



HUMAN RIGHTS *update*
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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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China releases Nyima Choedon serving ten years prison term

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is happy to learn the release of Nyima Choedon, 38 years old, from Drapchi Prison. According to latest update from the U.S based Dui Hua Foundation, Nyima has been released on 26 February 2006. TCHRD has long campaigned for the release of Jigme Tenzin Nyima a.k.a Bangri Chogtrul Rinpoche and Nyima Chodon, a couple running an orphanage in Lhasa, who were wrongly charged for "splitist" activities and convicted in September 2000 to ten years prison term and life sentence respectively. Nyima received sentence reduction on few occasions where as Jigme received a year reduction and is likely to be released on 30 July 2021.

With the release of Nyima Choedon, TCHRD hopes that her husband Jigme Tenzin Nyima would also be released unconditionally soon. Jigme is currently serving his term at the newly operated



Chushur Prison in Chushul (Chin: Qushui) County near Nyethang (Chin: Nidang), Lhasa, along a host of other long term serving Tibetan political prisoners. TCHRD requests the international community to maintain pressure on the government of People's

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TCHRD Commemorates International Day Against Torture

26 June 2006- is 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. TCHRD hopes that a day will dawn when the practice of torture will be completely eradicated and the abusers brought to justice.

In Chinese occupied Tibet, torture is endemic in the network of prisons, detention centre and labour camp on the plateau. The systematic practice of

torture is aimed to breakdown the spirit of nationalism of the Tibetan people. Towards this end, rampant use of torture has resulted in the death of 88 known Tibetan political prisoners since 1987. According to TCHRD's documentation there are currently 131 known Tibetan political prisoners languishing in various prisons in Tibet. Torture being a regular feature in the Chinese administered prisons; the Centre is highly concerned about the well being of the political prisoners upon

whom the worst of torture is afflicted. Electric shocks, pricking cigarettes on the face, hand or thumb cuffs, feet manacles, suspension from ceiling, 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 torture techniques employed by the authorities to defeat the nationalist spirit of the Tibetans.

"Torture is afflicted from day one in detention and carried on through out a

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Republic of China to release all the Tibetan political prisoners.

While TCHRD is happy that Nyima Choedon has been released prematurely in view of her original sentence, TCHRD maintains the stand that she and all the Tibetan political prisoners does not deserve to be in prison at all in the first place. According to TCHRD documentation there are 131 known Tibetan political prisoners currently languishing in a network of Chinese administered prisons in Tibet. Out of the 131 known political prisoners, 52 are serving prison terms of more than 10 years and 91 prisoners out of the total are monks.

Background Information about Nyima Choedon, Jigme Tenzin Nyima and Gyatso Orphanage

Jigme Tenzin Nyima, 40, a.k.a Bangri Chogtrul Rinpoche founded an orphanage in 1996 at Gyatso area near Norbulingka, Lhasa, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") and accordingly named it as Gyatso Orphanage. At its peak the orphanage had 60 children in it and Jigme's partner Nyima Choedon and his relatives assisted him in running the orphanage. The orphans, belonging to various parts of Tibet, were given education in Tibetan language, Chinese language, English language and mathematics. Until the arrest of Jigme, Nyima and several others working in the orphanage, Gyatso Orphanage catered to the needs of orphans and street children who had no one to look after them. The orphans were between two months to twelve years old.

On allegations of having connections with a Tibetan, Tashi Tsering, who was arrested for an alleged anti-Chinese protest during the National Minority Games in Lhasa in August 1999, Jigme and Nyima were arrested on 27 August 1999 and subsequently Dechen

Chonzom (Jigme's sister and foster mother to the orphans) and several other Tibetans working in the orphanage were also arrested. At least 23 people were arrested in connection with Jigme's case out of which twelve received sentence of varying prison terms.

On 17 October 1999 the orphanage was closed and the authorities directed the children to return to their places of origin, however, most of them were later reported to be begging in the same streets of Lhasa from where Jigme and Nyima picked them up and provided shelter and education.

