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HUMAN RIGHTS

update

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Monk sentenced to five years term for distributing political pamphlets

Gyaltzen Namdak (lay name: Dawa), a 24-year old monk in Sera Monastery in Tibet, was sentenced to a five-year prison term for distributing pamphlets containing political material, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

In May 2006, the monastery residential police arrested Gyaltzen for alleged distribution of pamphlets containing explicit political views. Following his arrest, he was detained at the Gutsa Detention Centre until the court pronounced its verdict in October 2006.

The Lhasa People's Intermediate Court sentenced him to five years on charges of

“endangering state security”. He is currently imprisoned at Chushul (*Ch: Qushui*) Prison located in the west of Lhasa.

Gyaltzen Namthak was born in Namling (*Ch: Namulin Xian*) County in Shigatse (*Ch: Xigaze/Rikaze*) Prefecture. He spent seven years in Sera Monastery studying Buddhist spiritual texts.

It is reported that security in Sera Monastery has recently been stepped up with an increase in the number of police in residence in the monastery. Additionally, the People's Armed Police monitor the monastery at night. During classes and prayer sessions, civil clothed police scrutinize the monks closely.



Former Tibetan political prisoner served with 12 years prison term

Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced Sonam Gyalpo, 44, to twelve years in jail on charges of “endangering state security”, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). He is currently imprisoned at Chushul (*Ch: Qushui*) Prison located in the west of Lhasa City.

Prior to the sentencing, which reportedly took place around mid 2006, he was held in detention at Sitru Detention Centre (“TAR” PSB Detention Centre). Sonam's family appealed to the High Court to reconsider the sentence but to no avail.

In September last year, Chinese authorities in Tibet celebrated the 40th founding anniversary of the so-called “Tibet Autonomous Region” (“TAR”) with much pomp and glamour. In the run up to the

event, Tibetans with political incident backgrounds were rounded up for detention, investigation and expulsion from Lhasa to ensure a smooth celebration. Chinese secret service (*Ch: Ang jang jue*) officers ransacked houses of Tibetan suspects deemed to be carrying out political activities during the event. Reportedly the officers discovered “incriminating” evidence in Sonam's home in the form of four videotapes containing teachings of the Dalai Lama, few political literatures and pictures of the Dalai Lama. After being led away by the secret service officers on 28 August 2005, whereabouts of Sonam remained unknown until the latest information about him being imprisoned in Chushul Prison.

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Sonam Gyalpo

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Being a fervent nationalist, he took active participation in a popular demonstration initiated by 21 Drepung Monastery monks on 27 September 1987 in Lhasa. He was then charged of “counter-revolutionary” activities and imprisoned for three years in the notorious Drapchi Prison. Thereafter, in 1993 he was detained for a period of one year in Shigatse Nyari Detention Centre and Sangyip Prison in Lhasa serving six months detention in both.

TCHRD urges the government of “TAR” to release Sonam Gyalpo immediately and to stop violating fundamental human rights of the Tibetans. The Centre calls upon the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to intervene upon the unlawful imprisonment of Sonam Gyalpo.

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Tibetan University Students Stage Protest

On 27 and 28 October 2006, hundreds of Tibetan students of Tibet University staged a rare public protest in front of the government offices in Lhasa, “TAR”. It was reported that the protest was made over discriminatory practices by Chinese authorities in hiring Tibetans for civil service jobs. After this protest incident, Public Security Bureau (PSB) rounded the students and forbade them from mass gathering.



Graduate Tibetan Student

Earlier more than 300 unemployed Tibetan graduates from Golog “Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture” (“TAP”) Qinghai Province staged a protest by putting up tents in front of government offices from 7 September to 7 October 2004. They appealed before the government for jobs, but their appeal did not yield any positive results. Again, in May 2006, they made a re-appeal citing a 2001 government document, which stated that those having state recognised certificates from 2001 to 2005 will be given a job. They asked the government to change the practice of giving jobs in Golog “TAP” only to rich, affluent peoples and those having *Guanxi* [Ch: literally “connection to officialdom to acquire preferential treatment] while denying jobs to natives of the region. They also asked for the use of both Tibetan and Chinese languages in schools and offices as Golog is a “Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture”. They did not receive any reply for their appeal, and these unemployed graduates are presently working at restaurants and guest houses as waiters and servants.

