thaye, 33-year-old monk from Amdo Rebkong Monastery, Rebkong (Ch: Tongren) County, Malho (Ch: Huangnan) "TAP"
3. Tenzin Dorjee, 21-year-old from Kham Bawa, Lithang County, Kardze "TAP"

Yesterday, the remaining fleeing Tibetans safely managed to reach Tibetan Reception Centre based in Katmandu, Nepal. As the winter approaches, the flow of Tibetans across the Himalayas into Nepal from Tibet is generally on the high (when there are less Chinese patrols in the area). There is a general consensus between the Nepalese government and the UNHCR that the Tibetans fleeing Tibet be handed over to the latter who in turn take Tibetan refugees under their protection. Amid high risk of being arrested Tibetans make the arduous journey into Nepal which acts as a transit for the hundreds of Tibetans entering India on a mission to get education in exile or be blessed with an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

After the Nangpala incident in September last year, the Chinese authorities beefed up security measures and restrictions on the Nepalese frontier to check the Tibetan escapees. The "TAR" Public Security Bureau (PSB) convened a special meeting in December 2006 calling for a strict monitor and vigilance on the 'fleeing individual' (Ch: toudu) and called for the launch of 'Strike Hard' Campaign beginning January 2007 for six months. According to the official Chinese mouthpiece, Xinhua, dated 4 June 2007, it was reported that a video conference was convened by the "TAR" Head PSB department among various Prefecture PSB departments on 5 May 2007 in Lhasa City to review the overall result of the "Strike Hard" campaign, which was launched on the border areas through which most of the Tibetan refugees escape. The individual officers and concerned departments successful in cracking down were rewarded with accolades, it was reported.

Last year on a bright sunny morning of 30 September, the world has yet seen another bloody killing of an innocent Tibetan crossing the border to seek freedom in exile. As 75 refugees were preparing to cross the glaciated Nangpala, an 18,753 ft. pass close to Everest base camp, the Chinese Border PAP fired live ammunitions on a group of Tibetan refugees killing Kelsang Namtso, a 17 years old from Driru County, Nagchu Prefecture "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") and Kunsang Namgyal, a 20 year old from Kardze was hit by bullets on his leg. He could not escape and along with him 32 other Tibetans including 14 minor boys were arrested by soldiers and taken to Shigatse Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Centre. The youngest was eight years old. Out of 75 people, 41 (27 minors below eighteen years) managed to reach Kathmandu, Nepal, where they were kept under the protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Under immense international pressure and extensive coverage on the shooting unarmed Tibetans by the Chinese border PAP, the Chinese Foreign Ministry paradoxically referred the shooting as a defensive measures carried on by the border forces. The Chinese Foreign Ministry confirmed that several Tibetans had been injured in a border incident, but denied anyone was killed as a result of

gunfire. The authorities claim one of the injured succumbed to 'oxygen shortage'™ in hospital. The official news agency, Xinhua, stated that when asked to turn back, Tibetan refugees 'refused and attacked the soldiers' so '[t]he frontier soldiers were forced to defend themselves and injured two [refugees].' The Foreign Ministry agreed with the claim that any violence on the part of the PAP was in self-defense. This was one of the incidents happened and rarely witnessed by the foreign mountaineers.

However, in light of testimonies by the refugees, the foreign eyewitnesses and confirmed by video there is hardly anything left for Chinese to duck the responsibility for killing innocent Tibetan. Jamyang Samten, a teenage youth who made successful second attempt upon reaching Dharamsala told TCHRD that, "the older teenagers and adults were severely beaten, and some children who were not immediately collected by their parents were detained for more than three months".

TCHRD is gravely concerned about the fate of three arrested Tibetans and other nine who are still missing in midst of tension following gunshot by the Chinese Border PAP. The government of the PRC should ensure that they are not subjected to ill treatment and torture which are common features in Chinese administered detention centres and prisons in Tibet. The actions of the PAP violate a number of international and national laws. Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides 'everyone the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution'. The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees also accords legitimate refugees with the same human rights as those enjoyed by nationals.

TCHRD calls upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, and the Human Rights Council to seek intervention in the securing their early release from Chinese custody without harm. TCHRD also calls upon the authorities of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to ensure that Tibetans are able to peacefully exercise their fundamental human rights without fear of harassment, intimidation or arbitrary detention, in line with international human rights standards. The Centre will continue to monitor the situation and will update on any development as and when we receive. ■



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

Assistant Director attends Geneva UNHRC meeting

The Assistant Director Mr. Jampa Monlam attended the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) meeting held from 25 September to 2 October 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Jampa Monlam represented the Centre along with NGOs from various parts of the world. The highlight of the meeting was a special seminar convened on the crisis in Burma in light of thousands of Buddhist monks protested in the streets of Rangoon demanding for the democratic reforms. In the following sessions, the NGOs from all various fields sat down for a dialogue on various issues of global concern, particularly the issue of human rights violations in many parts of the world. Mr. Jampa Monlam tabled and briefed the human rights violations inside during the Dialogue session. ■

TCHRD briefs South Tyrol Parliamentarians

Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director and Mr. Tenzin Norgay, UN Affairs Personnel briefed parliamentarians from South Tyrol on 4 October 2007 about current status of Human Rights Situation inside Tibet. ■

TCHRD briefs the British Parliamentarians

On 5 October 2007, Mr. Tashi Choephel and Mr. Chukora Tsering Agloe, researchers; attended a meeting of Tibetan NGOs in Daramsala with a group of British Parliamentarians during their visit to Daramsala this autumn. The Tibet Society of the United Kingdom organized the visit of British Parliamentarians with objectives of giving them a first hand understanding on the realities of the Tibetan situation, to share parliamentary experience and to strengthen the links between the two parliaments, to give additional support to Tibet's non-violent campaign for freedom and self-determination and to ascertain the current progress of the dialogue between the

Chinese government and representatives of the Dalai lama. TCHRD gave a thorough briefing on current situation of human rights inside Tibet and the functioning of the Centre in promoting and protecting human rights and democracy. ■

TCHRD interacts with the delegates of Human Rights Law Network

On 23 October 2007, the staff of Centre sat down for an interactive meeting with the Delegates of Human Rights Law Network, which publishes Combat Law, a frontline legal Magazine in India.

During the formal interaction, Centre gave an illustrative briefing on actual situation of human rights and the practice of torture in Tibet by the Chinese government. Later the staff fielded many critical questions from the Combat Law staff on the issues of refugees and the need of redefinition of the human rights in view of the fast changing global geo-political scenario.

The Combat Law Magazine devoted 63 pages of out of 98 in extensive story coverage 'Tibet Trapped'. In the concluding part, both sides agreed to interact closely on future reporting and monitoring of human rights violation faces by refugees. ■

TCHRD attends conference on combating torture

On 25 - 27 October 2007, Mr. Tenzin Norgay, UN affairs officer and Mr. Chukora Tsering Agloe, researcher participated the conference on "Use of Information Technology to combat torture" at Nalzar, National Law University, Hyderabad, India with representatives from Sri Lanka, Pakistan and the People's Watch NGO from India. It was a cross sharing of knowledge and expertise on documenting, reporting, monitoring and lobbying human rights violation and torture with the use of technology and software systems. The German Based Friedrich Naumann-Stiftung FÜR DIE FREIHEIT funded the conference. ■

TCHRD attends annual ATSS 2007 in Bangkok

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Information Officer participated in the 11th Annual Asian Training and Study Session (ATSS) 2007 for Human Rights Defenders, which was organised by Asian Forum for Human Rights (Forum Asia) at St. Gabriel Foundation, Bangkok, Thailand from 7-27 October 2007.

Around 35 participants from various human rights organisations and advocacy groups from 16 Countries (*Bangladesh, Burma, Canada, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Lao, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tibet, Timor Leste*) attended the training and study session.

The three weeks training includes topics such as historical evolvement of human rights, UN and other HR mechanisms, Human Rights trends in Asia, Universality of Human Rights, Gender and Women's Human Rights, The UN Human Rights System (*Charter and Treaty based system*), The UN Human Rights Council, Principles of Community Organising, Media Strategizing, Cyber Campaign and Popular education.