On 26 September 2000, on charges of "splittism" Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Jigme to life imprisonment term and Nyima to ten years prison term with subsequent deprivation of political rights for five years. Both were later transferred to Drapchi Prison to serve the term.

Citing good behaviour in prison and also in consideration of her seven years old daughter, born just before her arrest, Nyima received sentence reductions thrice in 2002, 2004 and the last at the time of her release. Whereas Jigme Tenzin's original life sentence was later commuted to a fixed term of 19 years imprisonment in July 2003 and had a sentence reduction by one year in November 2005. His term is now due to expire on 30 July 2021.

Jigme was later transferred to the newly built Chushur Prison along with many other Tibetan political prisoners serving long terms where as his partner Nyima continued to be imprisoned in Drapchi. Dr. Manfred Nowak, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, (TCHRD listed Jigme Tenzin as prisoner of concern in a memorandum to him) during his visit to Tibet and China from 20 November to 2 December 2006 met with both Jigme Tenzin Nyima in Chushur Prison and Nyima Choedon in Drapchi Prison. ♦

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prisoner's term. There exist unimaginable forms of torture and I fail to understand how can a human being to do this to another human being", said Rinzin Choekyi, 37 years old, who recently fled Tibet after serving 12 years in the notorious Drapchi Prison for shouting pro-independence slogans in Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet. She further said, *"Every Tibetan political prisoner suffers torture whilst in prison. The prison officials single out the political prisoners in subjecting them to torture. Due to innumerable torture accompanied by denial of proper medical treatment has resulted in death of Tibetan political prisoners while in prison, and those who survive the Chinese prisons suffer from various illnesses throughout their life."* Rinzin and another former inmate, Lhundrup Sangmo, who served 9 years prison term, are currently undergoing medical treatment in exile.

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. After a decade of appeals by various human rights organisations, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Dr. Manfred Nowak, was able to pay visits to Lhasa, "Tibet Autonomous Region", Beijing and Urumqi from 20 November to 2 December 2005. The visit has been held a great victory in exposing the practice of brutal torture in Tibet and the PRC.

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 reparation with special attention to medical and psychological needs". ♦

profile

POLITICAL PRISONERS

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

Biography of a former political prisoner Rigzin Choenyi

Rigzin Choenyi was born in Chushul County, Lhasa municipality, "TAR". Few years after studying at the local school run by the government, she joined the Lhasa Shugseb Nunnery in Lhasa at the age of 15. In 1987 and 1988 mass pro-independence protests broke out in Tibet which was spearheaded mostly by youth. The Chinese government responded to the pro-independence demonstration with severe and harsh crackdown. The massive crackdown resulted in the death of many protestors and incarceration of many who participated in the demonstration.

Rigzin Choenyi and 13 other nuns participated in the peaceful demonstration at Lhasa on 17 May 1988. They shouted pro-independence slogans like: "Free Tibet", "Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama", "Tibet belongs to Tibetans", "Chinese leave Tibet". Though they were not arrested immediately but they remained under the strict vigilance of security personnels.

On 22 September 1989, Rinzin Choenyi along with six nuns again raised pro-independence slogan at Lhasa. At that time, they were arrested by the local security personnels and were detained at Gutsa Detention Centre in Lhasa. They were

interrogated by security personnels with severe beating and torture. They repeatedly questioned her about instigator behind the protest, objective or any organisation behind the protest. At the same time her inmates were also subjected to severe beatings and torture for a month. Rigzin and her inmates were put in detention centre in a separate cell. After finishing the interrogation by prison officials, Lhasa Intermediate People's Court charged them for "counter revolutionary" and inciting "anti-government propaganda". While some were sentenced to three years' term, she was awarded seven years' prison term for being the ringleader of the demonstration. She was transferred to women cell, unit three in Drapchi Prison. At that time she was the first female political prisoner in Drapchi prison. Since from the day of her arrival inside prison, she was subjected to constant watch by prison officials. With increase in the number of female political prisoners in Drapchi Prison, surveillance on her gradually decreased thereafter.