In 2001, during the examination of Lhasa specialised school, the government spontaneously changed the percentage requirement, and many students were unable to qualify the entrance exam. Due to that, both students and parents staged a protest in front of the “TAR” government offices.

In Tibet, there is no honest way to secure the required percentage during entrance exams for specialised schools and job recruitment. Rather one has to seek through *Guanxi* (Ch.) or through bribery. Hence, many Tibetan students are deprived of opportunities if they seek through honest methods. Those students who hail from a poor family background and nomadic or farming families face more hardship compared to others. Moreover, Chinese students in mainland China secure a Household Registration Card (Ch: *Hukou*) of Tibet through their family connections and sit in the exam in Tibet for seats which are meant for Tibetan students. This unfair practice of snatching the seats of Tibetans by the Chinese deprives many Tibetans opportunities in education and employment. This has negatively affected the Tibetan students in continuing their education.

According to the information provided in Xinhua, the state owned news agency of PRC, the head of research section of “TAR” Education Department, Mr. Lobsang Tsering, has revealed that after a joint investigation undertaken by Education Department and

Security Department, they found 38 mainland Chinese students had sat for the entrance exam for Senior Secondary School by buying household registration cards. All of the 38 Chinese students were debarred from sitting in the examination. Xinhua news agency further added that these days many Chinese students from mainland China were making “TAR” household registration card and enrolling themselves in schools in the “TAR”.

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Official Information Confirms Sentence for Choekyi

According to official Chinese information that has recently become available and published by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, the Gannan Intermediate People’s Court in Gansu province sentenced Choekyi Dolma, a Buddhist nun, to three years’ imprisonment in December 2005 for “inciting splittism”.

Earlier on 22 May 2005, Public security officials (PSB) detained Choekyi along with nuns Tamdin Tsomo and Yonten Dolma of Gedun Tengyelung Nunnery, and monks Dargay Gyatso and Jamyang Samdup of Labrang Tashikhyil Monastery in Xiahe (Sangchu), in Gannan (Kanlho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) in Gansu, on suspicion that they circulated and displayed letter-sized posters in Xiahe and other locations, that were critical of the Chinese government.

The official information mentions only Choekyi, but it was speculated that Gannan court probably tried and sentenced the five monks and nuns together, since they were accused of acting together to distribute and display the posters.

Tibetan monks and nuns constitute about 70 percent of the 107 currently detained or imprisoned Tibetan political prisoners, according to information available in the CECC Political Prisoner Database. The actual number of Tibetan political prisoners is likely to be higher. Reports of Tibetan political imprisonment often do not reach monitoring groups until at least one or two years after the detention occur, and some reports do not include the names of the detainees.

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profile

POLITICAL PRISONERS

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

Biography of former political prisoner Lobsang Sherab

Lobsang Sherab was born in Chakgyap Township, Gyantse County, Shigatse Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). He attended elementary School in the township till the age of 14 and afterwards was ordained as a monk at Gyantse Monastery in 1983.

In 1988, in the fourth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, people of Gyantse County gathered to celebrate a grand annual picnic like every year, where participants from different regions held a game competition and a traditional dance presentation. Lobsang, along with ten other monks, went to watch the show and found that participants from state organized groups presented plays and songs vilifying the Dalai Lama and urged the viewer to fight against "splittists" and follow the ideology of socialism. Unable to control their anger, Lobsang and his friend went onstage and asked the participants that, being Tibetan, how could they besmirch their own religious leader? Lobsang and his friends further warned them of dire consequences if they did not stop this type of show. After this they returned to their monastery.

That evening, officials from the Democratic Management Committee (DMC) of the monastery called them and inquired about that day's activities and told them that authorities from the county are chiding on them. The official asked them to bring a statement, on paper about what they did during the day.

The incident was however magnified to the extent that the monastery was asked by the county officials to expel them from the monastery. But the monastery's authority declined to comply with their directives and replied that monastery prefers to remain closed if they were asked to expel monks. Consequently, they were unable to expel Lobsang and his friends, but the monastery was kept under severe surveillance thereafter. Four to five "work team" officials from the Shigatse Religious Affair Bureau (RAB) regularly visits the monastery every year to launch "patriotic re-education" campaign.