On the evening of 17 October 2007, Mr. Tashi made a brief presentation on the current human rights situation in Tibet and historical fact supporting Tibet as an independent state before the Chinese occupation. Later, he screened two short documentary movies: Demolition of Serthar Institute and Nangpa La shooting incident. ■



Mr. Tashi Phuntsok giving presentation to the co-participants of the workshop

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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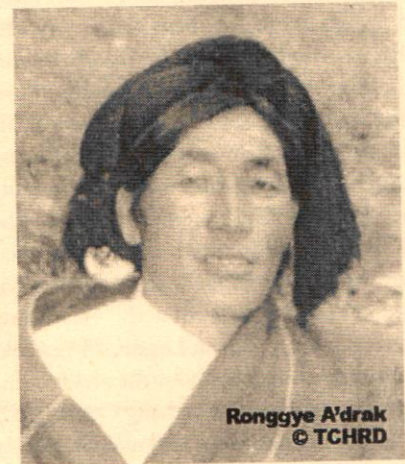
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Ronggye A'drak and others sentenced to lengthy prison terms between three to ten years

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) expresses its deepest shock and condemnation over the swift and extremely harsh sentence to Ronggye A'drak and three other Tibetans by Kardze Intermediate People's Court today.

Ronggye A'drak, who was earlier indicted by the Kardze Intermediate People's Court on 29 October 2007 on four counts of 'crimes' ranging from disruption of law and order to state subversion was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment with deprivation of political rights for four years, A'druk Lopoe to ten years; Kunkhen ("Jacmyang Goinqen") to nine years and Lothok to three years imprisonment respectively by the Kardze Intermediate People's Court today, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD).

On 29 October 2007, a handcuffed Ronggye A'drak who was earlier brought to Kardze Intermediate People's Court, for the court indictment was today sentenced to eight years of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for four years on charges of "inciting to split the country to undermine the country unity," and "severely disrupting the public order". Whereas A'druk Lopoe, a nephew of Ronggye A'drak received the heaviest sentence of ten years' imprisonment on charges of "colluding with foreign separatist force to split the country and distributing political pamphlets." Kunkhen, ("Jacmyang Goinqen") an artiste who was arbitrarily arrested on 22 August by the Lithang County PSB officials for unknown reason was sentenced to nine years of imprisonment on charges of "carrying out splittist activities," and Lothok was given three years imprisonment by the same court.



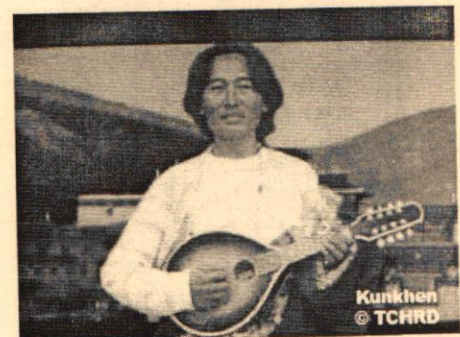
Ronggye A'drak
© TCHRD

There has been no information on their physical condition and where they were taken after the court verdict was delivered.

Ronggye A'drak, 52 year-old and a father of 11 children was arrested after his peaceful solo demonstration on 1 August 2007 at the annual Lithang horse race festival in Kardze, "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") in Sichuan province. In the aftermath of A'drak's detention by the Lithang Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers, hundreds of local Tibetans and nomads in Lithang and surrounding areas protest at Lithang PSB Detention Centre to show their solidarity for A'drak and called for his immediate release before being dispersed. Several days after



A'druk Lopo
© TCHRD



Kunkhen
© TCHRD

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A'drak's arrest, and the subsequent protest by the Tibetan supporters were dispersed by large number of military forces in their full combat gear using tear-gas and firing guns into the air.

"On the evening of 21 August 2007, a large number of Lithang PSB and PAP forces suddenly stormed into A'drak's native village, Yonru Kharshul Village, Lithang County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" (TAP), Sichuan Province and arrested few of his nephews. It was confirmed by the source that the Lithang PSB and PAP forces first stormed into the house of A'drak and enquired about A'druk Lopoe, a monk of Lithang Monastery who has been leading the call for A'drak's release. Finding A'druk Lopoe absent at his house, the PSB officers and PAP forces arbitrarily detained two of his brothers, A'druk Gyatso and A'druk Nyima and took them forcibly to the local PSB Detention Centre. The PSB officers and PAP forces ransacked their entire house looking for any evidence that they could charge them with." According to the source. "A'druk Lopoe, 45 year old monk, on learning about the arrest of his two brothers went to Lithang County PSB Office after few hours and told the officer



that "I am the person you are looking for and demanded the release of his two brothers. However, the PSB officers without complying his demand also arrested him". A'druk Nyima and A'druk Gyatso were released after six hours of detention. A'druk Lopoe is a very strong proponent of the need of education for the youth and a leading advocate against deforestation, lumbering and wildlife hunting in his native Kardze.

In the aftermath of the protest by and arrest of Ronggye A'drak, the Chinese authorities launched massive "Patriotic Education" Campaign across Lithang County's monastic institutions and even to village communities where few Tibetans who openly challenged the authorities were arrested.

The TCHRD questions the integrity of Chinese judicial court that sentenced Tibetan nomads with lengthy prison terms for exercising basic human rights peacefully and expressing the wishes of Tibetans inside Tibet in a most peaceful manner. The sentence passed by the Kardze Intermediate people's court is one of the swiftest, spanning only about three and a half months, definitely indicates that the whole judicial process has been summary and arbitrary in nature.

The TCHRD strongly condemns the sentencing of Ronggye A'drak and the three other Tibetans as their freedom to opinion and expression does not violate any of the constitutional components of Chinese law. TCHRD is gravely concerned for the fate of Ronggye A'drak, A'druk Lopoe, Kunkhen and Lothok and would like to seek immediate intervention by the governments and the international community. Since their activities constitute nothing more than an expression of their opinion, thought and exercise of their basic human rights peacefully, TCHRD calls upon the Chinese authorities to release them unconditionally.

In the light of the prevalence of summary trials and sentencing in Chinese court, TCHRD urges Chinese authorities to give Ronggye A'drak and the others a fair re-trial with adequate legal representation and also to follow all domestic and international legal norms. ■

Chinese authorities closes down Pangsa Monastery in Tibet

The Chinese authorities in Meldrogungkar has temporarily closed down Pangsa Monastery in Meldrogungkar County, Lhasa municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region ("TAR") in Tibet according to credible information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD).

Pangsa Monastery belongs to the Sakya school of Tibetan Buddhism. The monastery's chief relic is a mummified reliquary body of the highly realized Yogi Jampal Gyatso. Je Tsongapa Chenpo (1357-1419), the exalted master and the founder of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism brought the holy reliquary statue of Yogi Jampal Gyatso from his birthplace, Tsonga in Amdo Province along with him when he came to Lhasa, during the 14th century. Since then the reliquary statue of Yogi was housed in the Pangsa Monastery as a chief relic.

Earlier, the Dalai Lama was reported to have preached the benefits of receiving blessings from the reliquary statue of the holy Yogi to Tibetan devotees and practitioners during his religious teachings in India.

In aftermath of the Dalai Lama's discourse on the sacred nature of the reliquary statue, thousands of Tibetan pilgrims and devotees have been flocking to Pangsa Monastery to receive blessings from the holy relic till date from all parts of Tibet. In one incident, around forty trucks packed with devotees and pilgrims reportedly visited the relic statue every day between August and September 2007. In the last many months, there has been a staggering increase in the number of devotees visiting the reliquary statue at Pangsa Monastery. The movements of Tibetan devotees in large numbers to the Monastery drew the attention and apprehension of the Chinese authorities. The Chinese government maintains a strict curb and restriction on the large congregation of religious devotees inside Tibet as a standard measure to control Tibetan people and to regulate religious practices.

Particularly, in recent times, the Chinese government has already placed an

unprecedented restriction in the movements of Tibetan people inside Tibet particularly in "TAR" in the light of China hosting 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. The incident of Tibetan devotees in thousands flocking to the monastery has led to the closure of Pangsa Monastery during the second week of October 2007 in backdrop of China's usual fear and suspicion over the large congregation of Tibetan people in one place.

TCHRD expresses its grave concern over the outrageous violation of denying the Tibetan devotees and practitioners from enjoying their right to religious freedom and beliefs. The Buddhist culture is an integral part of Tibetan people's culture and way of life and therefore placing such restrictive curbs only contradicts the spirit of Chinese constitution where the right to religious practice and beliefs is guaranteed to all of its citizens.

TCHRD calls upon the Chinese authorities to immediately lift the closure of Pangsa Monastery and allow the Tibetan devotees to practice their religious beliefs. ■

Commercialization of a holy pilgrimage site

Donkar Kyab from Sarum Village, Karma Township, Dzogen, Ngapa Prefecture, Sichuan Province Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) County testified to the Centre about a construction of new road which runs through Kirti Monastery in Ngapa Prefecture in order to convert a famed pilgrimage site into major tourist attraction spot.