After serving 7 years sentence in Drapchi Prison, she was finally released on 21 September 1995. During her two years stay at her hometown - Chushul, her movement was



closely monitored and was subjected to constant harassment by local Security personnel. Unable to bear the incessant psychological trauma that she had to undergo even after release, she finally decided to go into exile in the end of 1996, leaving behind her family and country.

Rigzin Choenyi finally reached Dharamsala on 14 January 1997. After seeking an audience from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, she joined College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah, to continue her studies. After completing her four years bachelor degree education and teacher training course from the above institute, she joined Upper Tibetan Children Village (TCV) School as a Tibetan teacher in 2001 and continue to serve the school till date. ♦

Five years for Chanting “Free Tibet”

Tsering Dhondup, 33 years old, hailed from Marche Village, Nagchu County, “Tibet Autonomous Region” (“TAR”). He was sentenced to 5 years’ imprisonment term in Drapchi Prison following his involvement in a pro-independence political demonstration in Lhasa in 1995. After completing his five years term, Tsering Dhondup came into exile in June 2006. He gave his testimony to the TCHRD.

Tsering Dhondup said, “In my childhood I worked with my parent in herding animals as we were nomads. At the age of 15, I entered monastic life and ordained as a monk at Drulung Monastery, Chomo Village, Taklung Township, Phenpo Lhundup County, “TAR”. However, I barely received opportunity to study Buddhist scriptures as I had to work in the renovation work of the monastery, which was demolished during the Cultural Revolution. At the time of my entry into the monastery, it was under the charge of two former monks of the monastery, who were forced to disrobe when the monastery was destroyed during the height of Cultural Revolution. They took the full responsibility of renovating the monastery through their hard earned income and donation received from the local people. They also sought legal permission from the local authority for the reconstruction of monastery. However, the authorities issued instruction to them that they could only hire not more than six monks for the construction work. I along with five other monks rigorously carried out the reconstruction work of the monastery which took us seven years to complete.”

“On the evening of the 18th day, second month of the Tibetan Lunar Calendar, in 1995, we six of us decided to initiate a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa. We left our monastery clandestinely on the very night and headed towards Lhasa City. However, four monks in our group returned to the monastery in the midst of journey. Ngawang Lobsang and I stood firm to our decision and continued our journey towards Lhasa City. We reached Lhasa around 11 am, on the 20th day of Tibetan Lunar Calendar, and headed for circumambulations. While taking the third round of circumambulation, we shouted slogan such as “Free Tibet”, “Chinese leave Tibet”, “Tibet belongs to Tibetan”, and

“long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama”. After hearing our slogan, the people nearby us quickly disappeared. Upon reaching near the Tsuglagkhang, the main temple in Lhasa, four Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials suddenly jumped on us. They hand cuffed us and forcibly put us into police vehicle, and thereafter took us to Gutsa Detention Center.”

“While at Gutsa Detention Center, we were taken into another chamber office inside the detention center and officials thoroughly interrogated us about our activities. After, rigorous interrogation, we were put in separate cells. After eight days, three PSB officials from Phenpo Lhundup County came and badgered us about “number of person initially involved in demonstration”. When I told them that “only two of us were involved in the demonstration”, they brutally beat us with electric rod, and anything they could get hold of. They interrogated us about the instigator behind the activities. We were subjected to forced interrogation for few days and each time we had to undergo severe torture and beatings.”

“Afterwards, two police officials interrogated us once more and told us that henceforth we are officially incarcerated and will be sentenced by court in a few days. After few days, two of us along with six nuns from Nyemo County were taken to Lhasa Intermediate People’s Court. We were charged for “Counter revolutionary propaganda and incitement.” The court gave five years’ imprisonment term for me while my co-demonstrator received three years’ imprisonment term. Afterwards the court announced sentences for the six nuns and we all were taken back to Gutsa Detention Center and kept there for few days. In the third month of Tibetan Lunar Calendar, in 1995, we along with 11 monks from Taklung Monastery, 3 monks from Phenpo Nalanda Monastery and 10 other nuns were taken to Drapchi Prison and put in the newly built prison unit no. 5. There were nearly 100 political prisoners at that time. We were not made to do any work in particular. Like other prisoners, we were made to attend re-education program in which the prisoners were forced to learn the

prison rules and study daily newspaper. We had to undergo rigorous drills exercise every morning.”

