



HUMAN RIGHTS *update*  
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# HUMAN RIGHTS

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*update*

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## Monk sentenced to three years term for "inciting masses"

Khenpo Jinpa, a monk from Chogtsang Talung Monastery in Serthar County, Kardze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"), Sichuan, has been sentenced to three years prison term by the Kardze People's Intermediate Court on 16 July 2007, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). He was charged with endangering the state security through "anti-government propaganda and incitement of masses".

On 8 August 2005, political leaflets calling for Tibetan independence and the Dalai Lama's long life were distributed at the Serthar County festival ground. The Public Security Bureau (PSB) upon investigation into the incident suspected Khenpo Jinpa of being responsible for the activity. On 23 August 2006, three PSB officers arrived at Chogtsang Talung monastery and took him away to a detention centre in Dartsedo County. Three days later ten vehicles full of PSB officers arrived at the monastery. The officers broke the lock at Khenpo Jinpa's room and went on a rampage looking for evidence.

In the morning of 4 November 2006, the PSB brought Khenpo Jinpa to the location of the alleged crime in Serthar County and took pictures of him at the scene. Earlier some individuals suspected of working

with him were also briefly detained for ten to fifteen days for interrogations. Subsequently on 16 July 2007 Kardze People's Intermediate Court sentenced him to three years' imprisonment term. He was later transferred to a prison (Tib: Ra-nga-kha Prison) in Dartsedo County, Kardze "TAP" and continues to be imprisoned there to this day.

Khenpo Jinpa, 37 years old, was born to a nomadic family in Donchen Village, Dartse Township, Serthar County. He was ordained as a monk at the Chogtsang Talung Monastery at a young age. In 1992 he joined the Serthar Buddhist Institute in Larung Valley where he studied and mastered the Buddhist text. Eight years later he returned to his original monastery and accepted the position as abbot of the Chogtsang Talung Monastery. The monastery has an enrollment of about a thousand monks.

In the summer and autumn of 2001, hundreds of monks' huts at the Serthar Buddhist Institute were destroyed by the People's Armed Police and a ceiling of thousand monks was imposed against the total enrollment of about ten thousand. The then Chief Abbot of the institute, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, was held in incommunicado detention for a year. Khenpo died under mysterious circumstances in January 2004.

■



**Khenpo Jinpa**

## Tibetans arrested in Rebkong during Monlam Chenmo

According to information received by the Centre, on 21 February 2008, some 200 Tibetans, mostly monks were arrested in Amdo Rebkong (Ch: Tongren) County, Malho Prefecture, in China's remote northwestern Qinghai Province, of Tibet after a major clash between Chinese authorities and hundreds of Tibetans gathered for the Great Prayer Festival (Monlam Chenmo). During the clash and protests, Tibetans were said to have raised slogans for the independence of Tibet and prayed for the Long Life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The arrest occurred when Chinese authorities in Rebkong ordered the Monlam Chenmo prayer festival to stop and sent in three truckloads of armed police after a clash erupted. Up to 200 armed and unarmed police were sent into the crowd, possibly to prevent anti-Chinese protests.

The local government was, however, forced to release most of those arrested apparently under the pressure of massive demonstrations by the Tibetans. Of those released, many of those were known to have been seriously beaten and tortured during the detention. Two of them who were seriously injured were taken away to Xining, the provincial capital, for medical treatment.

According to one report, a protest erupted when police tried to question one man, other Tibetans gathered around him, and a group of Tibetans outside a restaurant began shouting slogans and attacking police with sticks and stones. As reinforcement to the existing police forces, more police forces were sent and around 200 people—mostly monks—were detained although most have since been released. According to one source, during the clash and protests, many Tibetans raised slogans for the independence of Tibet and prayed for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the

demonstration went on until about 10 p.m. The protest gained intensity when police detained some monks and took them away. However, under the pressure of a massive Tibetan demonstration, the local government was forced to release all of those who were arrested.

Chinese authorities in Tibet continue to restrict Tibetan people's freedom of religion, expression and association and as result many are imprisoned for peacefully exercising their basic human rights. The Centre will continue to monitor situation in Rebkong and update as and when information surfaces. ■

## A Buddhist shrine under threat of demolition

A Buddhist shrine built by the local Tibetans in Shatoe village, Dingri County, Shigatse Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") was ordered to be removed by the Chinese authorities according to information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy ("TCHRD").