According to Donkar Kyap, a famed retreat hermitage cave called "Taksang or Tiger's Den" is located right in the interior part of the valley on a cliff side, which the Tibetan devotees come to pray and seek blessing. Every year the pilgrimage site attracts thousands of devotees.

Of late the Chinese authorities made a proposal to convert the holy pilgrimage site into a tourist attraction site for commercial purposes. Since the holy cave is located way up in the interior part of the valley, a

construction of a road is necessary to make the cave accessible to tourists.

According to the blue print of the road construction, it is to run in close proximity to the monastery. In response to authorities plan, around seven hundred monks from the monastery immediately raised their objection to the construction. They raised their concerns and worries about the adverse impact of road will have on the monastery.

Donkar Kyap explains that the officials from Public Security Bureau (PSB) of Ngapa Prefecture summoned the senior monks of Ngapa Kirti Monastery for a meeting in April 2007. During the meeting, the PSB officials disclosed them about a construction of new road project which was to run along the Kirti Monastery.

The monks complained to the officials that once the road is constructed, restaurants, shops and hotels would mushroom up on the road sides, thus damaging the pristine and quiet atmosphere of the monastery and also affecting the studies and quiet contemplation of the monks.

In response to monks' complaints, the PSB officials stood up and shouted, "All of us are the citizens of the People's Republic of China. It is for the sake of our national security and development we are regulating the religious institutions. Religion brings no development and prosperity. Religion is poison. Our Motherland China would not have progressed and entered the era of prosperity and modernization if we had clung to the old superstitious beliefs of religion. You people are still the prisoners of old Tibet, and still yet to understand the ideologies of socialism."

Despite strong protests from the monks, the PSB officials adamantly stated that the construction of new road will go ahead. They also warned that those who hinders the construction of new road will be arrested and face dire consequences.

The local Chinese authorities have a plan of converting the holy pilgrimage site into a major tourist destination by setting up shops, restaurants and picnic parks. In order to carry out the implementation of the blue print, the Chinese officials have a plan of moving in hundreds and thousands of Hui Chinese workers and migrants to the area. At the moment, significant Hui Chinese settlers were running garment shops and other groceries in the vicinity of monastery.

As it was seen in major part of infrastructure developments in Tibetan areas, many of the developmental projects have little economic benefits to the local Tibetans who are largely the nomads and farmers. There is little doubt that the money churn from the enterprise will be reaped by authorities and those who invested in the business venture.

In recent times, due to tremendous economic growth in Mainland China, thousands and thousands of rich Chinese Buddhist visits the holy pilgrimage sites in Tibet every year. Many of holy pilgrimage sites in Tibet have been converted into tourist destination site, churning in millions and millions of yuans every year.

This is yet another example of communist party's brutality and insensitivity to the religious beliefs and sentiments of the local Tibetans. The Tibetans in Tibet are stripped of their own right to self-determination and to have a proper share of participation in the decision making processes. In this case, the repeated plea of the monks of Kirti Monastery was rejected and went ahead despite strong objection from the Tibetan people.

Meanwhile in another incident, an ancestral hot spring site in Khumtsar Township, Dzogen County, Ngapa prefecture in Qinghai Province Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) was nationalized by the local authorities as the place attracted hundreds and thousands of tourists who come to the spot to have a ritual dip as the hot spring water is believed to have contained medicinal healings. For centuries, the local Tibetans visited the hot spring site to cure certain ailments.

The Chinese government has issued stern guidelines on visiting the hot spring water for locals and tourists. The authorities also fixed rates for visiting the site.

1. The locals are charged 2 yuans per head for taking bath in hot spring water
2. The visitors from Townships and Counties are charged 5 yuans per person for taking bath in hot spring water.
3. The Tourists from western countries and China are charged 15 yuans per person for taking bath in hot spring water. ■

Forcing silence in Tibet as Dalai Lama receives US Congressional Gold Medal

There are credible reports on the arrest of a monk of Drepung Monastery, five people in Labrang Tashikyil Monastery and two other from Kardze region of Tibet for celebrating the US Congressional Gold Medal Award to the Dalai Lama despite severe restriction and control imposed by the Chinese authorities, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD).

Hundreds of Tibetans in their best attire converged early in the morning at Lingkor Road and Barkhor Street in Lhasa for customary observance of Sangsol (incense burning prayer that involve throwing tsampa in the air for success and good fortune) and visited monasteries in large number to offer prayers despite Chinese authorities imposition of severe restriction and vigilance in Tibet ahead of and during the US Congressional Gold Medal Award ceremony for the Dalai Lama on 17 October. The place adorn a festive atmosphere with people from all walks of life gathered for a kind-of picnic to celebrate the day, according to the information received by the Centre.

Earlier on 16 October, dozens of Drepung monks had begun repainting the exterior of a hall assigned as the residence of the Dalai Lama with whitewash to exhibit their joy after US Congress decided to award it's highest civilian honor to the Dalai Lama. However, the Chinese authorities came to stop the activities in the monastery. In the morning of 17 October, when monks resumed painting auspicious symbols inside the Drepung Monastery, the Public Security Bureau (PSB) Officers moved in to stop the monks resulting in violent scuffles between the monks and the officers which left a monk with injured head. There was also report of arrest of a monk from Drepung Monastery during the celebration of the award.

According to one report, a large contingent of around three thousand armed police surrounded the Drepung Monastery to carry out the round-the-clock vigilance of the Monastery and refused to allow anyone to enter and leave the monastery. In addition, strict checking were done to restrict people's movements at the road leading from west of Lhasa towards Lhasa city. Similar bans and restrictions were imposed at the Nechung

Monastery located below the Drepung Monastery and at the Sera Monastery situated north of Lhasa City.

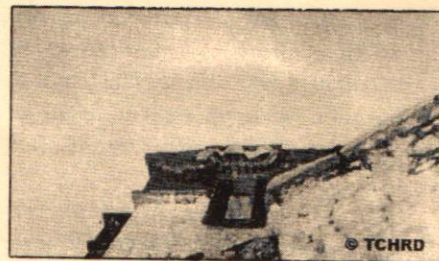
According to sources inside Tibet, a large contingent of People's Armed Police (PAP) and PSB officers were present at the major roads particularly at the famous Barkhor Street in Lhasa. Additional surveillance cameras were installed around the city to identify the people attending the Sangsol (incense burning prayer) and to monitor whether any ethnic Tibetan government employees are participating in the prayer as they are banned from participating in religious activities.

In a similar incident, a monk and four laypersons were arrested while celebrating the US Congressional Award to the Dalai Lama in Amdo Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in Sangchu County, Kanlho "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"), Gansu Province. The five persons were arrested following offering of Sangsol Prayer and bursting firecrackers in celebration of the award to the Dalai Lama. There were also reports of two Tibetans having been arrested from Othok Village, Lithang County, Kardze "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") on 17 October following hoisting prayer flags and for offering Sangsol prayer for the Dalai Lama, who received the US highest civilian award. Although the Centre could not ascertain their identities, however, we will continue to monitor the situation inside Tibet and conditions of those arrested by the Chinese authorities.

The centre has reported a severe imposition of restriction and heightened vigilance prior to the award ceremony. Despite the restriction and vigilance, Tibetan people across the three traditional Tibetan provinces risked arrest and detention by celebrating the day with prayer and festivities. Although it was reported that there has been little space for celebration in remote Tibetans areas, however, it was not the case in bigger towns and cities where severe restrictions and bans were imposed by the local authorities to prevent celebration.

These heightened measures and restrictions have resulted in violation of fundamental human rights of Tibetans in Tibet by arbitrarily arresting them for offering prayers

and celebration in honor of their spiritual leader-the Dalai Lama. TCHRD expresses its serious concern on the whereabouts and the condition of those arrested and condemns in strongest terms for violating the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights guaranteed in the Chinese constitution and major international human rights covenants and treaties which she is party to. ■



Rainbow arches over Drepung Monastery on the day when Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the Dalai Lama.



On 16 October 2007, Tibetans gear towards repainting exterior of hall with whitewash which was the residence of the Dalai Lamas as a display of joy when US Congress confer it's highest civilian honor to the Dalai Lama.



A group of policemen stationed on the hill above Drepung Monastery to keep watch of monks sneaking away to Lhasa city.



Chinese army troop on standby inside the compound of Drepung Monastery to rapidly quell any show of defiance to government orders.



Chinese policemen keeping guard at the western terrace of the Drepung Monastery on 17 October 2007.



A huge contingent of Chinese troop stationed at Drepung Monastery for rapid action.



Monks walking by under close watch by the armymen.



Policemen guarding west lingkor path of Drepung Monastery.