“Moreover, after the outburst of 1 May and 4 May Drapchi Prison protest in 1998, political prisoners were subjected to severe inhuman torture which resulted in death and severe injuries of prisoners. Health condition of many prisoners became serious and grave. PSB officials forcibly interrogated us one by one. They thoroughly asked me about the reason behind my participation in the protest and as well as the person behind the unrest. They brutally beat me with iron rod and electric baton. After the interrogation, sentences of many prisoners were extended. Lobsang Choephel, a monk from Markham who was unable to bear the torture and cruel interrogation in the prison, committed suicide in his cell. Afterward, strict surveillance was regulated in the prison and all the prisoners were kept in separate cells in order not to let the prisoners interact specially among themselves. Moreover, hidden cameras were installed in the prison to monitor us. Even the duration of the monthly visitation period by our relatives and friend time was reduced.”

“After the completion of my 5 years prison term, I was finally released in 2005. During my release, the head official of Drapchi Prison warned me that I should never attend or participate in any social gathering and religious festival after the release, as I was stripped off all my political rights. At the same time, I was barred from moving outside of my hometown, without the permission from the local authorities. I stayed at Lhasa City for three days and after that I moved straight to my hometown. I engaged myself in a small business around Nagchu and nomadic region. But there again, I was also frequently interrogated, constantly kept under the close watch of the PSB officials. Hence, unable to lead a satisfactory life in Tibet, due to constant harassment and mental torture by Chinese officials, I secretly left Tibet in March 2006 and safely reached Dharamsala in June 2006.”

Patriotic re-education Campaign in Podo Nunnery

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy received confirmed information that 39 nuns, belonging to Podo nunnery in Phenpo Lhundrub County, “TAR”, were expelled from their nunnery by local Chinese government “work team” officials belonging to the Religious Affair Bureau. The expulsion of nuns took place after they refused to denounce the Dalai Lama, during patriotic re-education campaign in the Podo nunnery.

One of the expelled nuns from Podo nunnery reached safely at Nepal based Tibetan Reception Centre on 12 April this year. Our Centre’s reporter based in Nepal took testimony of her. She testified, “My name is Yeshe Choedron (lay-name: Lhamo Tsering), and I am 25 year’s old. I hail from village no# 3, Nganang Township, Phenpo Lhundrub County. I joined the village school at the age of 8 and studied for three years. After completing my third standard, I discontinued my school education to join nunnery as I always had nurtured a strong desire to ordain myself as a nun in this life. But, due to poor living condition of my family, I was not able to join the nunnery immediately. Hence, I stayed at home till 16, by engaging myself in domestic work and herding animals. After approaching 16, my parent gave a strong support to me to become a nun as per my wishes. I ordained myself at Podo nunnery at Phenpo Lhundrub County.”

“Podo nunnery earlier used to house more than 100 nuns, but later on, there were only 50 nuns in the nunnery. In the fourth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, in 1996, around seven local Chinese government “work team” officials of Phenpo Lhundrub county, came to our nunnery and stayed for more than a month and conducted the “patriotic re-education” campaign in the nunnery. We were grouped into 20 each and were made to study “political re-education” and “socialist ideology and its law” for one and half hour, three times a day. Moreover, during the “patriotic re-education” campaign, the “work team”

official forcibly asked us to denounce and condemn His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They also told us to strive hard against the splittist forces and the Dalai clique. After launching “patriotic re-education” campaign for a month, the “work team” officials conducted examinations. We were given a question paper, wherein we were made to write our opinion and feedback regarding the impact of “patriotic re-education” campaign. At that time, all of the 36 nuns instantly tore the question paper given to them during the examination. Due to our action, the “work team” officials became furious and angrily told us that we were violating the law of state, and will be expelled from the nunnery. The nuns were put in vehicle and taken to Deng-Thok Township by “work team” official, where they took our photographs and made us to sign on a document. The “work team” official not only told that we cannot go to other places as our wishes, but also threatened us that our offence of not abiding the law of country can land us in a prison, but we were let off to go uncharged for one time.”

