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Drapchi Prison

TIBET'S MOST
DREADED PRISON



TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is the first Tibetan non-governmental organisation (NGO) to be formed with the mission "*to highlight the human rights situation in Tibet and to promote principles of democracy in Tibetan community.*" TCHRD is independent of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, and is based in Dharamsala, India. It is funded by donations from individual supporters and foundations around the world. It was founded in January 1996 and was registered as an NGO on 4 May 1996. In addition, a branch office has been set up in Kathmandu, Nepal. Our objectives are to protect and promote human rights of Tibetan people and to build our society based on the principles of human rights and democracy.

TCHRD conducts regular, systematic investigations of human rights abuses in Tibet and publishes research documents on various human rights issues confronted by the Tibetan people in Tibet.

TCHRD attends the UN Commission on Human Rights and takes part in other national and international conferences to highlight the human rights situation in Tibet.

TCHRD organises various educational programmes like workshops and seminars in an effort to empower the Tibetan community to play an important participatory and vigilant role in a democratic future Tibet. We produce various educational materials on human rights and democracy in both Tibetan and English languages.

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OTHER TCHRD PUBLICATIONS

1996 Annual Report: *Tibet: One More Year of Political Repression* (English and Tibetan editions) • 1997 Annual Report: *China in Tibet: Striking Hard Against Human Rights* (English and Tibetan editions) • *The Next Generation: The State of Education in Tibet Today* (1997) • *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • 1998 Annual Report: *Tibet: Crackdown on Humanity* • *Behind Bars: Prison Conditions in Tibet* (1998) • *Closing the Doors: Religious Repression in Tibet* (1998) • *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Tibetan Translation) (1998) • *Democracy: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *Fearless Voices: Accounts of Tibetan Former Political Prisoners* (1998) • *Human Rights: An Education Booklet* (1998) • *South East Asia: Human Rights NGO Seminar on Tibet* (Proceedings) (1998) • *A Guide to Human Rights* (1999) • *A guide to Democracy* (1999) • *Tales of Terror: Torture in Tibet* (1999) • *Briefing paper for travellers to Tibet* (1999) • 1999 Annual Report: *Tibet: Tightening of Control* (2000) • *TCHRD Review* (2000) • *Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet* (2000) • *Racial Discrimination in Tibet* (2000) • *Impoverishing Tibetans: China's Flawed Economic Policy in Tibet* (2000) • *Death Profiles of Political Prisoners* (2000)(Tibetan) • *Prisoners of Tibet: Current political prisoners* (2000) • 2000 Annual Report: *Enforcing Loyalty* (2001) • *Prison Diary* (Tibetan) (2001) •

Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms

- Barkhor:** central circumambulation and market area around the Tsuklhakhang Temple in Lhasa
- CCP:** Chinese Communist Party
- Detention Centre** (Ch: *kanshousuo*): place where prisoners are held without charge and subject to investigation prior to sentencing.
- County** (Tib: *dzong*, Ch: *xian*): administrative division approximately equivalent to district
- ICESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- ICCPR:** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Lhasa:** Tibet's capital city
- PAP:** People's Armed Police
- PRC:** People's Republic of China
- Prefecture:** Administrative area below the level of province and above the level of county
- Public Security Bureau (PSB):** local level police force responsible for detaining and arresting suspects and for pre-trial custody
- Rukhag:** Unit within the prison complex
- Splittist** (Tib: *khadrel ringluk*): Term used by China to refer to those who advocate independence for Tibet or support for the Dalai Lama
- TAR:** Tibetan Autonomous Region; formally created by China in 1965, this area of central and western Tibet is the only area recognised by China as 'Tibet'
- TAP:** Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture; 10 of these administrative areas were created outside the 'TAR' by the Chinese authorities and are located in north and eastern Tibet (in the Tibetan province of Kham and Amdo)
- UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Right
- Work team** (Ch: *gongzuo dui*, Tib: *lae doen ru khag*): specially formed, temporary units of Party members sent to conduct investigations or give re-education in an institution or locality

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Preface

The year 1998 marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ironically, in Drapchi Prison the same year, Chinese prison guards and Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials violated all human rights norms with the use of brutal force on Tibetan prisoners. On the ill-fated days of 1 and 4 May 1998, the unarmed prisoners were indiscriminately fired upon, beaten, tortured, solitarily confined and their prison sentences extended for having called out for freedom. Eight political prisoners have since died due to severe torture inflicted during the protest incident.

Drapchi Prison is one of the three officially recognised prisons in Tibet, the other two being Lhasa Prison (earlier known as Outrido) and Powo Tramo in Tramo County, Nyingtri Prefecture (Ch:Pomi in Linzhi Prefecture). However, the actual number of prisons and detention centres in Tibet far outnumber the stated figure.

Considered as a notorious dungeon of torture, Drapchi Prison has seven major units, with five units for criminal prisoners and two units for political prisoners - the first, second, fourth, sixth and seventh for male criminal prisoners, the third for female prisoners, both political and criminal, and the fifth unit for male political prisoners. The third and fifth units have been further divided into two sub-divisions each. The seven divisions are currently housed in eight cellblocks. Prisoners who have been sentenced to life imprisonment or execution after two years imprisonment are held in the first unit

It is in Drapchi Prison that majority of the freedom activists has been incarcerated and some have even lost their lives too. Contrary to the recent Chinese official's claim of 115 political prisoners currently

in Tibet , TCHRD estimated 252 political prisoners as of June 2001, who are currently imprisoned in various prisons, detention centres and labour camps. Out of which 129 political prisoners remain incarcerated in Drapchi Prison, including 26 female political prisoners.

A total number of 27 deaths and sentence extensions of 47 political prisoners have been recorded since 1987 in Drapchi Prison alone. The prison officials employ extensive torture methods to extract information from the prisoners as well as to curb their political sentiments and activism in the future. Several deaths have occurred while being tortured whereas others have gradually succumbed to their injuries resulting from the torture. There are others who have died with the prison torture haunting their memories and hampering their health, after their release.

The core objective of this report is to highlight the condition of political prisoners and the undue sufferings they undergo in Chinese-administered prisons in Tibet. Taking into consideration the gravity of the prisoners' condition, the report also intends to appeal to the United Nations, and various international organisations, to bear pressure on the Chinese government to release political prisoners and to stop the inhuman treatment meted out to them. The report is dedicated to the sacrifices made by the courageous Tibetans in the face of Chinese oppression. It is also in memory of the infamous protest in Drapchi Prison in May 1998.

An Insight into Drapchi Prison

History of Drapchi Prison

Located in the north-east outskirts of Lhasa City, Drapchi Prison is the largest prisons in Tibet which holds prisoners sentenced through the judicial system that technically involves investigation, arrest, procuratorial investigation and court verdict. The name 'Drapchi' is derived from Drapchi Monastery, which is located just a mere stone throw away from the prison gate. Regarded as a major centre of torture and ill treatment, countless prisoners have lost their lives at the hands of official maltreatment.

Although the Chinese authorities claim that only male prisoner with sentences longer than five years are incarcerated in Drapchi Prison, there is ample evidence that there are actually many male inmates there with shorter sentences. All religious and every judicially sentenced female political prisoner, regardless of length of term, also serve out their sentence in Drapchi. In the late 1990's, according to Chinese figures, consistently 75 percent of prisoners were of Tibetan nationality.

Originally built as a Tibetan military garrison, Drapchi was transformed into a prison after the Tibetan uprising in 1959, principally for monks and lamas, government officials and the remnants of the Tibetan army. In 1961, Drapchi resembled more of an army camp, and one of the initial prisoners, Palden Gyatso, estimated that there were more than 6000 prisoners, "crammed into every inch of space, shoulder to shoulder".

In 1962 however, Chinese fear of riots led to the Drapchi inmates being dispersed, as a preventative measure, to prisons within their own local areas. India and China were on the brink of war, and the size reduction and scattering of prisoner groups was a precaution, as the "hundreds of thousands" of Tibetan prisoners were seen as a risk to internal security.

By 1964, Drapchi Prison had been transformed into a "modern" prison, and Palden Gyatso recorded that it was regarded as a "model prison, the number one jail". There was even electric light. At this stage the prison had been divided into five different *rukhang*, or units. Many former Tibetan government officials and high lamas including Lobsang Tashi, the last Prime Minister of Tibet, and Lhalu, the former commander of the Tibetan Army in eastern Tibet were lodged in the 5th *rukhang*.

During the 1960s, it was common practise to move prisoners around to prevent the prisoners becoming cohesive group. Inmates were regularly transferred between prison, between *rukhang*, and between cell within the *rukhang*, so that no groups of prisoners were together for any length of time. Any inmates suspected of becoming too friendly were immediately separated and any act of kindness between prisoners was frowned upon. Friendships discovered between individuals who were in disparate levels of "class", as delegated by the authorities depending on the persons' previous social status and political background, could result in "struggle sessions".

The number of political prisoners in Drapchi continued to stay low, however, during the 1960s and 70's, as most prisoners were sent to "reform through labour" camps (Ch:laogai), a punishing physical labour system designed to create high profit for the authorities while reducing prisoner's political fervour. They were also forced to undergo

intensive ideological “re-education” in communist doctrine. In the 1980s, the Chinese started their “liberalisation” and “open door” policies, and many surviving political prisoners were eventually released – those few who had managed to escape the fate of the hundreds who had succumbed to starvation, committed suicide, or were executed.

With the launch of “Strike Hard” campaign by the Chinese government in 1983, many Tibetans from Lhasa were arrested and imposed heavy prison sentences on account of criminal charges. It was during the operation of this campaign that Ven. Lobsang Wangchuk and Tanak Jigme Sangpo took place for political reasons. The number of political prisoners in Lhasa at that time were approximately seven, according to Palden Gyatso, a figure that escalated exponentially after the Lhasa demonstrations in 1987 and 1988. In 1988, a Tibetan policeman estimated the number of Drapchi inmates at over 700, and this peaked in 1997 with an official Chinese figure of 968. According to a letter written by Tibetan political prisoners in Drapchi on 10 March 1997, of these 968 prisoners, 523 of them were political, with ages ranging from 15 to 70 years old.

Post 1987 political prisoners

The 1987 demonstration gave huge impetus to the Tibetan freedom movement like never before. It led to a series of demonstrations and scores of arrests till the imposition of Martial Law on 5 March 1989. On 29 September 1987, 21 monks from Drepung Monastery led a peaceful demonstration for Tibet’s independence in Lhasa. The demonstrations, which occurred within Lhasa thereafter, are on 1 October 1987 and 5 March 1988. On 5 March 1989, Tibetans staged a major demonstration, which resulted in stricter enforcement of military surveillance for almost a year.

Protests of varying nature and aspects took place in many areas, where protesters shouting for Tibet's independence were arrested on "counter-revolutionary" charges. Without any legal trial, these protesters were transferred to different prisons and labour camps and further subjected to severe torture and beatings. Majority of those arrested for political reasons in Lhasa and other nearby regions were taken to Drapchi prison, which is now considered as one of the biggest prisons in the area.