Later in the same year, Lobsang, along with fellow monks, went to Lhasa for a pilgrimage and rented a room for lodging. During that time he met one close acquaintance who handed him leaflets concerning Tibetan issues for distribution. Lobsang and his friends took the leaflets and distributed them on their way to the pilgrimage site, e.g Samye. Afterwards they returned to their monastery with the remaining leaflets and distributed them at Gyantse. However, officials of the local Public Security Bureau (PSB) became suspicious of his activities. However, they do not have any concrete proof; hence an official was specially designated to keep an eye on Lobsang's movements.

In 1989, Lobsang and his friends decided to paste pro- independence slogans at different places. They

pasted and distributed hand-written posters with the slogan, "Free Tibet, Chinese Quit Tibet and Long Live Dalai Lama". After carrying the activities vigorously for number of times, during one of the monastery meeting in February 1990, Lobsang, along with Lhundup Monlam was suddenly arrested from the monastery by Public Security Bureau (PSB) and the People's Armed Police (PAP) of Gyantse County. At the meeting, the officials called out their names and they were taken out with their hands cuffed. But on that day, they were paraded through five villages of Gyantse County. Afterwards, they were detained at Gyantse Detention Center for six months with routine tortures and forced interrogations. In July 1990, the People's Intermediate Court of Shigatse implicated Lobsang for 'inciting splittism' and sentenced him to four years imprisonment. His friend Lhundup Monlam was sentenced to four and half years and both were transferred to Drapchi Prison. In prison they were subjected to severe reform through labor.

On 13 February 1994, Lobsang was released from the prison after completing his four year prison term. However, he was deprived of any civil rights and his movements were constantly monitored by police officials. Unable to bear the harassment, he secretly escaped into exile in 1998 and reached India in December of the same year.

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Railway, Deve

According to Chinese officials, the Qingzang Railway will bring 'tangible benefits' to local Tibetan farmers and nomads. The article, "What are the tangible benefits for locals?" appeared on the People's Daily website, July 8, 2006, claimed that the Qingzang Railway is expected to carry 75% of the region's entire cargo and materials. According to the article, a single one-way-journey will carry 40 times the capacity of cargo previously carried by trucks and road transport and will reduce the transportation expenses by half. The article stated that the railway would allow superior and high quality goods to reach Tibet at a cheaper price and thus increasing the local Tibetans' purchasing power. However, the officials have not raised the issue of 'dual profit loss' which local Tibetans will suffer due to easier, cheaper transportations and buying goods at lower prices. The economic parameters will function and operate the way they have in the past, and the Tibetan farmers and nomads will naturally be at loss when they sell their indigenous products, animal products and raw materials to the markets in China from where they have to buy the processed goods at higher exorbitant rates. Chinese consumer goods dominate the markets in Tibet, and local Tibetans cannot compete with Chinese firms and manufacturers. The Chinese firms have superior technology and labour supply and can process products at far cheaper rates. They have more capital power, important contacts and backing from the Party and government.

In short, the Chinese present in Tibet have more 'comparative advantages' than Tibetan entrepreneurs, who have relatively little support. While the Qingzang Railway will change the parameters of market forces and prices, the 'modus operandi' will remain the same, and the 'double profit loss' will increasingly harm the Tibetan people. Therefore, the stated tangible benefits that Chinese officials and government have promised to local Tibetans will remain elusive until Tibetans gain empowerment, equal economic footing in competition and protection of their comparative advantages.

Another larger issue pertaining to China's development pursuits in Tibet that has hindered the actual growth and economic prosperity for Tibetans has been the 'unfair economic lever' existing between the Chinese and Tibetan entrepreneurs. In terms of

scientific know how, technology, knowledge, skills and expertise, labour market, capital and purchasing power, government incentive, support and level of education, all of these factors have favored the Chinese counterpart. In the end, a completely lopsided and exclusionary economic growth pattern in Tibet has resulted.