“The expelled nuns from nunnery hail mostly from Phenpo Lhundrub County and some from Damshung County, Nagchu Prefecture. Among us, the oldest nun was 35 years old while the youngest was 19 years old. After expulsion from the nunnery, some of us requested the concerned official of the Township and County level for a re-admission in the Nunnery. The official told us that they could re-admit us only on the condition that we have to denounce the Dalai Lama and condemn splittist groups. Since we refused to comply with them, Chinese official abused us that we are people without any rights and drove us away. The senior nuns used to call me at nunnery to stay, when the “work team” official was not around. Hence, I used to stay at the nunnery, but flee when “work team” officials come to our nunnery.”

“Earlier in the 1996 “patriotic re-education” campaign, three main nuns

who tore the question paper were Sudron (ordained name) age 23, Nyidruk (ordained name) age 20 and Chokey: age 22. They were not only denied from re-joining their respective nunnery, but also restricted to join other nunneries. It was also heard that they have to seek permission from Township authorities whenever they have to leave for other places. They were always kept under constant watch and vigilances”.

“After expulsion from the nunnery, I stayed with my aged uncle, who is a monk in Drepung monastery and was ailing from hepatitis. He had a small rented room below the monastery. I was always looking for a job, but it was very difficult for me to get a job, since I am a former political prisoner. Thus, I ended up as an unemployed till date. In between I used to stay at nunnery for a few months when “work team” official was not around. But in the sixth Tibetan month of the Tibetan lunar calendar in 2005, “work team” officials from the County again visited our nunnery to re-launch the “patriotic re-education” campaign. Hence, it then became impossible for me to stay at the nunnery any longer, which left me with no other alternative than to return to my hometown. Moreover, Podo nunnery always received more surveillance than other nunneries. The “work team” officials regularly visit nunnery to propagate their “patriotic re-education” campaign. They used to admit that it was hard to change the ideology of nuns in Podo Nunnery, no matter how hard they propagate and re-educate due to which, they are more vigilant on us compared to other nunneries”.

She further testified that, “Due to severe crackdown on nuns and mass expulsion from the nunnery, many nuns were deprived of their monastic education. For this very reason, I came into exile for pursuing my monastic education and to receive an audience of His Holiness Dalai Lama”.

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Nepal finally resumes issuing 'Exit Permit' to Tibetans

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) received information that a group of 40 Tibetans who had recently arrived from Tibet on 19 June 2006 were issued 'Exit Permit' by the Nepalese Government. The group boarded a bus from the Tibetan Refugee Reception Center in Kathmandu, Nepal, on the evening of the very same day. They headed their journey onwards to India to seek asylum.

Earlier, the Nepal Government led by King Gyanendra has stopped issuing 'Exit Permit and travel document' for Tibetan refugees in October 2005 due to pressure from China. During that period (when permits were not issued), it was a big problem for the Nepal based Tibetan Reception Center to accommodate, feed and arrange the journey of new escapees to India. The majority of new arrival were young Tibetans seeking education in India.

On 18 May 2006, European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the Nepalese government to protect Tibetan refugees in transit to India, and end the suspension of exit permits without delay. The resolution criticizes the Nepalese government's decision to suspend issuing exit permits to Tibetan refugees for their onward travel to India from November 2005, which has left hundreds of Tibetan stranded in Nepal, and has exacerbated severe overcrowding at the Tibetan Reception Centre in Kathmandu.