Mining and construction of a highway road in Gansu Province

Lobsang Tendhar, 27, a monk from Tawoer Village Karma Township, Dzogen County, Ngaba Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), gave TCHRD the following testimony about a construction of Highway between Sichuan Province to Chendu.

The construction of a broad highway with estimate length of more than thousand kilometers has been going on for last ten years under the supervision of the Chinese military. The highway can handle four vehicles simultaneously and said to be made of a high quality material. The highway links the two major cities of Lanzhou in north eastern part of Amdo and the Chinese city of Chengdu. The highway currently runs through Gansu province, Dzogey County and ends at Chengdu city.

The Chinese government has spent billions of dollars on the highway project and the construction is due to complete by the end of 2007. Although the construction of the highway project was carried out in the name of bringing development in Tibet, however, on a more sinister note, the construction of the highway is to serve the strategic interest of China in mobilizing, transporting of military hardware, equipments into Tibetan region and dumping hazardous nuclear wastes in Tibet.

The construction of the highway brought significant damages to the livelihood of the Tibetan farmers and nomads as the highway falls on the traditional grazing areas. The Chinese government has issued a compensation of 50, 000 yuans but the Tibetan farmers and nomads received only a paltry sum of 10, 000 yuans due to corruption and extortion by the local authorities.

The part of the highway is to cut a two kilometers long tunnel through the mountain. Incidentally, for Tibetans the tunnel cuts through a holy mountain named by Tibetans as 'Lago' [Tib: holy site]. In wake of the construction, the local Tibetans submitted writ petitions to local authorities not to construct a tunnel across the holy mountain repeatedly. However, the local authorities turned deaf ear to the plea of the local Tibetans by outrageously stating that the mountain site belonged to the People's Republic of China and not to the local

Tibetans in a sheer act of bully and officialdom.

During the construction of the tunnel, the local authorities stationed military force around the mountain and barred Tibetans from going near the mountain site where they were constructing the tunnel. Later, it was known that the construction of the tunnel was just a pretext, a cover to fool and deceive local Tibetans about the mining activities going inside the mountain. The mountain actually contained a rich deposit of many natural resources which Chinese wanted to explore.

Lobsang Tendhar says, the Chinese government has been rather insensitive to the local Tibetans sentiment and their way of lifestyle. For instance, the present highway is constructed in a close proximity to the Khangsar Monastery. In summer the local Tibetans from regions such as Tawor, Hai, Ngawor, Hor, Gharkor celebrated summer picnics and horse racing festivals on an open grassland pasture near the Khangsar Monastery. The monastery is also a major centre of attraction for Tibetans for religious festivities and rituals. Therefore the construction of the highway is a big risk for pedestrians and festive goers during the major celebrations.

At the moment, the local Tibetans were barred from hiking on the mountain site stating it is a risk for them if in case landslides and other natural calamities strike. In reality, the hectic mining and resource extraction activities has been taking place in the mountain core that the authorities don't want the local Tibetans to notice their activities.

This is a typical case of how Chinese authorities deny and violate the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and their day-to-day traditions. In the final analysis, the highway construction does not bring any benefit for the local Tibetans who are supposed to be beneficiaries of China developmental projects in Tibet. The highway only benefits the China's long term design over Tibet and their hunger for Tibet's rich resources to fuel the massive economy. ■

Unemployment woes for young educated Tibetans

Sonam Choetso a 22-year old student from Padur village, Maro Township, Nyachuka County Kardze Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) recently testified to TCHRD about the unemployment woes faced by the young Tibetan graduates in Tibet.

Sonam Choetso hailed from a humble peasant family. Her ambition to pursue higher studies was thwarted when faced with financial constraints at home. She could have continued her studies if she was able to afford high tuition fee. Eventually she settled down to find a job but jobs were hard to come by.

She remained unemployed for a while and thereafter she joined Tibetan Medical Institute after her graduation. She took up Tibetan Medicine as Major subject and studied Mandarin and English languages for five years at Sichuan Tibetan Language School in Dhartsedo County, Kardze Prefecture Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP).

Normally the students pay around 2400 yuans for mid term tuition fee. In a year students have to pay around 4,800 yuans for an entire one academic year excluding accommodation and mess expenses. Sonam Choetso says, "I had to economize my shoe string budget, spending a meager 120 yuan every month to meet my basic needs."

The Chinese government claims that they are providing free primary and middle school education to citizens under the 'Nine Years Compulsory Education'. However, in contrary to their claims, the Tibetan students are imposed with hefty tuition fees when they go for higher studies. The Tibetan students who came from semi-nomad families are the ones most affected by the exorbitant tuition fees imposition.

The Tibetan parents in order to afford such exorbitant tuition fees goes to collect Yartsa Gunbu fungus [Botanical name: cordyceps Sinensis] In China, the caterpillar fungus is widely used in medicine and fetched lucrative price when sold in markets. Those parents who have more than two children sell their animal livestock and properties to send their children to school.

Ironically, the future prospects of education and finding decent jobs are grim

in today's Tibet due to the discriminatory practices against the Tibetans. Those Tibetan students who have a good command over Mandarin language can only find a job. In the case of Sonam Choetso, she didn't find a job after she completed her Tibetan Medical School because her Mandarin wasn't good enough.

One of popular avenues of finding a good career prospect is getting through the government civil service examination. However, Tibetan students with their educational background in Tibetan studies are not preferred by the Chinese authorities when it comes to new recruitment. The examination structure is such that only 10 marks are allotted for Tibetan studies and other 90 marks allotted for non-Tibetan studies such as Mandarin language and other subjects. So Sonam Choetso and many of her Tibetan peers face difficulties challenges in getting decent jobs and enjoying prosperity under China's 'harmonious society' campaign.

After failing to find a job, she went on to practice her medical knowledge in remote Tibetan areas selling Tibetan and Chinese medicines. She provided medical services to remote areas where there were no hospitals and doctors.

In 2007, she finally made her decision to leave Tibet and come into exile to find educational opportunities which is not possible in Tibet. She currently lives in exile India. ■

New Restrictions for Tibetan civil servants in Tibet

Phentri Kyi, 31 from Phelshar Township, Dado County Golog Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) testified to TCHRD about the new restrictions placed on Tibetan civil servants to display their loyalty to the Communist Party and to display atheism to the state.

Phentri kyi says, "it was hopeless to find a job for me had it not been my relative's timely help to paid a huge bribe to the Chinese

officials. If one were to follow the normal procedure, it would take years to get a job. I worked in government store for seven years and during which there were no increments in my salary and beside the Chinese staff in our shop were paid higher. If we Tibetans complained about the discriminatory treatments, only we would land in a trouble and possibly being sacked from the job.

Phentri Kyi further explains to TCHD that "The Tibetan students from Golog protested in front of government office about the lack of employment opportunities and high unemployment rate amongst the educated Tibetan graduates. They had also written petitions to the County officials but were responded by crackdown and force."

She says, "Today the majority of the government civil servants are Chinese hailed from various parts of China. They are paid higher and with on going influx of Chinese migrants and skill workers, more and more Tibetans are left unemployed and lose their jobs."

In recent times, "the Tibetan civil servants and staff government offices are not allowed to apply for visa to India. They are especially barred from seeking an audience with the Dalai Lama. It is considered a serious crime and the concerned person will be dealt with serious consequences."

She continued, "One day in June 2007, two Chinese police came to my office and interviewed me about my son. I refused to disclose the fact on several occasions. I was intimidated and harassed by the police officials about the whereabouts of my son who is a reincarnated Lama, Tulku studying in one of the monastery in India. Eventually, I left Tibet and fled to India. I procured a visa pass to India by bribing an official paying him a ransom of 3,000 yuans. Normally the standard visa fee is only two hundred and fifty yuans. In recent times, there is more restriction placed on Tibetan civil servants to procure a visa to travel outside." ■



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TCHRD presents talk to legal students

On October 15 2007, the Students for the Promotion of International Law Organization convened a workshop at Gangkyi staff mess, Dharamsala for a symposium on a topic, "Refugees and International law". To argue Centre's legalist perspective on human rights violations taking place in Tibet, Mr. Tenzin Norgay, Centre's UN Affairs Personnel gave a legalist presentation on International declarations such as covenants, UDHR and other legal stipulations during the gathering of the students for the promotion of international law. ■

TCHRD distributes publication

On 28 October 2007, Himalaya Parivar organized a Tibet awareness activity for Indian students studying in various colleges in Shimla in a form of displaying literatures, books and reports on Tibetan polity, culture and human rights situation inside Tibet. Seizing the occasion, Centre's staff Ms Phurbu Dolma was specially dispatched for displaying and distributing Centre's publications for the occasion. ■