The Damxung mineral water bottling which came to the spotlight after the construction of the railway line highlights one intended purpose of the railway since Damxung is one of the important stations along the track. The lack of Tibetans who have seized economic opportunities clearly illustrates the crucial issue of 'unfair economic leverage and the exclusionary growth in Tibet'. In simple terms, Damxung mineral water belongs to Tibetans because the spring water originates from their ancestral lands. Although the Tibetans are the ancestral and true owners of the water source, they are profoundly handicapped in terms of legal and technological expertise and cannot harness the mineral water. The Constitution of China states that all lands belong to Government, no one owns it, and yet Chinese entrepreneurs and settlers now own and dominate almost all economic and exclusive rights at the expense of the local Tibetan population. The Xinhua News Agency¹ covered the Damxung mineral water episode:

"Development of Tibet's mineral water resources will not only contribute to cargo transportation on the railway, it will also increase the value of local mineral water resources," said Dorji, a Tibetan academician with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, who made the suggestion to the geological and mineral exploitation bureau of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The bureau has located over 100 drinking water springs with the largest source found in Damxung County, which can produce 3,000 tons of drinking water a day.

The daily output of the lake in Damxung could fill 50 train cars or two trains, said Lu Yan, a senior engineer with the bureau.

"Bottling the Damxung mineral water could generate an annual output value of one billion yuan (125 million U.S. dollars)," said Lu. Dubbed Asia's Water Tower, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is the source region for the major rivers in China and is home to the largest lake resources in China".

The Damxung mineral water issue demonstrates how the Chinese have exploited Tibet's natural resources for its own commercial purposes. It also illustrates three levels of exclusionary growth in Tibet, as it is typified by all development business ventures taking place in Tibet. It reveals a pattern of developmental features that can drastically harm the people who have been living in the resource area for generations. The Damxung mineral water episode represents only one instance in the larger phenomenon of development projects and economic strategies and policies that the Chinese have implemented in Tibet at the expense of the local population, and it highlights three levels of resource and human exploitations and the disempowerment of the native Tibetan people.

In the first level, higher authorities ignore the religious, spiritual and traditional sentiments of local inhabitants when embarking on any development cum business ventures. In many of the inhabited areas of indigenous people, water springs and certain natural sites such as mountain peaks can be objects of worship and spiritual importance. Therefore, the Chinese should not exploit these places for developments and economic ventures. In this regard, the authorities do not consult the Damxung people and do not give them any decision-making role in harnessing the mineral water.

In the second level, exploitation of local resources produces destruction of local ecology and environment, common and immediate fall out. The exploitation of natural resources often results in the destruction and damage of fragile natural surroundings that in turn profoundly affects the ancestral way of life of the Tibetan people. Traditionally, Tibetans depend on natural resources for their survival and subsistence. In view of this, the long-term interest of indigenous people are often ignored and neglected.

The Chinese government continuously violates the rights aspect of development despite the fact that it is against the spirit of the Chinese Constitution. The rights aspect shows how outside people and agents benefit and grow economically at the expense of local inhabitants and ethnic people. A resource and prosperity, which otherwise could have been enjoyed by the native Tibetan people, falls in the hands of outside agents and migrants simply because they have prospered and thrived under the socio-political and

economic system. They do so precisely because of economic and development strategy implemented in Tibet.

The third level shows the disempowerment and exclusion of native and local people in reaping the benefits of development projects or business ventures. The Damxung mineral water bottling episode, where Chinese entrepreneurs and migrants make the investments in water harnessing technology, is a case in point. Once the Chinese entrepreneurs start exploiting and harnessing the mineral water, it will be sold to consumers in China to meet the acute demand for mineral water coming from Tibet. In the first phase, profit lands strictly in the hands of Chinese owners. In the second phase, the native Tibetans may eventually rely on bottled water in contrast to the current scenario where they consume free of cost. Additionally, the Chinese will conduct their business using cheap labour forces consisting chiefly of migrant Chinese workers. Thus, in addition to exploiting the natural resource of Tibet, the project will not generate any employment for Tibetans. Moreover, the Chinese will transport the bottled water by train to be sold in Chinese markets. The business venture functions exclusively between the Chinese entrepreneurs, their Chinese retailers, customers in China, and its Chinese manufacturers in Tibet. The Tibetan people are completely excluded from the business ventures process while, at the same time, they have to brunt and face the wrath of climate changes and damages done to the ecology in surrounding areas.