Owing to their participation in independence demonstration on 6 and 12 March 1989, the arrest of about 25 people took place on different dates including Yulo Dawa Tsering, Thupten Tsering, Sonam Wangdu and Lobsang Tenzin. They are the first political prisoners to be imprisoned in Drapchi Prison. Due to spurt of freedom protests in Tibet more especially in Lhasa and the subsequent imposition of Martial Law by the Chinese government on 7 March 1989, many Tibetans were detained and sentenced to different years of imprisonment in Drapchi Prison.

On 17 November 1989, the first two female political prisoners, Rinzin Choenyi and Chungdak, arrived in Drapchi and by early 1990, they had been joined by 23 others. Consequently, prison authorities allocated *rukhang* #3 for the sole use of female political prisoners, and also *rukhang* #5 specifically for the then approximately 100 male political prisoners. This was designed to separate the political inmates from the common criminals and prevent their "contamination" and consequent spread of political dissent. This failed miserably, however, with common criminals not only supporting the political prisoners and joining in the major protests that occurred within Drapchi Prison, but also instigating their own.

Between 1990 and January 1996, there had been sharp increase

in political prisoners in Drapchi Prison and in 1995, there were 162 known current female political inmates. Accordingly, in 1995 and 1996, two new *rukhang* (buildings) were constructed for the female and male political prisoners respectively. Sixty nuns were finally transferred from Gutsa on the completion of the new building and all incoming prisoners were incarcerated in their new buildings with the concept of preventing them from being influenced by the older serving inmates who had proved to be “unreformable”.

In 1996, the female inmates of the “old” and “new” *rukhang* # 3, a designation informally allocated by how long the prisoners had resided in Drapchi Prison, were swapped – with the new prisoners now occupying the older building. Although officially allocated the designations in 1998 of *rukhang* # 6 for the older serving female political prisoners, and *rukhang* #7 for the newer serving prisoners, they are still commonly referred to by the inmates as the old *rukhang* #3 and new *rukhang* #3 respectively. Likewise, the male political prisoner buildings, now officially designated as *rukhang* # 8 and # 9, are also still respectively known as the old *rukhang* #5 and the new *rukhang* #5. The official designations are only used during inter or intra prison activities such as the imposed military drill competitions. Currently, however, due to the drop in numbers of female political prisoners, all the inmates of *rukhang* # 6 and 7, apparently have been combined into a single unit and housed in the new building.

The prisoners’ cell can be reached only after passing through the barriers of main prison gate and three more gates inside. At the second prison gate which has placards in red Chinese letters on both sides of the gate and markings on the ground forbidding outside visitors, one would find an armed sentry guarding the gate round the clock. There are watchtowers on all four sides of the prison with uniformed People’s Armed Police (PAP) patrolling on 24 hours’ surveillance.

As of June 2001, there are 26 female and 103 male political prisoner serving their sentences in Drapchi Prison.

Managing Prisoners

In Drapchi Prison, the officials administer the prisoners by employing extensive torture method and inhuman treatment. Besides the PLA Political Instructor and Prison Head, both of who takes entire responsibility of the prison administration, there are several officials as well in every prison units to assist them in the prison management. The prison head decides most of the prison activities such as reform, re-education and supervision.

Prison laws and regulations are enforced to discipline the prisoners and every prisoner has to strictly abide by it. Two prisoners are appointed as head out of the total of ten prisoners in each cell. Those units that observe every prison rules and regulations are awarded prizes. Likewise, measures of score deduction, threat, blacklist and sentence extension are imposed on those units that violate the stipulated prison rules.

In 1990, eleven solitary confinement cells were established in Drapchi Prison for "undisciplined prisoner". These cells are small, dark and very narrow rooms with just enough room for a prisoner to lie down. With low bedding facility and food standard, the cells are without windows and electric light.

Various forms of torture techniques were employed as a form of punishment which include standing in the sun for long hours without any movement, making the prisoners run for long hours and deprivation of food and water. As a part of ideological reform, every prisoner undergoes forceful acceptance and study of communist ideology and the refusal to go along the Party line results in beatings and torture.

Political education meetings are held everyday in the prison during which time the officials attempt to force recognition of one's "crime" and acceptance of Chinese communist ideology. At every "TAR" annual meeting, all the heads of Department of Supervision, Supreme People's Procuratorate, Supreme People's Court, Public Security Bureau, Department of Justice within "TAR" would submit half-yearly and annual reports detailing the behavioural pattern, adherence to prison laws and 100 point scoring method. Those found "guilty of serious charges" in the context of prison rule face punishments of sentence extension, threats and blacklist.

Reforming Prisoners

Every prisoner is exposed to the two reforms – "re-education through labour" and "reform through labour". It has become somewhat mandatory for prison guards to impose these two-fold reforms to every new prisoner at gun-point.

"Re-education through labour" is designed to oppose any view that contradicts the views and ideologies of the Chinese Communist government. Its ultimate aim is to coerce Tibetans into accepting Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. The People's Republic of China passed into law the Administrative Punishment Law (APL) in March 1996 that specifically governs "administrative sanction" and retains the system of *laojiao* or "re-education through labour". Though essentially applicable to criminal offences, the "re-education through labour" has been widely used against political dissidents. Re-education through Labour Management Committee made up of PSB representatives determines the nature and length of sentences for these political suspects. Deprived of right to counsel or to a hearing, the suspects may be detained for up to three years, with a one-year possibility of extension

for “failure to reform”.

Various reform measures for political indoctrination entail forced study of communist documents and official newspapers and individual acceptance of the communist ideals. Those who fail to comply with the official order are liable for heavy torture and beatings. The authorities have reserved 100 points score to examine prisoners’ response to actual enforcement of the reforms and 55 marks is set as the minimum standard.

“Reform through Labour” is a Chinese policy of bringing about prisoner’s “reform” through enforcement of excessive labour. On 9 December 1994, the National People’s Congress of the PRC promulgated a Prison Law that officially replaced the term *laogai* (reform through labour) with the term “Prison”. The basic aim of the *laogai* system was not simply punishment but also “reform and change for the better”. This includes admitting their “criminal” past and promising to “reform” themselves in accordance with communist doctrine.

The prison rule of the 100 points score stipulates that every prisoner, capable of enduring hardship, must go through labour. The same rule sets aside 45 points for “reform through labour” exercise. To extract profit by subjecting prisoner to excessive labour has been the most common way of amassing extra profit in Chinese prisons.

Drapchi prisoners as a part of “reform through labour” program undertake works on agriculture, horticulture, masonry, carpet-weaving, tailoring, wool-weaving, mechanical operations, fertilisation and so on. Failure to finish and produce substantial result within the stipulated time lead to deduction in working hours from the total labour time due for all prisoners. In such cases, prisoners are either subjected to inhuman treatment or forced to do labour for extra time into the wee hours of the night.

Since January 1990, the political prisoners undertook vegetable cultivation on an expansive 150 Mu (10050 sq.km) field near Sera cemetery from where they plucked fruits from the 3000-plus apple and peach trees. Since the beginning of October 1990, they built more than 50 green-house with each stretching over 1.5 Mu. The prison authorities entrusted each green-house to two prisoners expecting returns at the rate of 15,000 yuan per big green-house and 10,000 yuan per small green-house. To ensure substantially profitable returns, the prisoners work even under the hot atmosphere of plastic coated green-house for long hours irrespective of the weather condition. As a result of hard labour, the prison officials witnessed substantial increase in their annual profit.

From January 1995, vigorous exercises have been introduced for the prisoners instead of horticultural works on the prison field. Various forms of torture are inflicted on the prisoners in the name of exercise such as march pass, running session and standing for long hours without movement which all affect their lives and health.

The female prisoners are given equal labour share like the male prisoner. They work in the green-house for as long as the male prisoners. There have been cases where some women have fell unconscious in the greenhouse unable to cope the summery heat. Most of the women political prisoners make four yarns out of weaving wool in a day and sometimes they work throughout the night to complete one's share.

Healthcare and Diet

The small dispensary located inside Drapchi Prison has very low standard of medical facilities. The officers and doctors refuse to provide medical treatment to ailing prisoners more especially the political prisoners on the pretext that they are feigning illness. The treatment

that some serious patients have received on very rare occasion helps relieve the illness only for a short while with no long-term benefit.

A patient is either taken to People's Armed Police (PAP) Hospital near the prison or released under medical parole only when he or she is in coma, death-bed or has grave illness which could cost exorbitant medical bills. Any recovery attempt by the family members thereafter seems futile and the patient gradually succumbs to illness. Some had to regularly seek medical treatment long after release putting enormous strain on their already lean financial prospect. Most of the death inside Drapchi Prison can be attributed to extensive torture coupled with improper medical treatment.

The prison diet does not even meet the minimum standard set by the Chinese government. The relatives of the prisoner can pay a monthly visit if they produce a required pass. However, the prison guards on the slightest excuse sometimes deny visitation rights and impose limitations on the quantity of food that the relatives bring for their kin member.

The prison food consists of black tea and *tingmo* (steamed bread) for breakfast, slightly fried vegetable either with *tingmo* or rice for lunch, and watery vegetable and *tingmo* for supper. Due to lack of nutrients available in the prison food, many prisoners suffer from malnutrition. The health condition of the sick prisoners deteriorates and fails to recover due to lack of proper food.

The Protests of May 1998

The largest and consequently the most violently suppressed of all protests within Drapchi Prison occurred over the first four days of May 1998. Though the Chinese authorities initially denied in their letter to the UN Rapporteurs in February 1999 that “no such incidents had taken place,” the protests involved nearly every prisoner and resulted in the death of eight Tibetans, and serious injuries, solitary confinement, and sentence extensions for many more.

However, in Geneva on 8 May 2000, China acknowledged the occurrence of the Drapchi Prison demonstrations in early May 1998 to a session of the UN Committee Against Torture at the United Nations in Geneva. In a statement to the Committee, the Chinese delegation said, “In early May 1998, when the prison held a national flag raising ceremony, which was part of the prison’s patriotism education programme, a handful of criminals went so far as flagrantly shouting separatist slogans, insult, besiege and assault prison police officers. They also smashed and destroyed prison facilities, seriously disturbing the normal order of the prison. The prison police officers took measures to put down the situation according to provisions of the Prison Law. In the course of controlling the situation, there was not any case of death caused by beating. As the act of some criminals constituted crimes of undermining the order of prison administration and of instigating others to split the State, the criminals concerned were given additional criminal punishment according to law.”

The following is what happened on 1 and 4 May 1998, according to Tibetan political prisoners involved in the “prison’s patriotism education programme”.

On 1 May 1998, the authorities planned a celebration for International Labour Day, which was to involve a flag raising ceremony, and demonstrations of military drills by the inmates. At 10 am, every non-political prisoner, and over 60 female political prisoners from the new *rukhang* #3 and 60 male political prisoners from the new *rukhang* #5, were assembled in the main prison courtyard. Prisoners from the old *rukhang* #3 and #5 were excluded from partaking due to their previously demonstrated aptitude for political disturbances within the prison. Armed guards surrounded the prisoners, with an especially heavy detail of extra PSB personnel for the female inmates. Camera crews and journalists were present, as well as the heads of Chinese Prison system and of Drapchi Prison.