TCHRD meets the vice President of EU Parliament

On 5 November 2007, Mr. Chukora Tsering Agloe, researcher and Mr. Yardrong Lobsang Tsultrim, field officer at the Centre briefed the Vice President of European Parliament and his staff about the current status of human rights and the Tibetan freedom movements in exile during EU Vice President's rendezvous with Tibetan NGOs based in Dharamsala at Chonor Guest House. ■

TCHRD participates Active Non-Violence Workshop

On 9 November 2007, Mr. Yardrong Lobsang Tsultrim, Centre's field officer participated in a workshop given by Active Non-Violence Organization at Gangkyi staff mess, Dharamsala on an invitation sent by the active non-violent organization. The workshop was to reiterated the principles and ideologies of Mahatma Gandhi and the Dalai Lama in the context of accepting the global realism and to also to affirm that the active non-violent approach can be the most suitable strategy to engage China and to resolve Tibet issue in the context of global geopolitical scenario. The workshop attendees discussed various aspect of the non-violent freedom struggle of the Tibetan people. ■

TCHRD briefs international students

On 15 November 2007, Mr. Chukora Tsering Agloe, researcher and Mr. Yardrong Lobsang Tsultrim, field officer gave a briefing talk to 15 international college students from USA, Australia and Canada on current Human Rights Situation in Tibet at Peace café, Mcleod Ganj. The talk was followed by lively interaction and discussion. ■

Jampa Monlam addresses Sherab Gatsel Lobling School

On 30 November 2007, Mr. Jampa Monlam, the Assistant Director of the Centre



was invited to deliver three hours address to some more than seven hundred students of Sherab Ghatsal Lobling School, formerly known as Tibetan Transit School. Mr. Jampa gave a talk covering a wide range of topics from human rights, development, violations and some of the pressing issues faces by Tibetan people inside Tibet. He later answered over hundred questions posed by the students in an atmosphere of heated exchange of opinions and discussions with the students about the current political and human rights situation inside Tibet. ■

Training Program

In view of Centre's emphasis on staff empowerment and enhancing professional capability, Centre's accountant, Ms Phurbu Dolma attended a training stint in advance accounting (Account-9) in south extension New Delhi from 3 November to 29 November 2007. ■

TCHRD attends seminar to commemorate the 50 years in exile

On 30 November 2007, Mr. Yardrong Lobsang Tsultrim, Centre's field officer participated in a seminar cum discussion about how to commemorate the 50 years in exile by chalking out plans and activities to remember the fall of Tibet to China in 1959. The actual commemoration of the fall of Tibet will be remembered with sequences of activities and programs scheduled to take place from 10 March 2009 to 10 March 2010. In preparation to the commemoration, the attendees of seminar cum discussion sat down to chalk out activities and programs to mark the sad occasion of Tibet's history.

The seminar cum discussion on 30 November 2007, was first of many of meetings and discussions that will be held subsequently from there onwards. The Tibetan government in exile has set up a committee to head and carry out the commemoration of the fall of Tibet in 1959. The next meeting is to take place in few months time. ■

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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Please e-mail us at dsala@tchrd.org or write to us on our postal address for further information.



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VOLUME I ISSUE 4

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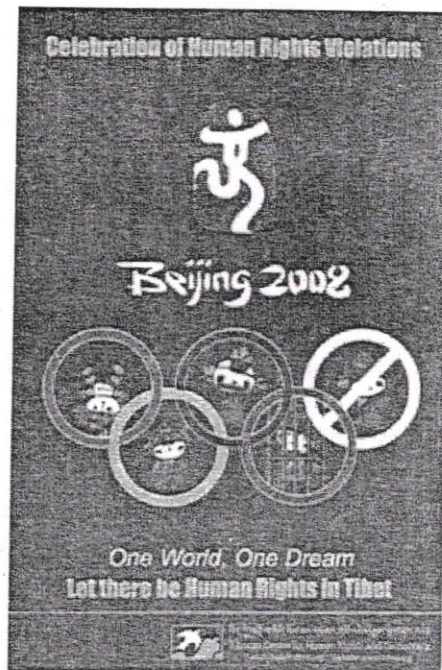
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TCHRD press statement on Human Rights Day

On the occasion of the 59th International Human Rights Day, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) salutes those around the world who struggle to defend, protect and promote the fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity, and the equal and inalienable rights that are the birthright of all members of the human family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was passed by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 and was proclaimed as the 'common standard of achievement for all people and nations' in respect of human rights. Despite taking years to formulate and decades of existence, the struggle to ensure just entitlement of the thirty rights and freedoms enshrined in the UDHR requires our attention today and everyday.

On 10 December, Tibetans commemorate not only International Human Rights Day, but also the conferment in 1989 of the Noble Peace Prize on the Dalai Lama for His continued struggle for peace and human rights through non-violence. TCHRD re-



dedicates itself to the objectives of the UDHR, the values it enshrines and to its ongoing efforts to promote and defend human rights of the Tibetan people in Tibet.
Continued on next page

Two political prisoners come into exile



Jampa Tashi and Lobsang Palden

Two political prisoners, Jampa Tashi and Lobsang Palden, who spent 12 years in Chinese prisons, came into exile on 23 December 2007. They were released on 29 March 2006 from Pawo Tramo Prison in Nyingtri County, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR").

Upon their arrival at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal in December 2007, they testified to TCHRD about their prison days.

On 29 March 1994, the Public Security Bureau officers arrested Jampa Tashi, Lobsang Palden, Chime Dorjee, Lobsang Tsegyal and Pema Tsering on charges of removing boards from the Chinese government offices and for pasting pro-independence leaflets and pamphlets in front of the Chinese government offices. The pamphlets called for freedom in Tibet.

While they were shouting slogans such as "free Tibet", the Chinese security personnel arrived at the spot and took them to Public Security
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In the past eleven months, the human rights and freedom of Tibetans in Tibet have witnessed an unprecedented beating at the hands of the Chinese authorities. It is highly regrettable and condemnable that the People's Republic of China (PRC), despite being a permanent member of the United Nations and a state party to UN treaties on human rights, fails to respect and uphold the basic principles set forth in the UDHR and that the most blatant forms of violations are regularly occurring in the region with impunity. Chinese authorities continue to practice a systematic denial of human rights to the Tibetan people.

TCHRD received information on scores of new known cases of arrests of Tibetans suspected of political activities;

Hence during the past eleven months of 2007, TCHRD has documented, among others, the following known events:

-On 1 January 2007, new "Measures for the 'Regulation on Religious Affairs'" with 56 articles, issued by the 11th Standing Committee of the "TAR" People's Government came to be enforced. This new regulation, instead of providing protection for religious affairs, aimed at enforcing compliance with governmental regulations and policies on religious organizations, religious personnel and religious citizens, places of worship and activities.

-Tibetan Communist Party members, civil servants and even the ordinary people in Lhasa were banned from visiting temples for a week corresponding to the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference being held in Beijing in March. Party members and civil servants were issued stark warnings of facing expulsion and dismissal, if they prayed at Buddhist temples in the Capital.

-China intensified prohibition of religious activities in Tibet with severe restrictions and curbs during the holy month of Saka Dawa, which began on 17 May 2007. The China State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) office's issuance of the 14-article; "Management measures for the

reincarnation of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism," which came into effect as of 1 September this year, clearly demonstrates the Chinese Communist Party's adamant attempt to undermine and tarnish the centuries-old Tibetan tradition of religious practice. The new measures described by the official press as 'an important move to institutionalize the management of reincarnation,' are deliberately targeted at one of the core belief systems of Tibetan Buddhism and set out 'approval procedures' for new living Buddhas. It also underscores the Communist Party's agenda to undermine and supplant the Tibetan religious hierarchy and weaken the authority of legitimate Tibetan religious leaders including the Dalai Lama;

-China intensified restrictions in Trulku Tenzin Delek's Kham Nalanda Thekchen Jangchub Choeling Monastery with the arrest of two elderly women Odho and Apha Bomo, both in their late 50's and residents of Othok Village, Nyagchuka County, Kardze "TAP" Sichuan Province, on 19 July 2007 by the Nyagchuka County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials. The women were alleged to have committed the 'crime' of instigating people to join their call for Trulku Tenzin Delek's release. They were later released on 27 August after the authorities called the head of the Othok village to stand as guarantor for their release;

