



HUMAN RIGHTS *update*  
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# HUMAN RIGHTS

*update*

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## UN High Commissioner highlights progress and challenges upon China visit

Beijing, 2 September 2005 -- A rapidly changing China has great potential in the area of human rights, although concerns remain in a number of areas and daunting challenges lay ahead, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said.

Closing a one-week visit to the country, Louise Arbour saluted progress in the realization of economic and social rights in China, highlighting how economic growth has been instrumental in improvements in life expectancy, reducing child mortality and increasing literacy.

Mrs. Arbour also pointed to China's ratification of five of the seven major international human rights treaties and its cooperation with United Nations human rights mechanisms.

Recalling the agreement, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed with the Government during the visit, Mrs. Arbour said the Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) would work with China to help it remove obstacles to ratification of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The High Commissioner emphasized the relationship between the two sets of rights ie International Covenant on

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## China intensifies control in Lhasa during the 40<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of "TAR"

The authorities of the People's Republic of China (PRC) stepped up a close vigil and control in Lhasa, Tibet' capital city and other parts of Tibet around the 40th founding anniversary of the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). The celebration was marked by repressive crackdowns, increased vigil and preventive measures to ensure smooth and hassle free event and also to propagate an image of a "happy,

modern and prosperous Tibet". These measures have resulted in violation of fundamental human rights of Tibetans in Tibet.

On 28 August 2005, Chinese security officials arrested Sonam Gyalpo, the former political prisoner Sonam Gyalpo from his home in Lhasa. There is no information available about his place of detention. The 43 year-old Sonam Gyalpo hails from his Lhoka region

in Tibet. He was one of the 21 group of monks from Drepung Monastery who participated in peaceful pro-independence demonstration on 27 September 1987. Sonma had spent three years in Gutsa Detention Centre and Drapchi Prison.

The PRC authorities have overriding paranoia about maintaining stability in the region. Hence, in order to avert upheavals by Tibetan people

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Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and ICCPR adding that respect of both was essential in meeting "the growing, and increasingly asserted, aspirations that economic change is generating" among China's people. "These aspirations translate into calls for transparency, fairness and the full extension of the rule of law", she added.

Mrs. Arbour said she had also raised a number of concerns with Chinese officials, citing the need for judicial review of all decisions regarding deprivation of liberty. She also called for an immediate overhaul of the system of administrative detention known as re-education through labour.

The High Commissioner expressed concern at the extensive use of the death penalty, including for offences that do not meet the international standard of "most serious crimes". She welcomed the anticipated resumption of the jurisdiction of the Supreme People's Court in the review of all capital punishment cases. Commenting on the lack of reliable data on the extent of the use of the death penalty, the High Commissioner said "transparency is critical for informed public debate on the issue".

The High Commissioner also raised with authorities individual cases illustrative of some of the changes needed as China prepares "I also urged China to take a proactive leadership role in the advancement of human rights, not only in the Security Council but also more broadly in instances where it might constructively exercise its influence".

Assessing her visit, the High Commissioner said she believed the trip, the signing of the MOU and

previous cooperation endeavours were evidence of the desire of OHCHR and China to continue working together to improve human rights in the country.

This will not always be easy", she said. "In a spirit of cooperation and constructiveness we can sometimes be critical. I leave China encouraged about taking this work forward, energized by the prospect of helping the country face daunting challenges, and guardedly optimistic about the enormous potential for positive change".

## Visit of High Commissioner to China from 29 August – 2 September

During her visit the High Commissioner took part in the "Beijing + 10" commemoration of the World Conference on Women hosted by President Hu Jintao at the Great Hall of the People. On 29 August, she also met with Gu Xiulian, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress.

On 30 August, the High Commissioner opened the thirteenth Annual Workshop on the Asia-Pacific Framework for Regional Cooperation in human rights, co-hosted by China and her Office. She held talks with State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan. Later in the day she met with Minister of Justice Wu

Aiying, followed by a visit to the Sunshine Community Correction Center of Chaoyang District, Beijing.