On the way to assembly ground, the prisoners were made to chant in time with their marching the now standard slogans regarding reformation, and then were lined up in front of the flag dais. They had to sing a nationalist song, "Socialism is Good", and then the Chinese flag was raised to the Chinese National Anthem. During the raising of the flag, two criminal prisoners, Karma Dawa and Karma Sonam, stepped forward and started shouting pro-independence slogans and decried raising the Chinese flag on Tibetan soil. The other prisoners promptly joined in and the two initiators also distributed leaflets pronouncing the same slogans. For a short time, the scene was uncontrollable, but the female inmates were quickly subdued as each guard from the extra detail grabbed their assigned prisoner and gagged them to prevent further shouting. The PAP personnel also quickly moved in and beat the protesting prisoners and warning shots were fired into the air.

Karma Dawa and Karma Sonam were severely beaten and placed in solitary confinement cells along with many other prisoners while rests of the inmates were dispersed to their respective cells. Unlike earlier

times when the prisoners were left shackled outside, workers were called in that evening to convert bathrooms, shops and interrogation rooms into additional solitary cells. Lobsang Lungtok, a 26-year-old monk from Gaden Monastery, and Phuntsok Wangchung, a student from Lhoka Region, were both later transferred to the notorious Powo Tramo Prison in eastern Tibet.

The inmates of old *rukhang* #3 witnessed the whole demonstration scene from their cell windows. However they quickly moved away when gunshots were fired, for they risk being identified for later punishments via security cameras. The restrained inmates from new *rukhang* #3 were returned to their courtyard and beaten with electric batons, plastic tubes filled with sand, the buckle end of belts, and rifle butts. The 16 prisoners who had been identified as being the most active during demonstration were removed to solitary confinement cells, where 13 remained incarcerated for seven months, and the other three were released after three months, just prior to receiving sentence extensions.

The beating session after the demonstration continued for three hours. The notoriously brutal female prison official, Pema Bhuti, accused the prisoners of being overfed and overclothed due to the generosity of prison officials, and she attributed the above reason for the prisoner's excess energy to protest. The inmates when returned to their cells were deprived even of thin mattresses and forced to sleep on bare concrete floor. The same evening, the inmates of new *rukhang* #3 commenced a hunger strike that was to last six days, in protest against the beatings and solitary confinements.

Three days later, the prison authorities attempted to stage another almost identical ceremony for International Youth Day on 4 May 1998. Camera crews were present again for meeting on the prison ground, as

were the head of TAR Prison Authorities and delegation of heads of PSB officials. Except for the inmates from the 'old' *rukhang* and the two 'new' *rukhangs*, all the non-political prisoners were designated to attend the meeting. This time however, only 20 female prisoners were selected to attend because others were too weak physically from the hunger strike and even those who attended required assistance to walk to the courtyard for the ceremony.

Once again at 10 am, the chosen prisoners were lined up in front of the flag dais. Unsurprisingly, once again during the raising of the flag, the prisoners raised pro-independence slogans, led by Lobsang Gelek), a monk from Khangmar Monastery. As a precautionary measure, guards and PAP personnel were present in force, in an attempt to prevent any repeat of the protest of the previous ceremony. The PAP are reputedly trained in special techniques of inflicting physical punishment and many former inmates have testified that their beatings are different and worse than those inflicted by standard prison guards. Armed with electric batons, iron bars, and wooden police batons, they surrounded the whole area.

While the demonstration was going on, the PAP personnel and guards fired into the air and rushed in to beat the protestors. The PSB officials present on the ground were forced to flee for shelter as they found themselves in the line of fire. The female inmates, who were too weak to join in the protest, were immediately returned to their cells and remained locked in with some of the guards. The male political prisoners after being severely beaten were returned to their compound. Six inmates who had been the more active protestors were identified and placed in solitary confinement cells. The rest were returned to their cells and the guards then individually interrogated each prisoner. Tortured by Paljor, a prison guard notorious for his cruelty, Ngawang Tensun confessed to his participation in the protest but declared that

he would willingly do the same again. He was also placed in solitary cell after further beatings. Some prisoners who were placed in solitary confinement cells on 1 May like Norbu Phuntsok, Migmar, Kapasang etc were later transferred to "TAR" PSB Detention Centre and Lhasa PSB Detention Centre. The *rukhang* cells were also rearranged so that friends were separated, causing additional feelings of loneliness and sadness amongst the prisoners recovering from injuries that had been inflicted over the two days of protests.

The inmates of old *rukhang* #3 were observing the ceremony from their windows. When the protest started, they spontaneously joined in the shouting of pro-independence slogans and broke the windowpanes. As the protest was unplanned, chaos reigned for about half an hour before guards could be dispatched to subdue the prisoners. The individual inmates were beaten by groups of PAP and guards, in the cells and out in the courtyard, for the next three and half-hours.

Pema Bhuti was once again prominent, repeating her accusations of overfeeding and excess clothing. She personally beat each prisoner before singling out those individuals for further maltreatment who she had a personal grudge. Of the ten included, Ngawang Sangdrol and Lobsang Choekyi, were accused of being instigators of the protest. Ngawang Sangdrol was beaten till she was unconscious and she suffered multiple head wounds. When Phuntsok Pema attempted to protect Ngawang Sangdrol from further beatings, Phuntsok herself got beaten until she could no longer move. The inmates were then locked into their cells without any medical treatment. Ngawang Choezom (lay name Pasang Lhamo) and Ngawang Tenzin (lay name Lhadrol) were placed in solitary confinement cells, and Lobsang Choekyi was transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre for two months solitary confinement before being returned to Drapchi Prison.

The inmates from the old *rukhang* #5 were also excluded from attending the ceremony but, unlike the inmates from the female section, they did not have a direct view of the proceedings. However, when the prisoners from the new *rukhang* #5 were returned they heard the commotion and immediately started their own protest. Infuriated by the situation outside, the prisoners, led by Ngawang Sungrab and Ngawang Dorjee, broke the main door of the *rukhang*. The commotion greatly alarmed the guards, who rushed into the compound and fired into the air. However, one Chinese guard, Zhu Xiofeng, shot directly into the milling prisoners and seriously wounded Ngawang Sungrab in the abdomen. A fellow prisoner who had some medical training immediately attempted to stem the bleeding with a piece of cloth but to no avail. A Gaden monk, Jamyang, was also shot in the face, which caused severe bleeding.

Tanak Jigme Sangpo tried to intervene at this stage and calm the prisoners down, entreating them to return to their cells. The PAP then surrounded the prisoners with their rifles aimed directly at the group. They then pushed the prisoners around and Jigme Sangpo was knocked to the ground. Infuriated, a Gaden monk, Dawa, grabbed a handful of soil and threw it in the faces of the guards, which subsequently led to his removal and severe beatings with iron bars. Another Gaden monk, Tsering Phuntsok suffered the same treatment, as did Ngawang Dorjee when the guards identified him as one of the instigators. These prisoners along with Ngawang Sungrab, who by this stage could no longer speak, were then transported to hospital.

All the prisoners underwent individual interrogation after severe beatings by the guards. These interrogations started at 6 pm that same day and continued until the following evening. Every prisoner was severely beaten without exception, with many suffering major traumatic injuries. In one instance, Tenzin Dhrodul was dragged along with his

face on the ground that caused abrasion on the skin. Thupten Kalsang, who was only one week away from his release date, was also beaten and suffered two more hours interrogation session the following morning. These two men, along with Tsering Nyima who also was brutally beaten, all now suffer nervous system damage and major psychological trauma.

On the evening of 4 May, Lobsang Choephel, a monk from Khangmar Monastery, unable to cope with Chinese brutality, committed suicide by using iron bars of the toilet window to hang himself. When Choephel's friends discovered his body sometime later, they cried out in despair. The inmates then rushed over to find out the cause of the commotion. Four inmates, Phuntsok Samdup, Lobsang Dawa, Buchung, and Gyaltsen Choephel lifted the body and cried, "they have killed one of us" with the other inmates quickly joining the commotion. The guards who came to investigate the matter, ordered the four men to take over the body to prison infirmary. The prisoners instead headed out into the prison grounds and shouted, "they have killed our man".

The PAP and prison guards later placed Buchung and Gyaltsen Choephel in solitary confinement cells. At the same time, other guards went into the cells yelling at the prisoners, "who has killed your man?" and demanded complete silence. Aggravated, a Lhoka monk, Sonam, grabbed a rifle barrel and held it to his chest, asking the guard to shoot. With the arrival of other guards, the inmates were confined into a single cell. Later, they were taken out individually and tied up with rope before being beaten by five guards who used iron bars, electric prods and anything else that came to hand. Five prisoners suffered head injuries serious enough to require assistance to return to their cells that subsequently resulted in memory loss and concussion. Lobsang Tsunden and Ringzin were so severely injured that they were close to death and were transported to hospital. Though near to his

release date, Lobsang Tsunden's release was consequently delayed due to his injuries.

Not only did the Chinese plan the ceremony for 4 May 1998, but a human rights delegation from European Union, consisting of Beijing based ambassadors from Britain, Austria and Luxembourg, were scheduled to visit that day. Arriving between 11am and 12 noon, they reported later that they were totally unaware of any disturbance within the prison premise, although they were surprised at an open-air briefing just outside the inner prison gates. Otherwise they noticed nothing they suspected as untoward or unusual within the prison complex.

By 4 May 1998, the inmates of new *rukhang* #3 were on the fourth day of their hunger strike, and had become extremely weak and debilitated with some vomiting blood. The next day, they were too weak to stand properly and could not even pick up the small brooms to sweep the compound's courtyard when instructed to do so. The following day the head of TAR Prisons (Tb: lobsotru, Ch: laogaizhu) visited the inmates, accompanied by PSB officials. He asked for the reason of the hunger strike, as they were only harming their own bodies. He seemed interested and asked for more details when the prisoners explained that they had been accused of having excessive quantities of food and that as being the cause of the protest, when in reality there was a major dietary insufficiency. Acknowledging that the prison officials had "made some mistakes", they continued to present an aura of friendliness and managed to end the hunger strike by placing water into the mouths of some of the weakest women and providing them all with a light, boiled rice soup, which they ate. The most debilitated cases were also placed onto IV drips.

Subsequent to the 4 May protests individual interrogations continued until 3 June 1998. Guards went through the *rukhang* cell by

cell, person by person, and needed more than a day to finish a single cell. The interrogations involved multiple guards using plastic tubes filled with sand and electric batons on the individual naked prisoners. On 6 May a male political prisoner, Dugtok, was severely beaten in two different sessions before being placed into a solitary cell. He was so close to death however, that doctors had to be summoned and he was transferred to hospital the next day.