So far, the trends have repeatedly demonstrated that Chinese migrants and their masters in Mainland China dominate most lucrative enterprises such as mining, manufacturing, tourism and tertiary sectors. Thus, Chinese entrepreneurs enjoy economic development and prosperity at the expense of native Tibetans. As a result, the Tibetan population suffers from exclusionary growth, and the bottom of society has seen little growth. The annual GDP of Tibet only shows statistics of numbers and production; it does not specify where they came from and who actually calculated the figures. Based on GDP stats, the overall picture boasts great growth and economic progress inside Tibet; however, a closer look at the reality of Tibet reveals much contradiction from the national growth statistics.

Following four decades of intense government campaigns for development in

western regions of China and in Tibet, 80% of the Tibetan population, consisting mostly of farmers and nomads, remain anchored in its traditional economy with virtually no development or prosperity while the urban enclaves and cities of western China and Tibet have grown at a rapid pace. Nothing can be more ironical.

Rather than advancing development in Tibet, The Qingzang Railway has harmed the local Tibetan community and changed the economic landscape in favour of Chinese entrepreneurs and settlers. People's Daily Online predicted a flow of 600,000 people per year going to Xinning, the capital city of Qinghai Province. The officials in both "TAR" and Qinghai have vowed to construct more towns with a capacity for larger populations and with a bigger economic profile. Their promises vindicate the argument that administrative outposts such as Chengdu, Xinning and Lanzhou prosper and grow while development fails to reach the interior regions of Tibet. The economic planners and juggernauts in Beijing have not sorted out who will occupy the planned towns and cities, but the plan can only harm Tibetan farmers and nomads. The economic activities planned for these coming towns and cities and China's newly reformed hukou, or household registration system, indicates that it is to attract settlers and profit adventurers from Mainland China.

The Zingzang Railway project demonstrates that China continues to neglect western regions of China and Tibet while it remains fixated on economic projects that benefit only minority. During the launch of the railway, President Hu Jintao, said "*The project is not only a magnificent feat in China's history of railway construction, but also a great miracle of the world's railroad history*". China enjoys great success while it deprives the Tibetan people the better education, health care and growth in knowledge and expertise promoted by the government in Mainland China. Tibetans need to become the masters of their own affairs. They need a genuine growth and per capita human development. In that sense, the so-called "magnificent feat" ignores the interests and needs of Tibetan nomads and farmers who have lost so much in order to make the Zingzang Railway possible. Thus, the "great miracle of the world's railroad history" lacks meaning and realism. President Hu Jintao's words show that the railway is

just another assertive call in China's quest for a so-called "peaceful rise," an image it craves so much to carve in the world arena. The Qingzang Railway has little to offer Tibetan nomads and farmers, and the birth of the railway forecasts their bleak future that may culminate in socio-cultural and economic ghettoization amidst booming Han cities and economic zones on the other face of Tibet.

The Tibetan Government in Exile (TGIE) expressed its concern and raised its objections to any development projects that are promoted at the expense of the Tibetan people and may result in long-term marginalisation and exclusion.

"We firmly oppose any development projects or activities that promote or result in: violence, environmental destruction, social exclusion and economic marginalisation of Tibetans, direct or indirect population transfer of non-Tibetans to Tibet, violations of basic human rights, including involuntary displacement, confinement and eviction".

Going by the 'rights' aspect of development, the Tibetan people were not consulted and had very little say in the decision-making process of the Qingzang Railway. From the conceptual stage, the matters concerning the survey, design, contracting, import of foreign technology, laying of the track, work force, generation of employment, utility of the train started with rich Chinese tourists and officials. Only a handful of Tibetans travel on the train.

In May 2006 Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported cases of eviction and paltry compensation given by the Chinese government for Tibetan farmers whose house and farms fell along the Qingzang Railway's route. The interviewee testified, "*The Tibetan farmers went to different departments, including the Tibetan Autonomous Region government, to appeal but nothing really helps. All this is what they call the great western development plan. We are victims of these developments*".