On 31 August, the High Commissioner held talks with Assistant Foreign Minister Shen, a meeting followed by the signing the Memorandum of Understanding. Later in the day she met with representatives of non-governmental organizations, including the China Society for Human Rights Studies, China Association for the Disabled Persons, Beijing Legal Aid and Research Centre for Youth, Beijing Bar Association on, Women's Law Research and Service Centre of Beijing University Law School.

On 1 September, Mrs. Arbour met with the President of the Supreme People's Court, Xiao Yang, as well as with Vice President Shen Deyong. She was then held a discussion with academics from the Law Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Renmin University, China University of Politics and Law.

On 2 September, the High Commissioner met with Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing, as well as with Vice Minister for Public Security Liu Jinguo, and the Director General of Legal Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security Ke Liangdong.

## Monks received 11 years' prison term for hoisting banned Tibetan flag

Lobsang Khedup, 23, was born in a small peasant family in Dhada Township, Kardze County in Kardze "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"). He began his informal education at the age of six from a private tutor in his village.

During the fall of 1992 he fled into exile in India and joined Sera Monastery in South India. He returned to Tibet after seven years of study at the monastery.

On the night of May 2004, Khedup along with Gyalpo were arrested from his home by local Public Security Bureau Officers (PSB) on alleged charge of hoisting Tibetan national flag on a Radio Transmission Tower, in his village. PSB Officers during their raids found belongings that had been passed down to him by his

ancestors, belongings like home made gun, a fine quality sword, five ordinary swords and a portrait of His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama. The PSB officials also ransacked his bookshelf and confiscated many books.

Khedup and Gyalpo were put into a police van and taken to an undisclosed location. Ever since nobody has any knowledge about his whereabouts. His family members have been deeply anxious about his arrest and his incommunicado detention. In the aftermath of his arrest, his parents approached local police station to enquire about his whereabouts but none of the police officers gave them any information about his whereabouts.

Two weeks after his arrest, two security policemen came to the Khedup's house and told his parent to report to Kardze Police Station. They were also informed to bring some clothes for Khedup and a 600 Chinese Yuan. Strangely, when his parent reached Kardze Police Station they were not allowed to meet Khedup. Rather 100-Yuan and the clothes were taken from them.

Later on 10 March 2005, Kardze Intermediate People's Court sentenced both Lobsang Khedup and Gyalpo to 11years imprisonment. Since his parents were barred from meeting him, no one knows about his current well-being and whereabouts.

No current information is available on Khedup as well as Gyalpo. ♦

## Three Tibetans arrested for attempted escape

According to information received by TCHRD from a reliable source, Chinese border officials have arrested Tibetan escapees who were trying to flee into exile from Tibet.

Twelve Tibetans escapees consists of five-member Tibetan group and another seven-member Tibetan group from Lhasa city, along with two guides who were on their escape journey to Nepal through the border region of Kyirong, Kyirong County, Shigatse prefecture. "TAR".

When the group were climbing a rocky mountain called Drachen Lhamo, they encountered around ten border security personnel. They were pelted with stones to stop the group from escaping into exile. In the encounter, three Tibetans were arrested while the rest managed to evade arrest and escaped into Nepal

The Tibetan arrestees are Lobsang Choephel (lay name Drakpa), a monk of around 19 years old from Minyak, Kham region; a woman of around 20 years from Rishoel Village, Markham County, Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR" and also a teenage boy from Markham county.

Those managed to escape reached Tibetan Reception Center in Kathmandu on 3 August 2005.

The Chinese authorities, in order to curb the flow of Tibetan escapees into Nepal, has set up local army camps at the border area of Zongkar village, Kyirong which remain an important focal point for Tibetan fleeing into exile.

According to information provided by three boys and three girls from Kyirong who recently arrived at Tibetan

Reception Center in Kathmandu, the arrest of Tibetan refugees were confirmed. Their testimonies reveal that the three arrestees were detained at a local Chinese army camp located in close proximity to Kyirong town. It was reported that the Chinese army camp has a prison that usually houses criminals and those arrested for attempting to escape into exile.