On 13 May, despite the fact that Ngawang Dorjee was still in a poor medical condition in hospital from the beatings he received on 4 May, he was transferred back to the cells of Drapchi Prison. Similarly, Ngawang Sungrab was subjected to an interrogation session by prison guards although still undergoing treatment at the hospital. The guards returned on 26 May, during the immediate recovery phase following a surgical procedure for the abdominal gunshot wound inflicted during the 4 May protest, and this time utilised electric batons, and enforced constant movement, throughout the torture session. Ngawang Sungrab was transferred back to Drapchi Prison the following day regardless that he had only just undergone major surgery, and placed alone in a cell, hence denying him any possible assistance from fellow inmates.

On 3 June the female prison staff (*tutrang*) arrived at the two female *rukhang* with Chinese songbooks and, referring to the May protests, told the inmates of the new *rukhang* #3 that “your case of [misbehaviour] last time hasn’t been finalised.” They were then instructed to sing twelve Chinese and Tibetan songs, all in praise of the Party, including the Chinese National Anthem. The political prisoners refused to sing, so the officials demanded that they sing the Tibetan songs as they could not deny knowledge of these. However the inmates were steadfast in their refusal to participate, and so they were made to stand immobile under the intense summer sun. They had paper placed under one arm and between their knees, and a cup of

water positioned on their head, and any loss of these articles resulted in beatings. They were rotated to constantly face the sun, and individuals were then taken aside for interrogation involving beatings and electric shocks. This regime continued for the next four days, with prisoners allowed only one ten minute break for food and toilet needs per day. Any prisoner who collapsed was beaten.

On Sunday 7 June the prisoners of the new *rukhang* #3 were given a half day reprieve. That morning Tsultrim Sangmo and Drugkyi Pema were seen to be in poor condition from the brutal treatment meted since the May protests. However, after lunch Choeying Kunsang witnessed the bodies of two nuns, each light enough to be cradled easily in the arms of a single guard, carried out to a waiting vehicle. Inmates from the new *rukhang* #3 followed behind crying out, "where are you taking our people?" and "you killed our people!" The prison staff replied that, "some of your people committed suicide in the storeroom. We have to take them to the hospital to try to revive them." In all five nuns from the new *rukhang* #3 died that afternoon, reportedly from hanging or suffocation - Tsultrim Sangmo, Drugkyi Pema, Lobsang Wangmo, Khedron Yonten, and Tashi Lhamo. Prison officials refused permission for any detailed examinations or to release the bodies to their families for traditional Tibetan funerary procedures. Either process would have revealed the extent and nature of any injuries to the prisoners. The bodies were cremated by the authorities, who all the while were telling the inmates that the five nuns were undergoing medical treatment. Information of their deaths did not reach the *rukhang*, and friends only discovered the truth after their release.

In the aftermath of the 7 June deaths, both *rukhang* #3 underwent full scale lock-downs that lasted until the summer of 1999. Prisoners were totally restricted to their cells and not even allowed out to empty the toilet bucket. Common criminals were inserted into the cells to

monitor the political inmates, and surveillance cameras were installed in every cell. This effectively made it impossible for the inmates to ascertain the condition of injured friends in other cells and inhibited communications even within the cells. Cell conditions were very cramped as each small room held 12 prisoners, and consequently when the inmates were finally released they not only suffered temporary impairment to their vision after being confined in the dim conditions for so long, but also experienced difficulties in walking. Visitation rights were suspended for up to as late as June 1999, only gradually reinstated in a cell by cell basis. The major impact of this restriction aside from the deprivation of information for the inmates was the loss of the vital extra food supply provided by the prisoners' families. Accordingly, the malnutrition of the inmates increased. Additionally, all the papers, pens, books, letters, and prisoners' sentencing documents from the two *rukhang* #3 were confiscated and burnt.

Having learnt from the previous demonstrations in Drapchi in 1990 where a high level of prisoner support was generated in the Lhasa populace, directly following the protests in May 1998 the prison authorities went to extraordinary lengths to prevent any information from filtering out from the prison grounds. Prison staff were prohibited from leaving the compound for several days and threatened with criminal proceedings if they disclosed any information relating to the events that had occurred within the prison. Several inmates due for release soon afterwards had their release dates delayed and were then threatened with severe reprisals if they talked with anyone regarding the protests or the subsequent deaths.

Solitary Confinements following the 4 May 1998 protest

From 'old *rukbag* #3':

Solitary confinement without sentence extension

1. Ngawang Choezom, lay name Pasang Lhamo, age 30, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 21 March 1992, sentence 11 years. Length of solitary confinement following 4 May 1998 unknown.

2. Ngawang Tenzin, lay name Lhadrol, age 34, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995, sentenced to 5 years. Length of solitary confinement following 4 May 1998 unknown.

From 'new *rukbag* #3':

7 months solitary confinement without sentence extension

1. Damchoe Dolma, age 28, Shar Bumpa Nunnery. Detained 25 February 1995, sentenced to 6 years for participating in a demonstration.

2. Khetsun Yeshe, lay name Lhagpa, age 25, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 8 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration.

3. Lobsang Choedron, age 26, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 6 July 1996. Sentenced to 3 years.

4. Namdrol Wangmo, lay name Yangdrol, age 30, Shar Bumpa Nunnery. Detained 25 February 1995. Sentenced to 6 years for participating in a demonstration.

5. Ngawang Choezom, lay name Oezer Dolma, age 29, Chimelung Nunnery. Detained 10 March 1995. Sentenced to 4 years

for participating in a demonstration.

6. Ngawang Dsompa, lay name Jangchub Dolma, age 28, Chimelung Nunnery. Detained 10 March 1995. Sentenced to 4 years for participating in a demonstration.

7. Palchen, age 28, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration.

8. Rinchen Pema, lay name Migmar, age 25, Galo Nunnery. Detained 28 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration.

9. Sangmo, age 25, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 2 February 1995. Sentenced to 6 years for participating in a demonstration.

10. Sangye Choedron, lay name Tsamchoe Dolkar, age 30, Rangjung Nunnery. Detained 14 February 1995. Sentenced to 6 years for participating in a demonstration.

11. Tsenyi, age 24, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 6 July 1996. Sentenced to 4 years.

12. Tseten Dolkar, age 28, Nakar Nunnery. Detained August 1995. Sentenced to 6 years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa.

13. Yeshe Choedron, age 28. Chimelung Nunnery. Detained 10 March 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration.

Sentence Extensions for participation in May 1998 protests:

1. **Bhuchung**, age 28. Taglung Monastery. Detained November 1993. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase 2 years. Current total seven years.

2. **Che Che**, age 28. Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 2 years to 7 years, solitary confinement for 3 months.

3. **Chogdrup Dolma**, lay name **Namdrol**, age 29. Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to 6 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 5 years to 11 years, solitary confinement for 3 months.

4. **Jangchup Dolma**, lay name **Palkyi**, age 29. Galo Nunnery. Detained 28 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 6 years to 11 years, solitary confinement for 3 months.

5. **Karma Dawa**, a.k.a **Kadar**, age 33. From Gonjo, Chamdo Prefecture, Kham, non-political prisoner. Detained 1995, sentenced to 13 years. Started the demonstration on 1 May 1998. Sentence increase of 9 years to 22 years for 1 May protest. Was not shot during the protest or executed soon afterwards as previously reported.

6. **Sonam Tsering** a.k.a **Kongtruk**, age 24, Kongpo, Gaden Monastery. Detained May 1996 for political reasons, sentenced to five years. Sentence extension of one year for May 1998 protest. Current total six years.

7. **Lhasang**, age 30. Gonsar Monastery. Detained 22 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 4 years to 9 years for 1 May protest.

8. Choekyi Wangmo, age 31, Phenpo Shar Bumpa. Detained 14 June 1994. Sentenced to 4 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Increase of 18 months to 5 ½ years, solitary confinement for 2 months at Gutsa Prison. Released from old *rukhang* #3 on 31 December 1999. Suffering from consequential psychological effects from her time in prison, she was reported to be behaving 'insanely' while in prison but was accused of "faking insanity", and was subjected to 6 months solitary confinement and regular beatings. Choekyi Wangmo is now in the care of her family who she does not even recognise due to memory loss caused by the beatings. She is mentally unbalanced, has sustained many injuries and scars from her punishments, and constantly falls over or collides with objects, necessitating constant care and attendance by her family.

9. Tsephel, 22 years. Serwa Monastery. Detained 1997. Sentenced to 14 years for political activities. Sentence increase of 2 years to 16 years.

10. Lobsang Lungtok, a.k.a. Lobsang Tenzin, age 31. Gaden Monastery. Detained 20 March 1992. Sentenced to 7 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 18 months to 8 ½ years for 1 and 4 May protests.

11. Lokud, age 27, Drepung Monastery. Detained 1997. Sentenced to 5 years after a "work-team" arrest. Sentence increase of 4 years to 9 years for 1 May protest.

12. Ngawang Dorjee, age 25. Gonsar Monastery. Detained October 1994. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase by 3 years totalling 8 years for 4 May protest.

13. Ngawang Kalsang, lay name Norbu Phuntsok, age 30. Jang Taglung Monastery. Detained 22 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increased by 3

years and currently serving 8 years prison term.

14. **Ngawang Ngonkhen**, lay name **Kalsang Phuntsok**, age 28. Tashigang Monastery. Detained 27 March 1994. Sentenced to 6 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 4 years to 10 years, solitary confinement for 2 months.

15. **Ngawang Woebar**, lay name **Wangdu**, age 31. Dechen Sangha Khar Monastery. Detained 2 December 1994. Sentenced to 4 years. Sentence increase of 4 years to 8 years for 1 May protest.

16. **Ngawang Sangdrol**, lay name **Rigchog**, age 24. Garu Nunnery. Detained 17 June 1992. Sentenced to 3 years. Sentence increase in October 1993 of 6 years, additional increase in July 1996 of 8 years, increase in 1998 for participation in the May protests of 4 years, to a current total of 21 years.

17. **Ngawang Sungrab**, lay name **Dawa Tsering**, age 35. Drepung Monastery. Detained 27 September 1991. Sentenced to 10 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 3 ½ years to 13 ½ years for 4 May protest.

18. **Ngawang Tensang**, lay name **Penpa**, age 32. Drepung Monastery. Detained 14 September 1991. Sentenced to 10 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Increase of five years and serving total of 15 years prison sentence.

19. **Tenzin Namdrak**, a.k.a **Pasang**, age 26. Phagmo Monastery. Detained on 18 August 1993. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 4 year to 9 years for 1 May protest.

20. **Phuntsok Rigchog**, lay name **Migmar**, age 25. Tashi Gang Monastery. Detained 31 May 1994. Sentenced to 6 years for initiating a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 4 years to 10 years.

21. **Sonam Choephel**, a.k.a **Nagril**, age 29. Khangmar Monastery. Detained 10 April 1995. Sentenced to 4 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 3 years to 7 years for 1 May protest.