After the change of government in Nepal, the new government in the month of May, agreed to issue 'Exit Permit' for newly arrived Tibetan refugees and 'Travel Document' for Tibetans living in Nepal wanting to travel abroad. ♦

Yahoo! worst offender in censorship tests on search engines

Lobby group Reporters Without Borders found Yahoo! to be the worst offender in censorship tests after the organisation has carried out a test on Chinese versions of Internet search engines such as Yahoo!,

Google, MSN as well as their local competitor Baidu.

The test threw up significant variations in the level of filtering. While yahoo.cn censors results as strictly as baidu.cn, search engines google.cn and the beta version of msn.cn let through more information from sources that are not authorized by the authorities.

It was also found that Chinese version of Microsoft, which claims no censor its results, returns very similar results to Google, which admits to filtering its content. Searches using a "subversive" word returns 83 per cent pro-government websites on google.cn versus 78 per cent on msn.com. They also performed the same search on google.com and only 28 per cent of the results were pro-Beijing websites.

TCHRD urges all search engines operating in Tibet and China not to comply with the repressive regime in China. Rather it should refuse censorship and make information more accessible to its user, so as to promote democracy and freedom in China and its occupied nation including Tibet as well as to respect the cardinal and fundamental human rights of its people. ♦

Five Tibetans allegedly detained for leafleting

The five Tibetans identified as Kayi Doega, his eldest daughter Yiga, a former nun and Sonam Lhamo, from the Geci nunnery; Sonam Choetso and Jampa Yangtso were reportedly detained by Chinese authorities for handing out leaflets calling Tibetan independence. All five were natives of Kardze, Sichuan province.

Yiga, Sonam Choetso, and Jampa Yangtso were detained by Chinese authorities in Lhasa City in early June, for allegedly handing out leaflets from a van calling for Tibetan independence in Kardze prefecture. Authorities also detained Kayi Doega on June 1 and Sonam Lhamo on June 2, on mere suspicious ground that they were behind the leafleting activity. Kayi Doega was earlier jailed on 2002 for offering prayers for Tibetan exiled leader, the Dalai Lama. He was freed much before the expiry of his prison term on medical parole while serving a three-year sentence. ♦

Google's founder admits mistake on China's demands

Sergey Brin, the founder of Google, the world largest Internet search engine, admitted that his company has made mistake by bowing to China demand for censorship. He made the admission in Washington, while he was requesting U.S. senators to approve a plan that would safeguard 'net neutrality,' in which all Internet content is handled equally.

Last year, Google has launched a new web search platform called - Google.cn - which filters search results according to criteria set by the regime in China. For instance, a search for "Dalai Lama," will omit thousands of websites and the users will be instead directed to sites and articles condemning the exiled Tibetan leader in Chinese government-run media and websites with a ".cn" suffix. Searches for other subjects sensitive to Beijing such as "Falun Gong", "Taiwan independence," and terms such as "democracy" and "human rights" will yield similar results. The net result is more than simply censorship - it's a promotion of Chinese government propaganda on issues critical to people in China and Tibet.

Google rivals, Yahoo! and Microsoft, have already cooperated with Chinese authorities. Last year, Yahoo! provided information to Chinese authorities that helped them to trace and jail a Chinese dissident for ten years and while Microsoft shut down a Chinese political blogger's site for "not complying with local law."

China routinely blocks access to Internet sites that discuss democracy, human rights, Dalai Lama, Tibet, Taiwan, and other topics. The Chinese government goes to great lengths to censor the Internet and punish those who use it to speak freely in favor of peaceful democratic change in China. Recently, Chinese authorities temporarily denied access to two popular Internet search engines, Sina-dot-com and Sohu-dot-com. It was reported that editors of the two web portals were "ordered to shut down their search engines after they failed an on-the-spot censorship test." It is estimated that the number of Internet users in China range between 150 million and 200 million which is second only to USA. ♦