It further came to light that the authorities of Kyirong county have in recent times stationed ten border security personnel each at Gon, Shak and Tsalung village to check the number of Tibetans fleeing into exile. These personnel were promised with lucrative rewards for capturing Tibetan refugees.

The testimonies also reported the arrest and detention of a monk named Namdol in June 2005 while he was attempting to flee Tibet. He was arrested by the border security personnel of Gon Village. Namdol was detained for several days before securing release on payment of bail amount. There is no clear information as to the exact amount paid by him. Namdol made a second escape attempt with another escapee named Tenzin and he was successful the second time. ♦

## "Patriotic re-education" campaign still active in Sera Monastery

The "patriotic re-education" campaign launched in 1996 by the Chinese authorities is still active in Sera Monastery, one of the three largest monasteries in Tibet.

Ringa (layname Samdup), a refugee from Tibet reports to TCHRD, "In Sera Monastery, 15 security personnel are permanently stationed to monitor the monks. Five or six security personnel are stationed at the main gate of the monastery to maintain 24 hours vigil. The monks are not allowed to go outside the monastery during important religious festivals especially during the birthday celebration of the Dalai Lama on 6 July every year".

In Sera Monastery, there are 700 registered monks with stay permit, of which approximately 300 are from Kham and Amdo regions of Tibet. Under "patriotic re-education campaign", the "work team" officials hold sessions for monks four times a week in the main gathering hall of the monastery. The monks are subjected to rigorous study of six books on politics, requiring them to denounce the Dalai Lama and to fight against hostile and separatist forces outside China. There is the risk of expulsion and conviction for failing to abide by official orders. Another special feature of the campaign is the requirement of all monks to attend the session irrespective of their seniority in terms of age and scholarship.

So far, no reports of expulsion have been received while the campaign continues unabated in the religious institutions in Tibet. It is believed that the intense control and vigilance this summer has correlation with the restrictive measures imposed during the 40<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the "TAR". In that context, Lhasa City has witnessed the re-launch of summer "strike hard" campaign to curb political activities. ♦

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during major celebrations and events, Chinese authorities embark on various precautionary measures including heighten vigilance, closer supervision of suspected individuals and former political prisoners, even resorting to arbitrary arrest and detention. Tibetans with background in political activities are specially are also being taken away from Lhasa city and interrogated. The family members are made to stand as witness that the individual will not carry out any untoward political activities. All these have created an atmosphere of fear in different parts of Tibet.

On 22 July 2005, the "TAR" Anti-separatist Committee and the Security Bureau Committee launched the "Summer Strike Hard" Campaign to prevent any outbreak of political incident that might undermine the celebration of the 40th founding anniversary of "TAR". The individuals with political activism record and ex-political prisoners as well as criminal prisoners are the chief targets of the Campaign.

According to a report published in the Tibet Daily Newspaper of the China Tibet Information Centre says that the combined effort of the Tibet Affairs Bureau and Security Bureau Committee have enabled the "Strike Hard" Campaign to be carried out in the entire region of "TAR". The article also stressed need for a good discipline and conduct from the Tibetan people.

On 14 August 2005, a big Military Exercise drill code named "Task Force 05" started in Lhasa to deal with a sudden outbreak of untoward incidents. The security wings that participated in the Military Exercise were Lhasa Security Bureau Polices, People's Armed Police and National Security Departments. The important

leaders such Yang Chuangtang, Secretary of "TAR" and the Chairman of 'security and stability' committee made speeches calling for more efforts from the people in achieving a long period of 'Peace and Stability' in Tibet.

Again on 18 August, 2005 the stationed security personnel of Lhasa Security Bureau conducted a 'Motivation' meeting and asked the security personnel to put extra effort avert political incidents during the celebration. The senior officials directed security personnel to consider the celebration as an important political responsibility, not a mere maintenance of stability and security.