22. **Tenzin**, age 30. Dargey Choede Monastery. Detained June 1995. Sentenced to 4 years for the pasting up of pro-independence posters in his monastery. Sentence increase of 4 years to 8 years.

23. **Lobsang Gelek**, lay name **Penpa**, age 28. Khangmar Monastery. Detained 15 April 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 4 years to 9 years for initiating the 4 May protest.

24. **Tenzin Jigme**, lay name **Ka Pasang**, age 26. Jang Taglung Monastery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 3 years to 8 years for 1 May 98 protest.

25. **Tharpa**, age 24. Phurbu Chok Ritro Monastery. Detained 2 July 1994. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 2 years to 7 years.

26. **Lobsang Jampa**, lay name **Tsering Phuntsok**, age 36. Gaden Monastery. Detained 20 March 1992. Sentenced to 8 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of 18 months to 9½ years for the 1 and 4 May protest.

27. **Yeshe Jinpa**, lay name **Pema Samdup**, age 28. Sungrabling Monastery. Detained 28 June 1993. Sentenced to 6 years from a “work-team” arrest. Sentence increase of 5 years to 11 years for 1 May protest.

Deaths:

1. **Lobsang Choephel**, lay name **Trinley Phuntsog**, age 25. Khangmar Monastery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to 4 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. 4 May 1998 – committed suicide as a result of the tortures received following the protest. Corpse retained for 7 days before notifying and releasing to the family.

2. **Ngawang Tenkyong**, lay name **Lobsang Wangchuk**, age 26. Gaden Monastery. Detained 9 May 1996. Sentenced to 11 years for resisting a monastery “workteam”. Died on 6 May 1998 at the age of 26 following torture and beatings from involvement in the protest.

3. **Khedrup**, age 30. Gaden Monastery. Detained 10 March 1994. Sentenced to 5 years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa. Put into solitary confinement following the May 1998 protest and died 23 May 1998 from torture. Was reportedly transferred to Outridu to a solitary cell there and received further beatings. His body was not returned to relatives immediately. Relatives were forced to fingerprint a certificate acknowledging that the cause of death was suicide.

4. **Tashi Lhamo**, lay name **Youdron**, age 24. Jewo Thekchogling Nunnery. Detained 5 January 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Died allegedly from self inflicted strangulation 7 June 1998.

5. **Lobsang Wangmo**, lay name **Tsamchoe Drolkar**, age 28, Nego Dho Nunnery. Detained 2 February 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Died allegedly from self inflicted suffocation 7 June 1998.

6. **Tsultrim Sangmo**, second ordained name **Ngawang Kunsang**, lay name **Choekyi**, age 25. Phenpo Shar Bumpa Nunnery. Detained 14 June 1994. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Died allegedly from self inflicted suffocation 7 June 1998. According to a news report in 1999, Choekyi's family holds an annual prayer service in her memory during the Tibetan 3rd month.

7. **Drugkyi Pema**, lay name **Dekyi Yangzom**, age 21. Nyemo Dowa Choten Nunnery. Detained 14 February 1995. Sentenced to 4 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Died allegedly from self inflicted suffocation 7 June 1998.

8. **Kundron Yonten**, age 28, Jewo Thekchogling Nunnery. Detained 9 January 1995. Sentenced to 5 years for participation in a demonstration. Died allegedly from self inflicted suffocation 7 June 1998.

A Chronology of Protests at Drapchi Prison

In a letter dated 24 February 1999, the Chinese government responded to an urgent appeal by a coalition of U. N. Special Rapporteurs relating to Drapchi Prison. Within this letter the Chinese authorities claimed that there had “not been a demonstration by offenders since the Tibet Autonomous Region Prison (Drapchi) was founded”.

Although there are few details available of life in Drapchi prison prior to the influx of political prisoners from the Lhasa demonstrations that commenced in 1987, the earliest record available of what undoubtedly was not the only incident of protest during this period, was witnessed in 1963 by the Dalai Lama’s personal physician, Dr. Tenzin Chodrak. As one of the many Tibetans incarcerated at the time, he heard a frustrated inmate shouting from his cell, “I don’t want Marxism, I want religion!” He then saw a home-made Tibetan flag being thrust between the window bars of the cell, which the prisoner waved while shouting, “Tibet is Independent!”

The next known incident was also a courageous solo effort, when on 5 October 1987, 61-year-old Tanak Jigme Sangpo shouted pro-independence slogans during the time that the prisoners were gathered for their meal. For this he received a five year extension to his existing 15 year sentence.

Following the Lhasa demonstrations, outside knowledge of protests within Drapchi has increased dramatically as new information

is constantly emerging, albeit at irregular intervals, with the former political prisoners that escape into exile.

In April 1988, Lobsang Tenzin, a former Tibet University student in Lhasa, was detained for allegedly being involved in the death of a Chinese policeman during the Lhasa protests, and was given a death sentence. This was usually carried out two years after sentencing, however due to international pressure Lobsang Tenzin's penalty was commuted to a life sentence in March 1991. While in Drapchi Prison however, Lobsang Tenzin constantly protested in various ways against Chinese rule in Tibet. In 1989 he wrote a letter expressing support for the ongoing pro-independence demonstrations that was smuggled out to the students of Tibet University. During the same year he also co-formed a group called "Snowlands Youth for Tibetan Independence" with three other prisoners, political prisoner Ganden Tashi, and common criminals Migmar Tashi, and Dawa. When officials discovered the existence of the movement the four inmates were placed in hand and leg manacles and transferred to solitary cells in the nearby Outridu Prison. They were confined in the tiny, totally dark, frigid cells for 34 days. Ganden Tashi was further restrained in the shackles for over one year, and Lobsang Tenzin for 17 months. Ganden Tashi received a sentence extension of nine years, increasing his total term to 12 years. Lobsang Tenzin was already facing the death penalty, and therefore received no extra punishment other than the solitary confinement. Dawa and Migmar Tashi, however, were sentenced to execution, which was carried out on 27 May 1989.

Throughout 1989 political prisoners were also constantly managing to defy the authorities by smuggling lists of arrests out of Drapchi, so as to inform the prisoner's relatives. Many of these lists even made it out to human rights groups outside Tibet.

The first known group protest within Drapchi took place in 1990, instigated by none other than Lobsang Tenzin. A young Tibetan student, Lhakpa Tsering, was originally detained in 4 November 1989 at the age of 17. He suffered major physical trauma from the beatings and torture he received during his arrest and original detainment in Gutsa Detention Centre, which were exacerbated by those he received during his time in Drapchi Prison. Despite his inability to stand upright, difficulty in walking, and constant abdominal pain, his requests for medical treatment were constantly denied and the prison doctors reported him to the authorities as a malingerer. Tibetan medicines provided by fellow inmates proved ineffectual, and on December 13 1990 Lhakpa Tsering was in a critical condition. Due to prisoner agitation during that night prison officials eventually moved him to the prison dispensary and thence to the hospital the next morning. However he was returned that evening after a cursory treatment of a couple of injections and pronounced to be "without any serious injuries."¹ That night his condition deteriorated even further and this time he died in transit to the hospital on December 15 1990.

A criminal prisoner apparently broke the news to Lobsang Tenzin the next morning and the news spread quickly through the political prisoners. Lobsang Tenzin tore his sheet in half and wrote "We mourn the death of Lhakpa Tsering" and "We demand improvements to the conditions of political prisoners" on the two halves. The sheets were held up like banners and the prisoners marched into the courtyard. Lobsang Tenzin and another inmate, Pema, walked in front carrying the first banner, and were followed by Kalsang Tsering and Gaden Gyathar with the second banner. When they entered the yard the prisoners from all the other cells in *rukbag* #5 lined up into four columns behind them, a total of over 150 prisoners. Every male political prisoner in Drapchi at the time participated in the protest, with the single exception of one prisoner whose sentence was due to expire in a few

weeks. The other inmates eventually persuaded him that it was more important to be released and get the information to people outside Drapchi, than to partake and face the expected sentence extensions with the others. The group of prisoners marched towards the main office building, less than 100 yards from the *rukbag*, "but that distance seemed like miles, such was the courage required to cover it."²

As it was a scheduled break for the prisoners there were no guards present and they approached the single Chinese guard at the administration building, asking him if the information regarding Lhakpa Tsering's death was correct. After confirming this, the guard fled into the building, eventually returning with all the guards, who rushed out to take up positions surrounding the prisoners, brandishing electric batons and setting up a Bren gun on a wall.

Eventually, the prisoners were approached by a small group of officials, consisting of the Head of Drapchi prison, the Chinese doctor who ran the prison dispensary, and the Director of prison, all surrounded by a group of guards and other officials. The Head official shouted at the prisoners, asking, "What are you doing?" and Lobsang Tenzin gave a detailed account of what had happened to Lhakpa Tsering and the beatings that he had received. He demanded that his death be investigated and the medical officers and guards involved punished. Another prisoner then demanded that a post mortem be carried out in the presence of a prisoner representative, and, shrewdly, the Head then allowed each prisoner to speak their grievances. Consequently, the group started to calm down, as this was the first time they had been allowed to speak freely. The Head then blithely promised that Lhakpa's case would be thoroughly investigated and all those negligent would be punished. He also claimed that the complaints regarding beatings and tortures would be investigated, thus dispersing the demonstration.

The day the protest occurred coincided with the day that criminal prisoners were allowed visitors. This ensured the quick spread of news relating to the protest throughout Lhasa, which generated a large amount of public support for the prisoners, and was probably a major reason that such intense measures were taken in 1998 to prevent information relating to the protests reaching the general public.

A few days later the inmates of *rukhang* #5 were shuffled between cells to separate the groups of prisoners and interrogations commenced. Predictably, all the promises made by the authorities to dispel the demonstration were reneged upon, as a month later they announced that Lhakpa Tsering had died of appendicitis and therefore there was no responsibility accountable for his death. However, post mortem results reportedly leaked in unofficial statements by the doctors and officials present apparently indicated that Lhakpa Tsering's death was due to an internal infection from the failure to treat internal lacerations caused by the beatings. In a testimony by Bhagdro, a former political prisoner, he claims that the prisoners heard that Lhakpa Tsering's lips, nails and gums were black, there was bruising with blood clots under the skin, and evidence of intestinal damage.

As a consequence of the protest, a sentence extension of five to six years for every prisoner was initially announced. However this was soon abandoned when they realised the response that this had generated, and fears of a prisoner riot overrode the desire for inflicting further punishment.