According to the information, around 54 families in Shatoe village in Dingri County came up with a plan to construct a Buddhist shrine for religious purposes. The construction of a Buddhist shrine was a collective wish of the local Tibetans in the village.

The construction of the shrine started as early as March 2007 by local Tibetan volunteers. It was funded locally through donations and contributions. The local volunteers collected over 18,000 yuan to start the construction of the shrine and construction was completed in the space of a few months.

In June 2007, the officials of Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) summoned the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and accused

the local Tibetans for constructing the shrine without procuring permission from the government. The PSB also accused the local Tibetan of harboring intentions to convert the small shrine into a major monasteries to house monks and nuns as time passes by. The security officials issued a dire ultimatum to the local Tibetans to either remove the structure by themselves within a period of one month or faces forcible demolition.

The Buddhist shrine is an important centre of faith and occupies prominent space in local people's day to day life. The local Tibetans, particularly the elders come to pray and worship at the shrine every day. Apart from the religious rituals and prayers, the shrine also serves as a place for local Tibetans to gather and discuss their day to day life activities.

The order to demolish the shrine has stirred deep misery and worry amongst the local Tibetans as the threat becomes more imminent with each passing day. The village elders have even approached the higher Chinese authorities to present their position that the shrine should not be demolished.

Fortunately, in a stroke of luck, the demolition order coincided with the change of the local officials of the Dingri County. The newly appointed local official Mr. Namgyal gave assurances to the higher Chinese authorities during a County level meeting that the shrine will not house monks and nuns. He also pledged that he will oversee the shrine to make sure that the shrine will not expand in the future. In the light of Mr. Namgyal's pledge, the demolition of the shrine was put on a hold but not without a possible threat in the future. The local Tibetans were still living with a fear of what lays in store for their treasured shrine. ■

*profile*

# POLITICAL PRISONERS

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

## Biography of Political Prisoner Dolma Kyab

**Dolma Kyab** (pen name: Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso), born in 1976 to Mr Khetsun and Mrs. Dolma in Ari Village, Chilen (*Ch: Qilian*) County, Tsochang (*Ch: Haibei*) "TAP", Qinghai, attended the local primary school in 1984 and later joined the county middle school. After completing his schooling in 1995, he joined a teacher training centre and served as a teacher in a middle school in Chilen County. He later went to a university in Beijing to continue his studies. In 2003, he went to India to learn English and Hindi languages and returned to Tibet in May 2004. Upon return, he served as a history teacher in a middle school in Lhasa until his arrest.

Dolma Kyab had a passion for writing and maintained a manuscript written in Chinese entitled "Restless Himalaya" (*Ch: Sao dong de Ximalayashan*), which was a compilation of 57 chapters on various topics about democracy, the sovereignty of Tibet, Tibet under communism, colonialism, religion and belief etc. Along side this manuscript, he also began writing another on the geographical aspects of Tibet which was comparatively short but touched on sensitive topics about the location and number of Chinese military camps in Chinese occupied Tibet etc. Dolma Kyab was arrested on 9 March 2005. He was

initially detained at the "TAR" PSB Detention Centre, popularly known as Seitru in Tibetan. On 16 September 2005, Lhasa People's Intermediate Court wrongly sentenced him for "endangering state security". According to confirmed information received by TCHRD, Dolma Kyab, has been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for writing and maintaining a manuscript about Tibet. Although his family appealed for a just retrial, the court upheld the sentence on 30 November 2005. Upon the declaration of sentence, he was transferred to the newly opened Chushul Prison in Nyethang; however, prison officials refused to accept him as a prisoner as he had contracted tuberculosis whilst in detention. After treatment, he was transferred to Chushul Prison in March 2006 soon after the Tibetan New Year.

Dolma Kyab's physical and psychological condition is unknown. He continues to be imprisoned at Chushul Prison, which has not been known to foreign observers until recently and which reportedly houses many of Tibet's monks and political prisoners under heavy surveillance.