On 31 July 2005, the Lhasa City's People's Municipality forcefully picked up beggars from Lhasa streets and returned them to their native hometowns in order to clean up the environment of Lhasa city. Also tourist and visitors in Lhasa city have to report themselves to the Lhasa Security Bureau office along with their host starting from the first week of the July. The hosts are made to promise their accountability and responsibility for the guests. The regulation and control over monasteries in the surrounding areas of Lhasa city are intensified more than it had been in the past. Tibetans are also barred from going to Lhasa city for circumambulation during the morning, day and evening. In the Sera Monastery, from the first week of July the extra numbers of Chinese Government officials arrived the monastery and resumed the "patriotic re-education" campaign in the monastery.

In the Lhasa city, the Security Bureau personnel and People's

Armed Police (PAP) have taken a round the clock vigilance and examined in the streets. All the roads and check posts are checked and monitored 24 hours a day. The security polices of the locality maintain a tight vigil and control of their region and barred Tibetans in the surrounding areas to go to Lhasa city on the day of celebration. There is an immense restriction on the freedom of movement.

The Chinese Government continues to deprive and violate the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people. Under such circumstances, Tibetan people live under an atmosphere of fear, tension and deprivation of political freedom. The 40th founding anniversary of so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" is celebrated amidst restriction and control by authorities of People's Republic of China. ♦

## Sonam Gyalpo arrested

According to information received by TCHRD, Sonam Gyalpo, a former political prisoner, from Lhoka region



was arrested on 28 August 2005. Sonam Gyalpo's arrest happened prior to the celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary day of "TAR" on 1 September 2005. It is believed that he was arrested during the "Summer Strike Hard" campaign launched months before the celebration of founding anniversary. The campaign was launched as a precautionary measure to prevent any outburst of protest during the celebration to project a happy and prosperous picture of Tibet to the

outside world. Chinese security officials arrested Sonam Gyalpo on 28 August 2005 from his home. Till to this

date there is no information about his whereabouts and detention.

At present Sonam Gyalpo is in his early forties and he hailed from Lhoka region, Tibet Autonomous Region "TAR". Since after his release from Drapchi prison in 1990, he has been permanently settled in Lhasa.

Sonam Gyalpo is one of the first group of 21 young monks from Drepung Monastery who staged the peaceful pro-independence in Lhasa on 17 September 1987. After the arrest he was detained at Gutsa prison and was

sentenced to three years imprisonment at Drapchi Prison after the conviction. He was released in 1990 after the completion of his prison term. ♦



**Sonam Gyalpo with his wife**



# TCHRD ACTIVITIES

## Bulletin

### TCHRD workshop held at Sarah, Sherab Ghatsel and Suja Schools from 22-31 August 2005



**Kalon Tripa Prof.Samdong Rinpoche**

TCHRD this year organised its mid year workshop at three different schools of Sarah Tibetan Higher Studies, Sherab Ghatseling and TCV Suja School in Blr from 22-31 August 2005. The new arrivals from Tibet were the target audience of this year's TCHRD workshop. A total strength of 1170 participants including students and teaching staff (Sarah - approx. 100, Sherab Ghatseling - approx. 800 and Suja - over 300) had actively participated in the workshop sessions held at their respective schools. Within the framework of democracy and human rights theme, the workshop topics and resource person for the workshop were the functions



**ATPD Chairman: Pema Jugney**

of judiciary system by Mr. Ngawang Thupten, Local Justice Commission, Dikyiling, Tibetan democratisation process and functions of Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD) by



Mr. Pema Jungney, Chairman of ATPD; Functions and policies of Kashag by Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Kalon Tripa of the Tibetan Government in exile (TGIE) and Mr. Thupten Lungrig, Minister of Education and Health of the (TGIE); Role

and responsibility of Tibetan electorate by Mr. Ugyen Tenzin, TCHRD Executive Mr. Jampa Monalm, TCHRD Tibetan Researcher; Universal Declaration of Human Rights by Mr. Tashi Choephel, TCHRD English Researcher; Right to Information by Mr. Tsering Agloe, TCHRD English Researcher and Reporting human rights violations via media by Mr. Tenzin Norgay, TCHRD Field Officer.

The workshop was a huge success in terms of fulfilling TCHRD's second mission

**Local Justice commission: Ngawang Thupten** to educate and empower the exile Tibetan community on human rights and democracy.