On the 31 March 1991, Lobsang Tenzin was again in the forefront of prisoner dissidence. In preparation for the visit of the U.S. Ambassador to China, James Lilley, he wrote a petition with the assistance of his cellmates, listing all the names of prisoners who had been tortured and details of the maltreatment of a group of nuns in

Gutsa Detention Centre. The letter concluded with an appeal addressed to the American president

A non-political convict informed Lobsang Tenzin when the ambassador arrived, and so he organised permission from an easygoing Tibetan official to take two Chinese inmates to the prison dispensary. At the last minute another prisoner, Tenpa Wangdrak (lay name Sonam), a monk from Gaden Monastery, also decided to accompany them. Walking across the yard when the delegation emerged from the main office, the group was pushed into a nearby kitchen. From there they witnessed the meeting between James Lilley and Yulu Dawa Tsering that had been requested by the delegation. At the conclusion of this meeting Lobsang Tenzin was about to exit the room to present the petition, when Tenpa Wangdrak convinced Lobsang Tenzin to allow him to undertake the task. Unfortunately though, Tenpa Wangdrak rushed over to James Lilley and clumsily thrust the petition into his hand, startling the ambassador. Before he could react it was snatched out of his hand by the female Chinese interpreter.

For their audacity, Lobsang Tenzin and Tenpa Wangdrak were both beaten and confined in solitary for three weeks. However, it was a request by James Lilley that resulted in Lobsang Tenzin's death sentence being commuted down to life imprisonment. The timing of the visit had coincided with the visiting day for political prisoners, but the prisoners refused to meet their relatives while the incident was underway. However, Penpa, a thanka artist from Lhasa Tsemonling, Lobsang Palden (lay name Gyalthar) from Gaden Monastery, and Tenpa Phulchung, an elder accountant from Lhasa, were all forced by the officials to meet their visitors at this time. Consequently the three shouted for the release of Lobsang Tenzin and Tenpa Wangdrak in the presence of their relatives and were immediately beaten, before also being removed to solitary confinement.

Guards were bribed by the inmates to provide Lobsang Tsering and Tenpa Wangchuk with extra rations, and Yulu Dawa Tsering and Ngawang Phulchung were delegated to approach prison officials to urge for their release. Characteristically, all requests were ignored, and on 27 April 1991 the five prisoners were transferred to Powo Tramo Prison in Kongpo, eastern Tibet. A group of at least 20 prisoners, which then swelled to include every male political prisoner, questioned the officials, asking, "Where are our people?" The Chinese guards brushed them aside with claims that it was none of their business, causing a heated exchange to follow. Consequently PAP troops were summoned and surrounded the prisoners. Two Communist Party officials arrived and two Chinese police officers were brandishing their pistols in the air, shouting in Chinese. One officer hit a young monk, Ngawang Rigzin, on the side of his face with his pistol. This acted as a trigger for the soldiers to rush the prisoners and what followed was described as "a carnage of beatings to horrifying to account in words."³

That day, every prisoner of *rukhang* #5 suffered severe beatings, resulting in many extremely severe injuries including bayonet wounds to the head, multiple head injuries, broken jaws, broken ribs, shoulder dislocations, and many cases of total loss of consciousness. There were also innumerable cases of severe overall body trauma from pistol whippings, electric shocks, and there was even, as in the case of Ngawang Kunga, a beating with a pair of leg shackles so extreme that the connecting chain of the manacles broke apart. The officials ignored all these injuries as they placed many of the prisoners in hand- and leg-manacles, and into solitary confinement cells for up to one month. In a situation that was to be repeated seven years later, there proved to be a lack of solitary cells for the authorities' requirements, this time however the excess prisoners were left shackled outside to suffer the elements.

Once again the common criminals proved to be valuable allies.

and showed their support of the political prisoners by smuggling in news and medicine to the inmates of *rukhang* #5. Lobsang Tenzin also managed to get a letter through a month later saying that he had arrived safely at Kongpo Prison and for his friends not to worry about him.

Not all protests within Drapchi Prison have been as confrontational as the aftermath of James Lilley's visit. Political prisoners have employed various tactics in voicing their ire at the Chinese occupation of Tibet, sometimes in more subtle and insidious ways. From the inspiration of some Chinese official, an 'award system' was introduced into Drapchi to attempt to instil a level of competitiveness and consequent disunity between the prisoners, and to increase productivity. However, the political prisoners simply refused to partake in the system, throwing away the instruction booklets without even opening them.

In another incident in the summer of 1991, the prisoners were permitted to watch the television coverage of the international soccer competition. The political prisoners began to cheer enthusiastically any goal against or match lost by China. Once again the criminal inmates supported their countrymen and started to join in the jeering. The Chinese guards and soldiers began to fear another riot due to the level of the rowdiness and surrounded the prisoners, brandishing their electric batons. All the prisoners were consequently reprimanded but upon learning that the criminal convicts had been particularly harshly dealt with, the political prisoners decided to cease the protest.

1991 was an active year, for on the 6 December Tanak Jigme Sangpo made another bold attempt at an individual protest. During an official visit by a Swiss delegation Jigme Sangpo shouted "Free Tibet" in English, a phrase he had especially learnt for the occasion, from his cell in *rukhang* #1. The authorities tried to explain away the incident by

claiming to the delegates that he was 'mad'. Tanak Jigme Sangpo was beaten and placed in solitary. Fellow prisoners knew that he would face a sentence extension and managed to smuggle out a letter to the delegation, explaining that Jigme Sangpo was not mad but a political prisoner, and urged them to attend his trial. Tanak Jigme Sangpo received another sentence extension, this time of eight years, bringing his total term now to 28 years.

The female political prisoners of *rukhang* #3 came into prominence soon afterwards, staging their first major protest during *Losar* of 1992. On the 5 March officials arrived with new uniforms for the inmates, whereas previously *Losar* had been a time when traditional clothing was briefly allowed to be worn, and some traditional foods brought in by relatives eaten. The prisoners regarded this as a deliberate provocation and refused to wear the procured clothing, leading to a heated exchange. The PAP were summoned and each inmate was kicked, punched, shocked with electric batons, and beaten with the buckle end of military belts by a group of soldiers. Former teacher Dawa Dolma, and nun Chungdak, were singled out as instigators and taken to Outridu Prison for 8 days of manacled solitary confinement, there suffering further beatings and torture.

A three day protest was then staged by the remaining inmates. On the third day they were summoned for labour detail but refused to work until the two prisoners in solitary were returned. Once again guards went into the cells and began beating the prisoners. However, the common criminals from the neighbouring *rukhang* #2 witnessed the beatings through the windows and began shouting "murder, murder". This required half of the contingent of guards to divert their attention away from the inmates of *rukhang* #3, and possibly saved the lives of some of the female political prisoners that day.

20 April 1993 saw another brave solitary attempt at rebelling against the Chinese authorities. Young monk Yeshe Ngawang was caught handing over an entire list of the political prisoners and conditions within Drapchi to his family on visiting day. For his efforts he received one month of solitary confinement and a sentence extension of nine years to add to his original five.

In June 1993, fourteen female political prisoners of *rukbag* #3 undertook a protest that has been probably the most rear reaching and heartfelt of all political expressions of defiance to date. Each prisoner individually recorded a song of freedom, and the tape was successfully smuggled out of Drapchi Prison, reaching not only Tibetans but support groups outside as well. In retaliation each person involved received a sentence extension of between five and nine years.

Gyaltsen Choezom: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 4 years to 9 years

Gyaltsen Drolkar: extension of 8 years, taking total sentence from 4 years to 12 years

Jigme Yangchen: extension of 4 years, taking total sentence from 7 years to 12 years

Lhundrup Sangmo: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 4 years to 9 years

Namdrol Lhamo: extension of 6 years, taking total sentence from 6 years to 12 years

Ngawang Choekyi: extension of 8 years, taking total sentence from 5 years to 13 years

Ngawang Choezom: extension of 6 years, taking total sentence from 5 years to 11 years

Ngawang Lochoe: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 5 years to 10 years

Ngawang Sangdrol: extension of 6 years, taking total sentence from 3 years to 9 years

Ngawang Tsamdrol: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 5 years to 10 years

Palden Choedron: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 3 years to 8 years

Phuntsog Nyidrol: extension of 8 years, taking total sentence from 9 years to 17 years

Rigzin Choenyi: extension of 5 years, taking total sentence from 7 years to 12 years

Tenzin Thubten: extension of 9 years, taking total sentence from 5 years to 14 years

The next failed attempt at sending out a list of the prisoners and conditions inside Drapchi was by Ngawang Pekar in August 1995. He was transferred to a solitary cell at Outridu Prison for four months before being returned to Drapchi Prison to a six year extended sentence of 14 years.

In 1995 *Losar* once again became a staging date for political dissent. This time however it was an individual protest staged by a common criminal, Lodroe Gyatso, from *rukhang* #1 on the third day of *Losar*, 4 March 1995. Receiving permission to visit unaccompanied another *rukhang* to obtain some medicine, Lodroe Gyatso circumnavigated the prison, starting from below *rukhang* #5 to pass the buildings of #6, #4 and #2, before concluding in the yard of *rukhang* #1. He shouted pro-independence slogans, distributed pamphlets, and hung posters while reading them aloud for everyone to hear. Eventually prison officials confiscated the pamphlets and commenced the beatings. Interrogations continued for a month before officials endeavoured to

obtain approval for his execution. However, prisoners managed to smuggle the information to personnel of Voice of America, a radio program. Consequently, an urgent appeal was transmitted to China from the appropriate UN body. Lodroe Gyatso received a six years extension to his sentence, but is reportedly suffering physical and mental health problems due to the maltreatment received in prison.

The next stance of defiance against the Chinese prison authorities by the female political prisoners was in January 1996. Exhaustive military style drills had been an integral part of prisoners' daily routine for over 18 months when a 'competition' with the nearby Lhasa Prison, formerly known as Outridu Prison, was announced. One of the competitive elements was to have inmates chant a Chinese slogan perfectly in time with the exercises. However, when the inmates of *rukhang* #3 discovered that the slogans were actually statements affirming that the prisoner recognised their criminality and were working on reforming their behaviour, and that they had resolved to rejoin society as a 'new person'⁴, they outrightly refused to chant them. They insisted that they had committed no crime and that there was nothing to reform. This caused the predictable fury amongst the supervising PAP soldiers, who claimed that the prisoners had been lying regarding their inability to understand Chinese. Although the punishments involved extended forced exercise and being forced to stand on wet cement floors with bricks placed on their feet as well as the standard interrogations and beatings, the female prisoners held steadfast and refused to yield.

Hunger strikes were a form of protest utilised by the female political prisoners on more than one occasion. In April 1996 the inmates of old *rukhang* #3 had been undergoing an intense period of **punitive** punishment. Initially refusing to submit to some unremitting re-education sessions, the authorities instigated an ongoing regime of daily cell inspections that were in reality just a facilitator for random

beatings on the slightest pretext. On 24 April the officials summoned the prisoner leaders of the *rukhang*, which included Ngawang Sangdrol and Phuntsok Pema, to a meeting and demanded to know why they were not enforcing the acceptable standard of tidiness within the *rukhang*. One of the officials then started to beat Ngawang Sangdrol and the other inmates rushed to the scene, shouting and protesting against the torture. Phuntsok Pema and another nun, Norzin Wangmo, tried to come to Ngawang Sangdrol's aid, but also suffered beatings for their efforts. All three were placed in solitary confinement, Norzin remained incarcerated for 45 days. Ngawang Sangdrol and Phuntsok Pema were held in solitary for between three to six and a half months. Ngawang Sangdrol also received another sentence extension, this time for an extra eight years, bringing her accumulated total term at that stage to 17 years.