Dolma Kyab's arrest is a clear indication of China's outright clampdown on freedom of opinion and expression in Tibet. In a letter smuggled from prison and addressed to the United Nations, he



**Dolma Kyab**

condemned the severity of his sentence, saying

***"I have written a book which was not yet published. In this book I wrote about democracy, freedom and the situation in Tibet. That is the main reason for my conviction, but according to Chinese law this would be not enough reason to give me such a sentence".***

■

## Abbot and five other Tibetans arrested in Golog

Chinese authorities arrested an abbot and six other Tibetans from Golog Tong Kyab Monastery in Gade County, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture “TAP” Qinghai province, according to the confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy “TCHRD”

In mid July 2007, the Chinese Government arrested a number of Tibetans in the Golog region. On 16 July 2007, a large number of Chinese soldiers suddenly entered the Golog Tong Kyab Monastery and arrested an abbot and a monk.

During the raid, the People’s Armed Police (PAP) arrested Thupwoe, Rigphel from Gonma Toema Township, Kundo, Rigkyab from Donkha Township and a large group of local Tibetans in a surprise raid. They were arrested for protesting against the construction of mosque by Hui Chinese businessman in Amdo Golog, Gadhe Prefecture “TAP”. The local Tibetans remain severely opposed to the construction of the mosque. Apparently the mosque was built by Hui Chinese without procuring permission from the local officials.

In response, the local Tibetans protested, damaged the mosque and restaurants owned by Hui Chinese. The local Chinese authorities blamed the local Tibetans’ fury and rampage as one fanned by the monks of Golog Tong Kyab Monastery. The Chinese authorities ordered the Tongkyab Monastery to pay the compensation for causing damages to restaurants and the mosque. However, the Golog Tong Kyab Monastery denied their involvement and refused to accept charges leveled by the Chinese authorities.

For many months Golog Tong Kyab Monastery remained under the close scrutiny of the Chinese authorities. The Democratic Management Committee (DMC) conducted “Patriotic Re-education” campaigns in the monastery but was met with stiff resistance from

the Golog Tong kyab Monastery monks.

The local Chinese authorities had previously summoned the local Tibetans and clergy for a meeting where the higher Chinese authorities ordered monks not to leave the monastery and restricted their movements.

There were around 150 monks in Golog Tong Kyab Monastery under virtual state of house arrest. The local Chinese authorities in Gade have watching been former abbot of Golog Tong Kyab Monastery Tsag Nor, who was wanted in a case related to the conflict between Hui Chinese and the local Tibetans. He was dubbed by the Chinese authorities as the chief ring leader. The local Chinese authorities widely suspected him of fleeing to India after his sudden disappearance. He was a disciplinary teacher at the Golog Tongkyab Monastery for 6 years and also worked as treasurer for past 20 years at the monastery. He was expelled from his post at the monastery after he refused to attend the patriotic re-education campaign conducted by the Chinese authorities. The local Chinese authorities even announced cash toward of thirty thousand Chinese yuan as a reward to anyone who are an information about the former abbot Tsag Nor. On 17 December 2007, the abbot Nyiwoe was arrested from the Tong Kyab Monastery. Meanwhile in Golog, the Chinese authorities had already convicted and sentenced six Tibetans for defying the government enforced “patriotic education” conducted in Golog Tong Kyab monastery by the DMC. The abbot of Golog Tong Kyap monastery, Nyiwoe was sentenced to 8 years in prison. The five other monks i.e. Shekyab, 30 received two years sentence, Kundrup, 30 and Tsechoe, 30 received one and half years of imprisonment. The six Tibetan monks are currently serving their prison sentence in Gade prison, Gade County, Golog “TAP”

TCHRD has received no further information about the well being of the imprisoned monks at this point in time and strongly criticizes the intervention of the Chinese government in religious affairs of the monks of Tong Kyab Monastery. ■

## School for discrimination

A 19-year-old, Chemi Dorjee from Ru Town, Gungthang Township, Kyirong County, Shigatse Prefecture, Tibetan Autonomous Region (“TAR”) testified to Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) about the prevailing discriminatory practices by the Chinese authorities in the employment and educational sectors.

Chemi Dorjee told TCHRD, “I came from a semi-nomad family in the Kyirong County, located in the southern part of Tibet. My mother was a local leader in the area. After completing my primary education from Gungthang School, I enrolled for further studies. I was then asked to sit for an entrance examination and I passed it without much difficulty. However, after passing my entrance examination, I was asked to procure a medical certificate from a government doctor.