In her critique "*China railroads over Tibet's suffering*," Kate Saunders reported a case of a nun who lost her ancestral land and was not adequately compensated by the authorities. Ms. Saunders wrote, "*A Tibetan nun who recently escaped into exile from Tibet reported that her family had lost land and been denied adequate compensation due to the railway construction. She said: "we appealed to county-level cadres about our*

To be continued in next issue...

dissatisfaction over the inadequate compensation for the land used by the State for the railway track. But none of the authorities paid attention to our petition. We are helpless”.

Apart from these facts, the authorities have yet to make the train a feasible means of transportation for the ordinary Tibetan nomads and farmers, and the poorer sections of the society, in whose name the construction of the Qingzang Railway was sanctified and baptized. Perhaps now, the route of Golmud-Nagqu-Lhasa and other routes still in the blueprints might shed some light on the purpose of the construction of the railway lines in Tibet as well as the impact that the railways may bring in the near future.

In an interview with “*Voice of Tibet*,” a new arrival from Tibet who spoke about the denial of ‘development as rights’ to the Tibetan people during the construction of the Qingzang Railway. He said, “*It is not that we are against development or against a railway to Lhasa and given the opportunity, we may have even decided to build one ourselves, the problem is that we never got to make that decision*”. His response reveals the frustration due to the fact that the Chinese deprived the Tibetan people of their rights to development in their own ancestral lands. In this case, the Chinese government violated the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people in order to build the Qingzang Railway. ◆

Tibetan Monks still faces hardship due to Patriotic Re-education

Twenty three year old, Ngawang Lodoe (layname Thupten Tsering) is one of the 41 Tibetan refugees who experienced a treacherous escape to India through Nangpala pass recently. He reached the Tibetan Reception Centre, McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala on 26 October 2006.

Ngawang testified to TCHRD that “I came from Dromo Township, Kongpo Gyamda County, Nyingtri Prefecture, “Tibet Autonomous Region” (“TAR”). My family livelihood depends on farming. Since childhood, I didn’t get any opportunity to attend school. I spent most of my early childhood in helping my parent in farming and household chores. At the age of 13, I was ordained monk at Langru Jamchoe Monastery in Kongpo Gyamda County and studied Buddhism over there.”

“Langru Jamchoe Monastery belongs to the Gelug sect of Buddhism and was founded several centuries ago. The monastery has forty-eight monks. Like any other monasteries in Tibet, our small monastery was unable to escape the wrath of Chinese Government anti-religion policy. Due to their policies, we were unable to continue our religious education and some reached a situation where, they were compelled to part away from the monastery.

“Moreover from 1996 onwards, a group of ‘work team’ officials from the county started visiting our monastery and vigorously started campaigning ‘patriotic re-education’. Officials from Religious Affairs Bureau would visit the monastery every year and on each occasion stay for a period of three to four months. They are to propagate their ‘Patriotic re-education’ campaign to us under strict surveillance. During their campaign, each monk was interrogated by three officials of the bureau. The main content of the ‘Patriotic re-education’ campaign in monastery includes, denouncing the Dalai Lama, opposing ‘splittist’ activities, accept Tibet as inseparable part of China and agree to fight against the ‘separatist’ block. Moreover, the campaign was aimed to transform all the monks into a patriot who believes in ‘love your country’ and ‘love your religion’.

“During ‘Patriotic re-education’ campaign, officials gave each of us four books to study. The books include topics like history, politics and legal system, all related to the campaign. The four books are, 1) Handbook of History of Tibet, 2) Handbook of Crushing the Separatist, 3) Handbook of Contemporary Policies and 4) Handbook on Law. All of us were then called for a meeting where the officials begin to teach from the prescribe texts. We were then divided into groups and made to discuss the chosen topic.

“The officials used force on us to undergo re-education and to denounce the Dalai Lama. Upon refusal, we were threatened, interrogated, abused and some were even expelled from the monastery. This enforced ‘patriotic re-education’ campaign is held in monastery every year without any specific timing. Till 2005, 22 monks from the total of 48 monks were expelled from the monastery after they refused to comply with ‘work team’ official directives during the forced re-education campaign.