While these three were suffering in solitary confinement, the inspections and beatings continued for the other inmates. Finally, at the end of April 1996, a hunger strike was initiated to protest against the continuous violence. Old *rukhang* #3 held approximately 87 prisoners at the time, all already in a poor state of health that had been exacerbated by the extended period of intensified maltreatment. Consequently, during the strike the health of the prisoners declined at such a rapid rate that after five days officials became concerned, and unwilling to shoulder the responsibility of their deaths, accused them of attempting to 'embarrass China' by "harming the national reputation."⁵ Threatened with torture, but more conclusively, informed in no uncertain terms that the authorities had the medical means to enforce the cessation of the strike, the rebelling prisoners were left with no option but to end their protest. Reports also indicate that there may have been an additional influencing factor of outside officials intervening and curbing some of the excessive maltreatment inflicted by the prison officials.

Losar 1997 triggered the next hunger strike staged by the female political prisoners, this time from the new *rukhang* #3. On 10 February three inmates who were regarded as 'well reformed' were delegated to sing Chinese songs in the praise of Mao Zedong. During their performance, Jamdrol, from Gyadra Nunnery, and Nyima, from Phodo Nunnery, suddenly stood up and began to sing Tibetan freedom songs to drown out the recital. Other prisoners immediately joined in, but the two instigators were removed by officials and subjected to interrogations and beatings before being placed in solitary. The inmates demanded their release from the confinement cells, which resulted in the PAP being summoned to retake control. This consisted of beating not only of beating the protesting prisoners while confining them to their cells, but of further beatings for the two incarcerated nuns as well.

The next morning all 80 inmates of the new *rukhang* #3, which excluded only the three original singers, commenced a hunger strike in an attempt to achieve the release of the two nuns from solitary confinement, and to prevent sentence extensions for them both. An official of the prison guard immediately tried to thwart their demands by claiming that the two nuns would only receive food if the inmates of the *rukhang* ate, and though they would not be released they would be adequately fed. Refusing to compromise, three days later the nuns also disbelieved promises by the same official that he would seek the release of the two from solitary if the hunger strike was ended. Finally after five days the nuns relented after further assurances, in the hope of some result. Officials later announced that the two nuns would not receive sentence extensions, but would serve out the rest of their terms in solitary confinement. This meant that Nyima was facing a period of over two years in the solitary cell, and Jamdrol five years. Both nuns in actuality remained incarcerated in cramped isolation for almost two years until December 1998, when they were returned to the *rukhang*

along with all the other prisoners who were released after seven months solitary confinement following the May 1998 protests.

The next known act of insubordination also involved female political prisoners and a hunger strike. In July 1997 a lone nun, Yeshe Choedron, staged a pro-independence protest during the Honk Kong handover. Placed into solitary confinement, the five other nuns who had been arrested with her in 1993 for demonstrating in Lhasa commenced a hunger strike, but were forced to cease after a period of five days.

In October 1997, the non-political inmates made yet another political stance. During a visit by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD), Sonam Tsewang made unexpected pro-independence statements to the delegation. At the delegates request they were allowed to talk with Sonam Tsewang briefly, and they then requested the Chinese officials to take no punitive action against the prisoner. Despite assurances to the delegation, Sonam Tsewang was put into solitary confinement. Shortly after the meeting, two friends of Sonam Tsewang's organised a meeting amongst the prisoners to protest to the authorities, and were also placed into solitary and received the obligatory beatings. All three men consequently received sentence extensions. Sonam Tsewang faced a further five years, his friends Trinkar received 10 years, and Wangdu an increase of three years.

Unconfirmed sentence extensions were also the result of a small protest reportedly staged by two nuns and a monk during *Losar* 1998. On 27 February the prisoners were apparently allowed to watch television and the three inmates utilised the opportunity to shout pro-independence slogans.

Shortly afterwards, monk Ngawang Sungrab also utilised a prison meeting to shout pro-independence slogans on 3 April 1998.

The final currently recorded act of defiance in Drapchi Prison came shortly after the major protests of May 1998. Gyaltzen Chopel bravely challenged the officials' claims that the deaths of the five nuns were due to suicide. For his stance he was severely beaten.

End Notes:

1 *The Autobiography of a Tibetan Monk*, Palden Gyatso, 1997, p.200

2 Ibid, p.201

3 Personal testimony, 16 August 1993, by two former political prisoners Tsesoe and Tsering, originally from Gaden Monastery.

4 *Rukhag 3: The Nuns of Drapchi Prison*. Steven D. Marshall, Tibet Information Network, London 2000, p.32

5 ibid p.34

A Letter of Appeal from the Drapchi political prisoners

The subject of human rights has been widely recognised by the well informed people of this world since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Countries have drafted articles to protect and promote the values of human rights yet some countries continue to disrespect these basic human values.

The UN Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International, Red Cross Organisation, nations, non- governmental organisations and some interested individuals have earnestly appealed for the United Nations to oversee the brutal suppression of one country by another. Nevertheless the UN has not been able to take strict measures to protect the ongoing human rights violations.

We want to single out the fact that the Chinese have pretended to respect human rights in China and Tibet before international representatives. Being signatories to this declaration, China continues to violate the basic and fundamental freedoms of the Tibetan people. They greedily entered through our eastern border in 1949 and finally occupied Tibet by force in 1959.

Since the Chinese occupation of Tibet, the land and the people have been destroyed. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in whom the Tibetan people take refuge for this and their next lives, has been compelled to leave his country and his people. There were uncountable cases of Tibetans slaughtered or injured, and families torn apart. These facts are clearly known to the world.

During the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese imprisoned many

learned Buddhist nuns and monks, destroyed large numbers of monasteries, burned all religious texts and scriptures, sterilised Tibetan women and carried out countless brutal actions aimed at eliminating the religion and culture of the Tibetan people.

Under the Chinese policy of "liberalisation", the monks were allowed to stay in the monasteries but were deprived of the freedom to study of religious texts. Chinese authorities claim that there is religious freedom in Tibet, but basic requirements for admission to monasteries and nunneries have been intensified. Even when monks are allowed admission to the monasteries, they are forced to work on renovating monasteries destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese take away all the money donated to the monasteries by the local people.

In order to indoctrinate young Tibetans the Chinese do not give them the opportunity to study the Tibetan language and the unique culture related to Tibetan Buddhism, described by the Chinese as "blind faith" and "backward". The Chinese constantly urge the people to be firm and stable in communist beliefs.

In addition, all the natural resources from various parts of Tibet are being exploited and taken to China. Shameful and demoralising activities are being encouraged inside Tibet.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and on behalf of the six million Tibetans, His Holiness the Dalai Lama described the critical condition of the Tibetan people before the United Nations, and to many other nations including the United States, and requested urgent action. In 1987 in particular, His Holiness the Dalai Lama proposed a five point peace plan with the hope of beginning peaceful negotiations with China. The Chinese government rejected this proposal and condemned His Holiness. This is unbearable to us and we are unable to remain silent.

Since 1959 and the brutal occupation and colonisation of the Chinese regime, the Tibetan people have been roused to call for their freedom and demonstrate against the brutal Chinese suppression. This has resulted in the death of 1.2 million Tibetans and the ongoing imprisonment of Tibetans still today. However, the truth will last forever.

From 27 September 1987, Tibetan people once again staged a peaceful demonstration against China. Led by monks and nuns, hundreds of Tibetans joined the uprising to demonstrate their opposition to Chinese rule in Tibet. In the clampdown on successive demonstrations, the Chinese army opened fire, killing and critically wounding many in the spot, and imprisoning thousands of unarmed demonstrators. The Chinese authorities forced the detainees to confess under harsh interrogation.

In Tibet, torture is the only method of interrogation. In prison, cruel and degrading methods of torture are inflicted to extract confessions. These include: deprivation of food, water, and air; confinement in a freezing room; setting guard dogs onto prisoners; and the use of electric cattle prods.

In some cases prisoners are charged as 'criminals' and administrative detention is imposed by local authorities without the supervision of an independent judiciary. The legal procedure established by the Chinese authorities is regarded as the highest authority, thus the Tibetan people have no right to appeal before the court.

After imprisonment, political prisoners are detained incommunicado. They are kept under strict vigilance by special guards sent by the Chinese authorities and there are limits placed on their visitation rights. Only a single member of a political prisoner's family is allowed to visit once a month, while the other prisoners have no limit on their visitation rights. Political prisoners are frequently

prohibited from receiving rations provided by their relatives, while other prisoners have no restrictions on such rations.

Political prisoners have no bed, instead they must use discarded clothes as their bed. Political prisoners are forced to eat rotten and contaminated food, and no one has right to appeal for their good health.

On political grounds, prisoners are required to denounce from their heart His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetan freedom, and to pledge their love for the Communist Party. At the same time, prisoners must accept the Chinese laws and regulations, renounce what they have done in the past, and agree to accept the laws in the future.

If the prisoners refuse to accept these conditions they are subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment using many torture instruments. They suffer beatings with iron rods, sticks, iron padlocks, the cuffing of hands and feet for many days, and the deprivation of food. This is what caused the death of Sangye Tenphel.

The Chinese do not take any responsibility upon themselves for sick prisoners. Even if sick inmates are taken for a consultation, only outdated medicines and equipment are used. It was as result of this that Lhakpa Tsering and Kalsang Thutop died in prison.

Political prisoners are regularly subjected to forced blood extraction and intensive exercises. Political prisoners are also compelled to praise whatever the jailer or prison guards say. Even when the guard makes a false statement we are forced to praise the communist values and ideologies. Nonetheless we are united and never listen to these statements. That is why we are severely beaten and deprived of food, water and sleep.

It is very hard to write the whole story in detail. If we complain

about the maltreatment in the prison to the relevant offices, they not only ignore the complaint but also our prison sentences are greatly extended. We are kept under strict surveillance and brutal suppression. In this way the prison guards are promoted and rewards are presented to them by the higher authorities.

In the "Tibet Daily" newspaper it was stated that during an official meeting, the Public Security Bureau and the Judicial Office of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) decided to award those guards who had worked hard in disciplining the political prisoners with the extra facilities.

Now we have 253 political prisoners in Drapchi Prison, ranging in age from 15 to 70 and with prison terms ranging from 1 year to 19 years. The present condition in Tibet is critical and more restrictions are being imposed. We are especially susceptible to the above mentioned atrocities which are directly inflicted upon us. Therefore we appeal to people of the world who love and support truth, peace, democracy and human rights.

From all political prisoners of Drapchi Prison.

10th March 1997

Male Political Prisoners

New Rukhag 5

As of May 2001

1. **Dawa Dorjee**, age 31, bank staff, Nagchu County. Detained 1996, sentenced to 18 years for pasting pro-independence posters.