During the medical check up, I was diagnosed with a minor liver problem. Owing to my minor liver problem, I was barred from continuing my further studies in the mainland China. Strangely one of my friends, Thupten cleared the entrance examination but was again denied access for further studies by Chinese government with other excuses. Instead of him, a daughter of a school principal was sent to mainland China for further studies.

We were not discouraged. Neither our parents nor relatives were disappointed with the local Chinese authorities. The problem persisted and

so did the discriminatory practices. For three years we were not able to go for further studies in the mainland China.

In three years time, the government conducted the exam for further studies for the children of government civil servants. Out of many, only five children were selected for further studies through a competitive examination. I sat down for the selection test.

The subjects such as traditional herbal medicine, child care, traditional art, Tibetan modern art and agricultural science were taught in the middle school. However, our Tibetan students instantly faced a language problem at the school. Difficulty in mastering the Chinese language stops the Tibetan student from progressing along with the Chinese students.

Chemi Dorjee speaks to TCHRD, "I thought of taking up veterinary science so that I could treat domestic animals in my Ru Town. However, my primary education was too insufficient to take up such specialized subject like veterinary science. In that way we were sent to collect simple survey rather than to undergo serious educational training".

Afterwards we returned to our respective places. Unfortunately I learnt that there were no jobs for us. The previous County official who promised them with jobs had been transferred to some other County administration. The new County officials sent us back empty handed stating that there were no job vacancies.

Chemi Dorjee testifies to TCHRD, "Generally speaking, higher education and educational scopes were only in names but the situation on the ground presents completely different scenario. This is the dilemma faces by the Tibetan students. Schools were often the fertile grounds for instilling the principles and ideologies of communism and socialism in the minds of young impressionable Tibetan students. The Chinese government says something but does something else. In midst of all those disappointments, I come to India to receive a proper and sound education".

## "Patriotic re-education" campaign forces monks to commit suicide

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has learnt that two senior monks from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery committed suicide following a "patriotic campaign" in the monastery. The Tashi Lhunpo Monastery is the traditional seat of the successive Panchen Lamas of Tibet, in Shigatse Prefecture, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR").

As a sign of the bitter struggle between the Chinese Communist Party and the faith of Tibetan Buddhism, 71 years old Gyaltsen Tsepa Lobsang was the first known monk to commit suicide in Tibet on 8 September 2007 as he defied the orders of the Democratic Management Committee (DMC) during the "patriotic education".

The "DMC" is a branch unit of the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) of the Chinese government whose key work is to stem off the influence of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people's allegiance towards Tibetan Buddhism and the Dalai Lama in the religious institutions.

On the 8th of November, another senior monk of Tashi Lhunpo Yangpa Locho was found dead during the ongoing "patriotic education" campaign in the monastery. During the campaign sessions the monks were forced to denounce the Dalai Lama during denunciation sessions as a "wolf in sheep skin". In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition denouncing ones revered 'root guru' is considered as the most heinous act of 'blasphemy' and breaking away from the cardinal precepts.

A decade since the launch of the "patriotic education" campaign in Tibet's religious institutions, there has been virtually no reports of suicides in the monastery. In 1995, a disciple of Yangpa Locho was arrested and imprisoned by the Chinese authorities. He was involved in a protest against the Chinese government over the appointment of another boy Panchen Lama and the disappearance of the boy Panchen Lama recognized by the Dalai Lama in 1995.

The appointment was marred by protests in the Tashi Lhundup Monastery.

According to sources, Yangpa Locho played a prominent role in the recognition of the reincarnation of the tenth Panchen Lama. Following the protests against China's appointment of another boy Panchen Lama, the Tashi Lhunpo and its monks has become the prime target of "patriotic education" campaign.

The Chinese authorities mistreated Yangpa Locho by quashing his publication of religious texts, ostracizing and expelling him from the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. He committed suicide and died at the home of his relatives.

The two of at senior monks and monastery had reportedly left behind their suicide notes according to a report given by a monk from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. ■



# TCHRD ACTIVITIES

*Bulletin*

## TCHRD conducts workshop on “Democratisation and Local Governance” among Tibetan communities in Darjeeling and Gangtok

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 and surveys on “Democratization and Local Governance” of the Tibetan communities residing in and around Darjeeling and Gangtok from 18 to 23 February 2008. The workshops were particularly aimed at preparing the general public to elect their Settlement Officer and constitute a 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 a Local Assembly. The Centre’s staffs were divided into three groups to collect public opinion and verdict on the Settlement Officer and the Local Assembly.