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

Talk series by “singing nuns” in and around Dharamsala

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) organized a series of talk by two singing nuns of the formerly “Drapchi Prison 14 singing nuns”. Rigzin Choekyi who completed her 12 years prison term and Lhundrup Sangmo who completed her 9 years term in Drapchi Prison, began their talk on 16 June 2006, at Sherab Gatsel Lobling (Transit School). Thereafter, they also delivered talks at TCV School, Suja, Bir, TCV School, Gopalpur, Upper TCV, Dharamsala, and lastly at Tibetan Community Center Hall in Mcleod Ganj, Dharamsala. They shared their experiences with school children and staff and common people about torture and forced labour, and the famous pro-independence songs, which they recorded on a smuggled tape whilst in Drapchi Prison. The audiences were deeply moved by their talk, while some were left with tears rolling down their cheeks. They all praised their courage and patriotism. ♦

Briefing to American Law Students

Former political prisoner Lhundrup Sangmo and Rigzin Choekyi briefed a group of American Law Students about their life on 22 June 2006, at Chonor Guest House, Mcleod Ganj, Dharamsala. Mr. Tenzin Norgay, UN Affair Personnel also briefed them about the current human rights situation in Tibet.

On 26 June, 2006, Mr. Norgay delivered a talk on the topic “Tibet, China and UN” to the participants of a workshop, which was organised by Tibetan Parliamentary Policy and Research Centre (TPPRC) at Staff Mess, Gangchen Kysihong to around fifty college going Tibetan Students. ♦

Talk by TCHRD staff at NED mini grant Workshop

Mr. Jampel Monlam, Assistant Director, gave an introductory talk about human rights situation in Tibet to the participant of workshop on 6 June 2006. The workshop was organised by Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, Bir, H.P.

On 12 June 2006, Mr. Tenzin Norgay, UN Affair Personnel, delivered talk on the “Human Rights Mechanism and Human Rights Situation in Tibet” to the participants of workshop, organised by Regional Tibetan Women Association, Orissa.

Mr. Tashi Choephel, researcher, delivered a talk to fifty participants of workshop on the topic: “Human Rights Mechanism and Human Rights Situation in Tibet”. The workshop was organised by Regional Tibetan Women Association, Bir, H.P. ♦

Appointment of New Chairman

Mrs. Gyari Dolma, Chairman of TCHRD Board of Director resigned from her post on 5 October 2005, after the approval from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the patron of the Centre. On 15 June 2006, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, appointed Mr. Lobsang Dhargyal, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, as the New Chairman of the Board. TCHRD’s staff members congratulate him for his appointment. Mr. Lobsang Dhargyal held numerous important post in Tibetan Government in Exile as a Deputy of Assembly of Tibetan people Deputies, Minister, Head of the Planning Commission, Chief Election Commissioner and Chief Justice of Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission. ♦

Core Group Meeting

Mr. Tsering Agloe, Researcher and Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Information Officer, attended Core Group meeting held on 10 June 2006, at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, DIIR, Gangchen Kyishong. It was first ever meeting of that kind held in Dharamsala. The meeting passed resolution to reinforce efforts to enlarge and intensify the Tibetan Movement through active and sustained cooperation and coordinated actions between the Tibetan NGOs and the Indian Tibet Support Groups (TSGs) under the guidance and coordination of the Core Group. It records the highly satisfying outcome of the interaction between all major Tibetan NGOs meeting together in one group, and the convenors of the Core Group.

The meeting raised questions about how best to set up effective mechanism of communication, cooperation and coordinated action amongst the core group and Tibetan NGO’s. As a result the Sub-Committee was set up at the end of free and detailed discussions presided over by the National Convenor of the Core Group, Dr. N.K. Trikha. It has also been decided to hold an annual meeting of all important Tibetan NGOs and the Core Group every year. ♦

Talk to Fulbright Student

On 22 June 2006, Mr. Jampel Monlam, Assistant Director, was invited by Department of Education to deliver a briefing on current human rights situation in Tibet to the batch of 2006 Fulbright Student, at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, DIIR, Gangchen Kyishong. ♦