-On 1 August 2007, Ronggye A'drak was arrested for staging a public protest during the annual Lithang horse race festival. In the aftermath of Ronggye A'drak's arrest, severe restrictions were imposed in Lithang and surrounding areas for fear of a massive popular uprising by his supporters. The authorities sent additional contingents of People's Armed Police (PAP) forces as reinforcements to monitor and restrict the activities of his supporters. Later on 21 August, three nephews of A'drak-Adruk Lopoe, Adruk Nyima and Adruk Gyatso were arbitrarily arrested. Although Nyima and Gyatso were released after six hours, A'druk Lopoe's whereabouts remained unknown until his court trial;

-On 19 August 2007, Lothok, a 36-year old Tibetan nomad and a father of five children from Drakar Latse Village, Lithang County was arbitrarily detained from a guesthouse in Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan Province;

-A near complete gold and copper plated colossal statue of Guru Rinpoche in Samye Monastery, in Dranang County, Lokha Prefecture, "TAP" was demolished by Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) during the Buddhist holy month of Saka Dawa in mid May this year; and another statue of Guru Rinpoche was also demolished in the first week of October in Ngari Darchen, Purang County, Ngari Prefecture, "TAR". In a similar incident on 14 August 2007, a statue of Guru Rinpoche under construction at Rongpatsa Village, Kardze County, Kardze "TAP" was suspended following the local authorities' issuance of an order prohibiting construction of the statue;

-Since the first week of September 2007, the Chinese authorities have commenced an intense "Patriotic Education" Campaign in Lithang and the surrounding counties. On 2 September, Adruk Kalgyam, a Tibetan nomad from Yuru Kharshul Village, was arrested for challenging the Chinese authorities during the campaign. In a similar case on 3 October 2007, Jamyang Tenzin, a monk of Yuru Geydenling Monastery in Lithang County was arrested for his open opposition to the authorities during the 'Patriotic Education' Campaign. The fate of these two still remains unknown;

-On around 7 September, police detained some 40 students alleged to have written slogans calling for the return of the Dalai Lama and a free Tibet the previous day on the walls of the village police station and on other buildings in the village. Within 48 hours, all but seven of the students were released from police custody. The seven students, all from nomadic families, are students of Amchok Bora Village Secondary School, in Labrang County (Ch: Xiahe xian), Gannan/Kanlho "TAP" in Gansu Province. Four schoolboys from the group of seven detained are still in custody after being tortured for the alleged offence of scribbling graffiti. The use of torture is still an endemic and prevalent practice in Tibet despite China's signature and ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture. The prohibition on torture is well established under international law. It is unambiguous and absolute. It is binding on all States in all territories under their jurisdiction or effective control. It applies in all circumstances and times. Nor is torture permissible when it is

called something else: cruel and inhuman treatment is unacceptable and illegal, irrespective of the name it is given;

-Heightened vigilance and strict measures prior to and after the conferment of the highest civilian award by the US on the Dalai Lama on 17 October 2007 have resulted in China's violation of fundamental human rights of Tibetans in Tibet. The Chinese authorities utilized various precautionary measures including heightened vigilance, closer supervision of suspected individuals and former political prisoners, even resorting to arbitrary arrests and detention. In particular, the atmosphere at Drepung Monastery remains tense, with monks under continued heightened surveillance. A massive contingent of PAP forces was deployed around the monastery, restricting people's right to freedom of movement. A monk and four laypersons were arrested in Amdo Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in Sangchu County, Kanlho "TAP", Gansu Province following offering of Sangsol Prayer and bursting firecrackers in celebration of the award to the Dalai Lama. There were also reports of two Tibetans having been arrested from Othok Village, Lithang County, Kardze "TAP" on 17 October following hoisting prayer flags and offering Sangsol prayer in honor of the Dalai Lama's receiving the US' highest civilian award;

-Another shooting incident on fleeing Tibetan refugees at Nangpa Pass on 18 October this year left nine missing and three arrested from the initial group of 46 Tibetans;

-On 20 November, Kardze Intermediate People's Court sentenced Ronggye A'drak to eight years of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for four years on charges of "inciting to split the country to undermine the country's unity," and "severely disrupting the public order". Whereas Adruk Lopoe, a nephew of Ronggye A'drak received the heaviest sentence of ten years' imprisonment on charges of "colluding with foreign separatist forces to split the country and distributing political pamphlets." Kunkhen ("Jacmyang Goinqen"), an artist who was arbitrarily arrested on 22 August by the Lithang County PSB officials for unknown reason, was sentenced to nine years of imprisonment on charges of "carrying out

splitist activities," and Lothok was given three years imprisonment by the same court.

-Over 130 Tibetans still remain detained in various prisons in Tibet for exercising their freedom of expression. The Panchen Rinpoche, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and many more senior religious leaders' whereabouts still remain unknown.

The case of Ronggye A'drak and three others from Lithang County and the lengthy prison terms given by Kardze Intermediate People's Court under vaguely defined charges of 'endangering state security', clearly epitomize the magnitude of repression and the price Tibetans inside Tibet are paying for the peaceful exercise of rights enshrined in the Chinese constitution and other fundamental human rights, which are protected by international covenants to which China is a party.

On this important occasion, TCHRD expresses its concerns over China's increasing use of vague terms such as "endangering state security", "disrupting social order" and "public order crimes", etc., as a part of Chinese law, to arrest and imprison Tibetans. TCHRD urges the Chinese leadership to put an immediate end to the practice of torture in Tibet and to the conduct of "patriotic education" campaigns in the monastic institutions of Tibet. The Centre urges China to respect the provisions in the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), to both of which it is a state party. China should honor its commitments to and ratify the optional protocol to the CAT and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Centre also calls upon the Chinese government to respect and comply with international standards of human rights practices and its constitutional guarantees.

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, TCHRD has released a poster and sticker entitled "Celebration of Human Rights Violations, Beijing 2008- One World, One Dream, and Let There Be Human Rights in Tibet." It depicts various human rights violations - viz. torture, curtailment of freedom of expression, arbitrary arrests and detentions, lengthy prison terms, and repression of religious freedom - taking place inside Tibet by using the symbolic Olympic mascots inside the five Olympic rings. The

overall human rights situation in Tibet and China remains grim despite international scrutiny of China's human rights policies and practices before the 2008 Beijing summer Olympics. The international community should remind itself that behind all the glitz and glamour of the biggest international sporting event next summer, there are people inside China and Tibet who are harassed and imprisoned everyday for exercising their fundamental human rights enshrined in the UDHR and in China's very own Constitution.

Two political...

Continued from page 1

Bureau office (PSB). While they were in PSB office, they were put in separate rooms for three days. During the interrogation, they were beaten, tortured with various torture weapons to force them to confess the name of their leader.

After three days of interrogation and torture, the Chinese security personnel failed to extract confession about who plotted the protest. They were later transferred to another prison Pawo Tramo Prison in Nyingtri County, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). In Pawo Tramo Prison they were subjected to most inhumane ways of torture, beatings and maltreatment. The interrogation and torture lasted for three months. After that they were again transferred to another prison in Parshul County, Chamdo Prefecture for two months and 15 days. It was during that time; Tsultrim Lobsang, Pema Choephel and Tashi Palden from Parshul County Chamdo prefecture were arrested on alleged charges of shouting "free Tibet" slogans and demanding the release of five other monks.

In April 1994, the People's High Court convicted Jampa Tashi and Lobsang Palden of "counter-revolutionary crimes" and sentenced them to 12 years of rigorous imprisonment. In addition, they were deprived of political rights for four years. Chime Dorjee, Lobsang Tsegyal and Pema Tsering were also charged with the same crime and sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment and deprivation of political rights for five years.

On 22 November 1994 Jampa Tashi and Lobsang Palden were imprisoned in Pawo

Tramo prison, Nyingtri County. Tsultrim Lobsang, Pema Choephel and Tashi Palden were imprisoned in Drapchi, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR").

In prison, the prisoners worked in fields, vegetable gardens and did cleaning activities such as washing toilets. Every morning the prisoners carried out their morning drill. The prisoners were usually made to do hard labour and conditions in the prison were not up to international legal standards at all.

Political prisoners were usually not given enough visitation rights while non-political prisoners had far better visitation rights, as they could spend more time with their visitors at prison.

On 29 March 2006, Jampa Tashi and Lobsang Palden were released from Tramo prison after completing 12 years of prison term each. During his release, his relatives were made to express verbal assurances that he won't be involved in any political activities in future. They were also barred from re-entering the monastery and from performing religious rituals and prayers in homes of Tibetan families.

As it has been the case with many political prisoners who have been released, the Chinese security personnel kept them under constant vigilance. They were categorized as third classes and also not allowed to work in higher offices by the Chinese local authorities. Having no hope in Tibet, they finally decided to escape to India and reached Dharamsala on 23 December 2007.