In the second phase, the Centre organized workshops for the heads of the various institutions, member of various Tibetan Associations, representatives of Tibetan Freedom Movement, Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC) and Regional Tibetan Women Association (RTWA).

In the third phase, a mass public talk was organized for the general public residing in



**Mr. Thupten Lungrik, Minister of Education**

the areas. It is in the purview of these three phases of the work, the Workshop on “Democratization and Local Governance” was carried in Darjeeling and Gangtok.

### The finding of survey

The Centre’s staff was divided into three committees in conducting the survey. The survey was done from 15-16 February 2008 in Darjeeling, Sonada Tibetan Settlement, Mirik, Kurseong, Phokrapong and Tibetan Refugee Self Help Handicraft Center in Lebogn. Out of the 232 Tibetans surveyed, 221 people were in favour of setting up the Local Assembly at the grassroots level and while 11 people thought that there was no need for setting up the Local Assembly at the grassroots level. Simultaneously, 142 people were in favour of a settlement officer appointed by the Tibetan Government in exile while 91 people were in favour of electing a settlement officer by the people.

In Gangtok, a survey was conducted from 19-20 February 2008, at the Guru Lhakhang and the Cholsum Tibetan Community Hall. A total of 71 Tibetan entered the polls and 63 people saw the needs of a Local Assembly at the grassroots

level while 8 people thought that there was no need for setting up a Local Assembly. In Gangtok, 47 people were in favour of a settlement officer being appointed by the Tibetan Government in Exile and 23 people were in favour of a settlement officer being elected by the people themselves.

The opinions were later categorized and studied. The general public’s worries and concerns were underlined and picked out. The outcome of the opinions and concerns were then handed out to speakers. People’s doubts and misconceptions were forwarded to the speakers. 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.

### Workshop in Darjeeling and Gangtok

The first Workshop was organized at Manjushree Center for Tibetan Studies, Darjeeling on the 18 and 19 February 2008. The workshop was attended by the Settlement Officer, members of Tibetan Freedom Movement, representatives of Handicraft Centre, Regional Tibetan Youth



**Mr. Pema Jungney, MP**



**Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, Election Commissioner**



# TCHRD ACTIVITIES

*Bulletin*



**Mr. Urgen Tenzin, Executive Director, TCHRD**

Congress, Regional Tibetan Women's Association and representatives from various other institutions and associations.

From 21-22 February 2008, the second workshop was held at Hotel Tibet in Gangtok where more than 90 people attended the workshop. The participants include representatives from the Tibetan Freedom Movement, Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, Regional Tibetan Women Association, Monastic Institutions, teachers of the Tibetan School and member of different associations in Gangtok.

## 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 being restricted and confined to one appointed by the headquarter in Dharamsala.

**Mr. Pema Jungney**, a veteran parliamentarian spoke in length about the charter of Tibetans in exile, the requirement

of local assembly as per the charter, the functioning of the local assembly and the power of local assembly.

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

**Mr. Urgen Tenzin**, Executive Director gave detailed accounts of democratisation of Tibetans in exile and then spoke at length about the rights and duties of people in the democracy.

**Mr. Jampa Monlam**, Assistant Director presented insight into the Human Rights Situation in Tibet and the structure of the People's Republic of China as per the law and in reality.

## Public talk in Gangtok

Due to unstable political scenario in Darjeeling, we were unable to organise a public talk in Darjeeling to general public as slated on 20 February 2008. However, Gangtok the public talk was held at Hotel Tibet on 23 February 2008. The talk was aimed at reaching out to a wider audience.

**Mr. Thupten Lungrik**, Minister of Education issued words of encouragement that the general public can appoint or elect their own chosen Welfare 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 slowed down 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.

**Ms. Pema Jungney**, a veteran Parliamentarian emphasised the need for efficient and successful functioning of Local Assembly. She also called on the general public to participate more in order to set up



**Mr. Jampa Monlam, Assistant Director, TCHRD**

local governance and the functioning of grassroots democracy.

## Conclusion:

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

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 the 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 18 February to 23 February 2008 in Darjeeling and Gangtok. ■