“Generally, the ‘patriotic re-education’ campaign is being widely practiced in the

whole of Tibet, but monasteries in ‘Tibet Autonomous Region’ (“TAR”) were subjected to stricter surveillance and duration longer as compared to other areas. Due to this forced re-education campaign in the monasteries in Kongpo Prefecture, the routine religious practices of the monks were deeply hampered. Moreover, this forced ‘re-education’ campaign was even started among the general masses a year ago. For example, before 1996 the annual opera dance rituals were performed regularly at the Langru Jamchoe Monastery. Both general public and monks would come out to celebrate the special occasion. On that day, many devotees would gather at the monastery to pay obeisance to the opera dance ceremony. However from 1996 onwards, the local county officials banned Langru Monastery from performing the highly acclaimed annual opera dance under the pretext that monastery cannot hold religious rituals without the consent of authority. Moreover, they were also forbidden to hold mass gatherings at the monastery. Langru Monastery can only perform important religious ritual after seeking permission from the respective officials of Gyamda County and Nyingtri Prefecture. But they are forbidden from holding mass public gatherings. Public gathering for religious rituals at the monastery are interpreted as an act against the Chinese Government; hence the monastery is being kept under close observation.

“While in monastery, I learnt that Chinese authorities is going to re-launch the ‘patriotic re-education’ campaign around Kongpo Nyingtri Prefecture in October this year, after their failure to yield any concrete result from the campaign launched in Gaden, Drepung and Sera monasteries. I also learnt that this year the campaign targets not only monasteries but also general public and comparatively more rigorous. Thus in September this year, I secretly left the monastery and with heavy heart left Tibet for exile. With the re-launch of ‘patriotic re-education’ campaign, I fear that monks at Langru Jamchoe Monastery might face many hardships. With the induction of new monks at the monastery, the number of monks has increased to 33, however it is highly possible for them to be expelled if they refuse to undergo a ‘patriotic re-education’ campaign.” ◆



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

Training on Strategic Organisational Development to TCHRD

Ms Dorit Lehrack, an experienced consular and trainer for NGO development at grass root, visited Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), Dharamsala on 30 October 2006. She was formerly designated by Heinrich Boll Foundation (HBF), the core funder of TCHRD to train and assist TCHRD on its way towards self sustainability, organizational development support and external outreach. The aim of this visit is to get an understanding about the TCHRD working environment, jointly develop strategic goals and approaches for the next three years of its existence and a follow up plan.

During her four-day visit, she held discussions with some members of the Board of Director and some key partners of the centre and invited ideas and feedback regarding future strategy of the TCHRD. Later, she talked with each individual staff members and invited opinions, share their experience in the work, their output and future vision for the improvement in ones feild.

On 1 November 2006 afternoon, she conducted an all team workshop - strategy conference - at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, DIIR for the staffs to develop a vision which will lead TCHRD through the next years. Next day afternoon, she held a brief session with the staffs about the outcome of the workshop and her visit.

She left the Dharamsala on the evening of 2 November 2006 and will visit the centre again in April 2007 to continue her training and workshop to the TCHRD on strategic organisational development.

TCHRD briefs Students

Mr. Tsering Agloe, Researcher, briefed about current human rights situation in Tibet to a group of students at Yongling School, Mcleod Ganj, on 23 November 2006. The students who are from USA and Europe were in Dharamsala as part of exchange programs.

“Electronic Protection” Workshop

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Information Officer attended “Electronic Protection” Workshop for Human Rights Defenders on 25-26 November 2006 at Hotel Royal Castle Grand, New Delhi, India. The two days workshop was focused on secure online communications with a variety of topics related to the problems computer and Internet users currently face and different methods and tips to solve them.

The workshop was organised by **Front Line-Defender of human rights defender** and hosted by **Bachpan Bachao Andolan** and **Global March against Child labour**. Around fifteen participants from India and Nepal participated in the two days workshop. The workshop was conducted by Wojtek Bogusz of Frontline-Defender of human rights defender. Mr. Tashi also distributed the centre’s Annual Report, Topical Reports and Brochure to the participants of the workshop.



Mr. Tashi Phuntsok with participants of the workshop.