EP's China resolution on human rights in Tibet

The European Parliament passed a resolution criticizing China for its poor human rights records in Tibet. The EU Parliament also urged the European Commission to take a stronger stance on China.

The resolution regrets China's poor response to the Dalai Lama dialogue initiatives to solve Tibet's status peacefully with China. It said, "The sixth Sino-Tibetan round of talks has brought about no results; calls on the parties to make every effort in order to continue the dialogue and calls upon the Chinese

government to engage in substantive negotiations taking into due consideration the demands of the Dalai Lama for autonomy for Tibet; calls on China to refrain from exerting pressure on states that have friendly relations with the Dalai Lama".

EP's resolution accused China of violating the fundamental human rights of Tibetan people in areas of torture, the intensification of the 'patriotic education' campaign in Tibet's religious institutions, forcing Tibetans to denounce the Dalai Lama as a "separatist". The EU also demanded China to allow an independent body to meet Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet as demanded by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Resolution passed by the European Parliament:

A. whereas since the set up of the EU-China Summit mechanism in 1998, China-EU relations have strongly developed politically and economically,

B. whereas any decision to initiate a human rights dialogue is taken on the basis of certain criteria adopted by the Council, which notably take into consideration the major concerns on the part of the EU about the human rights situation on the ground in the country concerned, a genuine commitment on the part of the authorities of the country concerned, with regard to such dialogue, to improving the human rights situation on the ground, and the positive impact which a human rights dialogue may have on the human rights situation,

C. whereas the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games should constitute an ideal opportunity for focusing the world attention on the human rights situation in China,

D. whereas the EU is based upon and defined by its adherence to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law; recalling, at the same time, that the EU considers that adherence to these principles constitutes the prerequisite for peace and stability in any society,

E. whereas the EU-China strategic partnership is of great importance for the relations between the EU and China and whereas a genuine partnership must be based on shared common values;

F. whereas the strengthening and deepening of EU-China relations could help to develop convergent views for actions to tackle global challenges such as climate change, security, terrorism and non-proliferation of arms,

G. whereas there are continuous disturbing reports of political repression, particularly of journalists, human rights activists and members of religious and ethnic minorities, allegations of torture, widespread use of forced labour, frequent use of the death penalty and systematic repression of freedom of religion, speech and the media including the Internet, and the strict controls exercised by the Chinese Government over information about and access to the Tibetan areas of China; whereas it is therefore difficult to determine accurately the scope of human rights abuses,

H. whereas China's engagement and influence in the world have increased considerably over the last decade, and considering that credibility, democratic values and responsibility should constitute the fundamental basis of the relationship between the EU and China,

EU-China human rights dialogue⁹. Regrets that China's human rights record remains a matter of serious concern; emphasises, therefore, the need to considerably strengthen and improve the EU-China human rights dialogue; calls on the Council to provide a more detailed briefing to the Parliament; considers it relevant to continue to organise the EU-China legal seminar on human rights, which used to precede the dialogue, with the participation of academic and civil society representatives, and in this regard welcomes the establishment of an EU-China Human Rights Academic Network under Objective 3 of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (IDHR) and calls on the Commission to ensure that this network will effectively function in cooperation with Parliament;

10. Considers that the matters discussed in the successive rounds of dialogue with China, such as ratification of the ICCPR, reform of the criminal justice system, including the death penalty and the system of re-education through work, freedom of expression, particularly on the Internet, freedom of the press, freedom of access to information, freedom of conscience, thought and religion, the situation of minorities in Tibet, the release of detainees following the events in Tiananmen Square, and workers' and other rights, must continue to be raised in the context of the dialogue, in particular with regard to the application of the recommendations

resulting from previous dialogues mutually agreed upon by both parties and seminars on legal affairs; to this end, calls on the Council to consider extending the time period of the dialogue and to allow more time for discussion of the issues raised; calls, furthermore, on the Council and Commission to pay special attention to compliance with the International Labour Organisation's conventions with regard, in particular, to independent trade unions and child labour;

11. Notes China's commitment to support the UN Human Rights Council in performing its function of addressing human rights issues in a credible, objective and non-selective manner, and calls for a strengthened cooperation in the UN system as well as to cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms and the international human rights standards provided for in the relevant international human rights instruments, including the rights of minorities;

12. Draws attention to the need for China to allow the free expression and practice of religion and thought; affirms the need, particularly in the light of the discussions among Chinese officials about the definition of 'religion' and especially 'legal religion', for a comprehensive law on religion meeting international standards and guaranteeing genuine religious freedom; deplores the contradiction between the constitutional freedom of belief (enshrined in Article 36 of the Chinese Constitution) and the ongoing interference of the state in the affairs of religious communities, in particular as regards the training, selection, appointment and political indoctrination of ministers of religion;

13. Regrets that the sixth Sino-Tibetan round of talks has brought about no results; calls on the parties to make every effort in order to continue the dialogue and calls upon the Chinese government to engage in substantive negotiations taking into due consideration the demands of the Dalai Lama for autonomy for Tibet; calls on China to refrain from exerting pressure on states that have friendly relations with the Dalai Lama;

14. Reiterates its concern over the reports of continuing human rights violations in Tibet and in the other provinces inhabited by Tibetan people, including torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, repression of religious freedom, arbitrary restrictions on free movement, and rehabilitation through labour camps; deplores the intensification of the so-called 'patriotic education' campaign since October 2005 in

Tibet's monasteries and nunneries, forcing Tibetans to sign declarations denouncing the Dalai Lama as a dangerous separatist; calls upon China to allow an independent body to have access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Panchen Lama of Tibet, and his parents, as requested by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child;

15. Calls on China, as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, to implement the recommendations of the UN special rapporteur on torture and to issue a standing invitation to China to UN experts; is of the opinion that human rights concerns should receive much more focus in the buildup to the Beijing Olympic Games; and reiterates "respect for universal fundamental ethical principles" and the promotion of a peaceful society concerned "with the preservation of human dignity" as enshrined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Olympic Charter;

17. Requests the International Olympic Committee to publish its own assessment of China's compliance with the undertakings given in 2001 before the Games were awarded to Beijing; stresses the responsibility of the EU to take note of such an assessment and to work with its Olympic Network to create a basis for responsible behaviour in preparation for, during and after the Olympics;

18. Is strongly concerned by the recent increase of political persecutions related to the Olympics of human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, petitioners, civil society activists, ethnic groups such as the Uighurs, religious of all beliefs, especially Falun Gong practitioners; calls on the Chinese authorities to release these people immediately and to put an end to these human rights violations, as well as to the demolition of substantial numbers of houses without compensation to make way for the Olympic infrastructures;

19. Calls on China to make concrete steps to grant freedom of expression, and to respect freedom of the press, both for Chinese and foreign journalists, raises particular concerns about the lack of implementation of the new regulation on international journalists active in China, and urges the Chinese authorities to immediately stop censoring and blocking - especially with the help of multinational companies - thousands of news and information websites based abroad, calls for the release of all journalists, Internet users and

cyber dissidents detained in China for exercising their right to information; reiterates its call on the Chinese authorities to establish a moratorium on executions during the Olympic Games in 2008, and to withdraw the ban list of 42 categories of people;

20. Draws attention to the conclusions of the 17th Chinese Communist Party National Congress, held in mid-October 2007, at which different perspectives and openness arose towards the implementation of higher international human rights benchmarks in China.

China detain monks from Phelka Monastery

China detained six monks from Phelka Monastery, Driru County, "Tibetan Autonomous Region" ("TAR") according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). The detention of monks came in the wake of "patriotic education" campaign conducted in Phelka Monastery by the Chinese authorities. On 20 November 2007, the monks were forcibly made to sign documents denouncing the Dalai Lama as "splittist" but they refused to sign the papers.

In addition to the detention of six monks, two other monks Nani and Tenphel were also detained after they refused to pay a fine of 10,000 yuan to the Chinese government. There was no further information about the monks.

The Chinese government has intensified the restrictions on religious institutions long described as a bastion of Tibetan nationalism. The daily activities of monks inside the monastery were kept under a close scrutiny. According to a reliable report, monks of Phelka Monastery were asked to vacate the monastery premises. The monastery used to house around two hundred monks but in the aftermath of the recent clamp down by the Chinese government, the monks have returned to their respective homes leaving the monastery abandoned and deserted.

Official lies create tension in Nyagchu County

Ngawang Dakpa, a monk from Miyak testified to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) about displacement of over 900 families in Shete village, Watuchoe Township, Nyagchu County, (Kham Miyak), "TAP", Sichuan Province.

The Chinese government ordered the construction of a hydroelectric power station in Watuchoe Township, Nyagchu County, Kham Miyak which had been inhabited by Tibetans for many centuries. The local Tibetan communities were rife with rumours about China's government setting up a mining camp.

The Tibetans were facing a serious crisis in the area. The local Chinese authorities told the Tibetans, "Your possessions were only houses, give us a rough estimate of how much the house cost. In accordance with that we would compensate. Apart from that you can't claim anything else, as the land belongs to the State".

Afterwards, the local authorities ordered the affected Tibetans to sign an agreement that they would be evicted from the area for which they must sign an agreement paper. However, the local Tibetans refused to do so. Incidentally, a well respected local Lama in Miyak, Choekyi Gyaltzen Rinpoche, advised local Tibetans to petition the case to the central government in Beijing. He told them that there was no reason for them to sign the compensation agreement and also that they had inhabited the place for so many centuries, had a land to till on and house to stay. Therefore, there was no need of any hurry from the part of local Tibetans to go ahead and sign the compensation agreement. As a result, the local Tibetans have not signed the compensation agreement to date.

In 2006, it was known that the Chinese mining companies had already started mining activities in a few mountains in and around Watuchoe Township. In response, around 30 local Tibetans approached the Chinese miners and requested them not to mine at their ancestral dwelling place. Having their request turned down by the Chinese miners, the angry local Tibetans stoned the Chinese miners.

This year, around 60 local Tibetans fought with the Chinese miners and as a result the Chinese local authorities imposed curfew on the angry

local Tibetans. The Nyagchu local Tibetans were not even allowed to go out to buy essential commodities from other places. As a result, around 30 enraged and furious local Tibetans confronted the miners and this resulted in another fight.

Later, in order to bring the situation under control one of the Chinese local authorities visited the area and told the angered Tibetans not to fight with the Chinese miners. He promised that he would take responsibility for not taking any further action if the local Tibetans stop fighting with the mining workers. Later the angry Tibetans withdrew to their homes and moments later the local Chinese authorities sent several hundred people's armed police for a crackdown on the Tibetans. During the crackdown, many Tibetans were injured, some seriously.

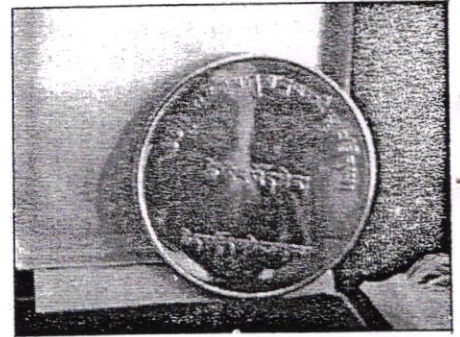
Ngawang Dakpa further testified that the Chinese police hit with iron bars four Tibetans who had their hands broken. One of the Tibetans was hit at the hip, critically crippling him. A few other Tibetans received serious head injurious and wounds caused by blunt objects used by Chinese police personnel."

During the incident, Tibetans gathered together and lodged a complaint with the County security personnel through telephone. Unfortunately the County security personnel instead of responding positively to Tibetans' complaints again beat them seriously.

Strangely, a Tibetan employed in the Chinese security force, expressed his displeasure to the Chinese security personnel accusing them of mistreating the Tibetan protestors with bias and discrimination. Later, the higher senior apparatus of the Chinese security polices accused him of 'verbal excess' and was later sacked him from the job.

In the aftermath of police beatings, the local Tibetans lodged a complaint with the head of County authorities. He too rebuked the local Tibetans and categorically ignored their petition.

In the end, local Tibetans were victims of a double jeopardy, many of them were permanently crippled and the concerned authorities gave no medical compensation to the victims.



The 'Freedom of Speech' medal awarded to Woeser by Association of Tibetan Journalists (ATJ) during its 10th founding anniversary

Tibetan writer awarded Freedom of Speech Medal

India-based Association of Tibetan Journalists (ATJ) awarded a prolific and widely acclaimed Tibetan writer Tsering Woeser in Tibet a 'Freedom of Speech Medal' on 17 December 2007 during its 10th founding anniversary at Gangchen kyishong Dharamsala. The award was given to her for her long-standing defiance of the Chinese government in speaking up as the voice of the Tibetan people about the human rights atrocities committed by the Chinese government in Tibet.

Upon receiving the medal, she described it as a vindication of the enormous international concern on the human rights situation inside Tibet.

Norwegian Authors Union also awarded her "Freedom of Expression Prize" for championing the freedom of expression of Tibetan people inside Tibet. She is today one of the most respected writers writing in Chinese language. Her writings are concerns for their known by its audacity, defiance and issue based.

She rose to international limelight with her highly controversial book "Notes on Tibet" (Ch: *Xizang Bijiji*) a compilation of 38 short stories on Tibetan culture, first published in 2003. The book became a best seller in China for its sensitive depictions of issues faced by Tibetan people in Tibet. The Chinese authorities later banned her book, removed her from her literary association accusing her of committing "political errors" in her work, and stating her opinions in the book "are harmful to the unification and solidarity of the nation."

Some of her works are "Tibet Above" (*Xizang Supreme*), "Notes on Tibet" and "Map of Burgundy Red" (*Xianghongse de Ditu*).



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

The Executive Director briefs TPPRC workshop participants.

On 27 December 2007, Mr. Urgen Tenzin, the Executive Director briefed some of 80 students and 16 teachers from 16 Tibetan Senior Secondary Schools across India and Nepal on the sidelines of the workshop on "Tibetan Democracy in exile and situation of Tibet," organized by the Delhi based Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) at Tibetan Children's Village School, Lower Dharamsala. Mr. Urgen Tenzin gave a slide presentation on the current human rights situation in Tibet to the students. Later he explained to them the democratic principles in the context of the current exile Tibetan democracy. He later fielded many questions from enthusiastic students at the end of his presentation

Two former Political Prisoners shared their ordeal to visiting students

On 19 December 2007, Mr. Dawa Tsering, Centre's field officer, and a former political prisoner, Ms. Rigzin Choekyi were invited by (fill forum) for their workshop on "Tibetan Democracy and Situation of Tibet" to a large group of Tibetan students from various senior Secondary Schools at Lower Tibetan Children's Village School Hall. Mr. Dawa and Ms Rigzin Choekyi, both former political prisoners, shared their personal stories, prison ordeal, life outside prison and situation inside Tibet with the visiting students. After their talk, students raised many pertinent questions which were answered to the satisfaction of the students by both the speakers

TCHRD set up book distribution stall on Human Rights Day

On the occasion of the 59th International Human Rights Day, TCHRD put up a stall for publication distribution, near the venue of the official function, in order to create general awareness on the importance of human rights and their abuse and violation inside Tibet. Various special reports and publications which included the Centre's Annual Reports, monthly Human Rights Updates, news letters in both English and Tibetan were distributed.

The Centre's staff Bugahgah, Palden Tsering, Tenzin Migmar and Yardrong Lobsang Tsultrim were in charge of book distribution.

On the occasion, TCHRD released a poster and a sticker entitled "Celebration of Human Rights Violations, Beijing 2008-one world one dream, let there be human rights in Tibet", depicting various human rights violation-viz torture, curtailment of freedom of expression, arbitrary arrests, detentions, lengthy prison terms, religious persecution taking place inside Tibet by using the symbolic Olympic mascots inside the five Olympic rings.

TCHRD briefs Denver University students

Mr. Tashi Choephel, Researcher, delivered a talk on the over all human rights situation in Tibet accompanied by a power point presentation, to a group of 15 visiting students from Denver University U.S.A on 11 December 2007 at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, DIIR, Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamsala. Mr. Tashi Choephel, highlighted the incidents in Lethang, where a series of peaceful protests, arrests and detentions took place this year. He later fielded questions from the floor. A documentary film "What remains of us" was later screened to the students.

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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 in 1996.

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.

Partial list of TCHRD publications:

•The Next Generation: *The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • 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) • *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) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's flawed economic policy* (2000) • *Destruction of Serthar Insitute : A Special Report* (2002) • *Dispossessed: Land and Housing Rights in Tibet* (2002) • *Strike hard Campaign: China's crackdown on political dissidence* (2004) • *State of education in Tibet: A human rights perspective* (2004) • *Kuxing: Torture in Tibet* (2005) • *Death Penalty in China* (2005) • *International Bill of Human Rights* (2005) • *TCHRD 1996-2006: A Decade of Human Rights Research* • *Railway and China's Development Strategy in Tibet: A Tale of Two Economies* • *Prisoners of Tibet* • *Annual Report : Human Rights Situation in Tibet* (1996 - 2006)

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