2. **Dawa Dorjee**, age 17, Chamdo Pashoe, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to four years for replacing nameplates of the People's Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and for taking part in a demonstration.

3. **Dawa Tsering**, age 16, Nagchu County, monastery unknown. Detained December 1997, sentenced to four years.

4. **Gonpo**, age 35, Ngaba County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 1 December 1996, sentenced to seven years for possession of wooden block prints used for pro-independence leaflets.

5. **Gyaltsen Thokmey** a.k.a. **Ngawang Woesser**, age 27, Nyemo County, Sera Monastery. Detained 27 September 1996, sentenced to six years for pasting posters opposing "re-education" of the "work-team" in the monastery and the ban on pictures of the Dalai Lama.

6. **Jampal Tendar**, lay name **Migmar**, age 20, Lhokagongkar County, Gongkar Choede Monastery. Detained 16 June 1997, sentenced to four years for pasting pro-independence posters.

7. **Jamyang Gyatso**, lay name **Lhundrup Kalsang**, age 29, Gyantse County, Shigatse, Gyaltsé Palkhor Monastery. Detained December 1996, sentenced to five years for distributing copies of a

long-life prayer composed by the Dalai Lama for the Panchen Lama – “endangering state security”

8. **Kalsang Norbu**, age 27, Meldrogungkar County, Pangsa Monastery. Detained 12 September 1997, sentenced to six years for political activities.

9. **Kalsang Tsering**, lay name **Gyakdroe**, age 20, Meldrogungkar County, Pangsa Monastery. Detained 15 August 1997, sentenced to six years for pasting pro-independence posters.

10. **Kalsang Wangdu**, lay name **Kadrok**, age 23, Meldrogungkar County, Pangsa Monastery. Detained 15 August 1997, sentenced to six years for pasting pro-independence posters.

11. **Lobsang Dechen**, age 28, Pashoe County, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to four years for replacing nameplates of the People’s Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and demonstration.

12. **Lobsang Nyima**, lay name **Gyeche**, age 30, Pashoe County, Pomda Monastery. Detained August 1997. Sentenced to five years for resisting a monastery “work-team”.

13. **Lobsang Topchen**, age 26, Pashoe County, Chamdo, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to four years for independence demonstration.

14. **Lobsang Tsondrue**, a.k.a. **Norbu**, age 22, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Reting Monastery. Detained 22 November 1996. Sentenced to six years on account of “arsonary charges” of a “work-team” vehicle and for pasting posters opposing the monastery’s “work-team”.

15. **Lobsang Tsultrim**, lay name **Lobsang Nyima**, age 37, Pashoe

County, Sa-nga Monastery. Detained 21 June 1997, sentenced to **four** years.

16. Lokud, age 27, Drepung Monastery. Detained 1997, sentenced to five years after a “work-team” arrest. Sentence extension of four years in 1998 for participation in the 1 May protest. Current total **nine** years.

17. Namgyal, age 30, Gyaltse County, Shigatse, Gyaltse Palchoe Monastery. Detained 12 August 1996, sentenced to **six** years.

18. Ngawang Nyima, age 25, Chamdo Drayab County, Drayab Bugon Monastery. Detained April 1997, sentenced to **five** years for pasting pro-independence posters in the monastery.

19. Phuntsok Legmon, lay name Tseten Norbu, age 18, Toelung Dechen County, Taglungdrag Monastery. Detained 10 March 1999, sentenced to **three** years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa – “incitement and propaganda”.

20. Phuntsok Wangdu, 32, Lhasa Taktse County, Gaden Monastery. Detained on 7 March 1997 for political activities, sentenced to **14** years.

21. Rinzin Choephel, age 24, Chamdo Pashoe County, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to **six** years for replacing nameplates of the People’s Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and demonstration.

22. Rinzin Dhondup, age 26, painter at Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to **eight** years for suspicion of links with the seven monks who replaced nameplates of the People’s Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and for taking part in a demonstration.

23. Sonam Choedak a.k.a. Namdol age 21, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Taglungdrag Monastery. Detained 10 March 1999, sentenced to four years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa – “incitement and propaganda”.

24. Tashi Phuntsok, age 25, Chamdo Pashoe County, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997, sentenced to five years for replacing the nameplates of the People’s Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and demonstration.

25. Tenzin Dorjee, age 23, Nagchu County, Shabten Monastery. Detained 1997, sentenced to 13 years for pasting pro-independence posters.

26. Thinlay Choenden a.k.a. Samdup, age 34, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Drepung Monastery. Detained on 25 April 1998, sentenced to four years for distribution of political leaflets in Lhasa. Held for 18 months before sentencing.

27. Thinley Tsultrim, age 27, Phenpo Thongka County, Reting Monastery. Detained 22 November 1996, sentenced to six years for the arson of a “work-team” vehicle and pasting of posters opposing the monastery’s “work-team”.

28. Thinley Tsundue, a.k.a. Gyatso, age 25, Phenpo Thongka County, Reting Monastery. Detained 22 November 1996, sentenced to eight years for the arson of a “work-team” vehicle and the pasting of posters opposing the monastery “work-team”.

29. Tsultrim Sherab, lay name Penpa Chungwa, age 23, Lhoka Gongkar County, Sungrabling Monastery. Detained January 1997, sentenced to five years for the pasting pro-independence posters.

30. Bhukhog, age 24, Meldrogungkar County. Detained May

1995 for pasting pro-independence posters, sentenced to **six** years.

31. **Bhutuk**, age 22, Gyaltse County, Drongtse Monastery. Arrested in May 1996 for pasting pro-independence posters and distribution of cassette tapes of speeches by the Dalai Lama. Sentenced to **five** years.

32. **Dhargye**, age 28, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained on 25 December 1996 for political leaflet distribution, sentenced to **five** years.

33. **Dawa Dhondup** a.k.a. **Atsak**, 33, Lhoka Gongkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained on 7 May 1996, sentenced to **10** years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

34. **Dawa Tsering**, a.k.a. **Thupten**, age 27, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Draglha Lhugur Monastery. Detained in January 1997, sentenced to **five** years.

35. **Gonpo Gyaltzen**, 24, Bhugon Monastery. Detained in May 1997 for pasting pro-independence slogans, sentenced to **five** years.

36. **Gonpo Tseten**, a.k.a **Tseten**, age 29, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 18 December 1996 for political activities, sentenced to **five** years.

37. **Gyurmey** (ordained name), 29, Sog Tsendhen County. Arrested on 17 March 2000 for putting up pro-independence wall posters. Sentenced in December 2000 to **10** years.

38. **Jampa Thaye**, layname **Drakpa Thaye**, age 19, Chamdo Pashoe County, Gaden Monastery. Arrested on 10 May 1996 for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures, sentenced to **five** years.

39. **Jigme Gyalpo**, age 23, farmer, Meldrogungkar County. Detained May 1995 for pasting pro-independence posters, sentenced to **six** years.

40. **Konchok Tsering**, age 32, Meldrogungkar County, Pangsa Monastery. Detained 1 June 1993 for pasting pro-independence posters, sentenced to **eight** years.

41. **Lobsang Choedhen**, layname **Migmar Dhondup**, Palkhor Choede Monastery. Detained on 25 November 1996 for distributing prayer leaflets for the Panchen Lama, sentenced to **five** years

42. **Lobsang Gelek** a.k.a. **Penpa**, age 25, Damshung County, Khangmar Monastery. Arrested in April 1995 for independence protest in Barkhor, sentenced to five years. Sentence extension of four years for the May 1998 protest. Current total **nine** years.

43. **Lobsang Lungtok** a.k.a. **Lobsang Tenzin**, age 23, Lhasa Nyangdrel, Gaden Monastery. Arrested on 20 March 1992 for participation in a protest, sentenced to eight years. Sentence extension of one and half years for May 1998 protest. Current total **nine and half** years.

44. **Lobsang Dawa**, 28, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gaden Monastery. Arrested on 7 May 1996 for political activities, sentenced to 12 years.

45. **Lobsang Tsering** a.k.a. **Bushow**, Pashoe County, Drongsar Monastery. Detained on 11 August 1995, sentenced to 14 years.

46. **Ngawang Choephel**, age 18, Chamdo Pashoe, Serwa Monastery. Detained 1 July 1997 for replacing nameplates of the People's Government County Headquarters with pro-independent posters and for taking part in a demonstration, sentenced to four years.

47. Ngawang Tsultrim, 24, Dzokhang County, Chamdo, Drepung Loseling Monastery, Mundgod. Arrested in July 1999 for screening a video of the Dalai Lama, sentenced to **three** years.
48. Pa Ngawang, age 42, Shigatse. Detained 1 January 1996 for political reasons. Sentenced to **six** years.
49. Sey Khedup, 27, Sog County, Sog Tsendhen Monastery. Detained 19 March 2000 for putting up pro-independence wall posters. Sentenced to **life imprisonment** in December 2000.
50. Sherab Tsultrim, 25, Chamdo Pashoe, Serwa Monastery. Detained on 1 July 1997 for political activities, sentenced to **six** years.
51. Sonam Dhondrup, a.k.a. Lekshey Phuntsok, age 23, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Nalanda Monastery. Detained in May 1995 for demonstration, sentenced to **12** years.
52. Sonam Tsering a.k.a. Kongtruk, age 24, Kongpo, Gaden Monastery. Detained May 1996 for political reasons, sentenced to **five** years. Sentence extension of one year for May 1998 protest. Current total **six** years.
53. Tenzin Choewang, age 64, Sog County, Sog Tsendhen Monastery. Detained on 19 March 2000 for political reason, sentenced to **seven** years.
54. Trakru Yeshe, 45, Sog County, government employee at Hydro Power Station in Sog County. Arrested in March 2000 for putting up pro-independence wall posters. Sentenced in December 2000 to **seven** years.
55. Tsephel, 22, Pashoe County, Serwa Monastery, Detained in

1997 for political reason and sentenced to 14 years. Additional sentence of 2 years for May 1998 Protest in Drapchi. Current sentence 16 years.

56. **Tsering Lhagon**, 41, farmer, Sog County. Detained 19 March 2000 for putting up pro-independence posters. Sentenced in December 2000 to 15 years' imprisonment.

57. **Tsering Phuntsok**, a.k.a. **Lobsang Jampa**, age 36, Lhasa, Gaden Monastery. Detained 20 March 1992, sentenced to **eight** for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase by 18 months for May 1998 Protest. Currently serving 9 and half years prison term.

58. **Tsering Samdup**, a.k.a. **Buchung**, age 26, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gadhen Choekorling Monastery, Detained on 12 June 1994 for participation in independence protest in Lhasa, sentenced to **seven** years.

59. **Yeshi**, age 30, Rinpung County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 23 December 1996, sentence to **five** years.

60. **Yeshi Tenzin** (ordained name), 33, Sog County, Sog Tsendhen Monastery. Arrested on 17 March 2000 for putting up pro-independence wall posters. Sentenced in December 2000 to 15 years' imprisonment.

Male Old Rukhag 5

As of May 2001

1. **Chime Dorjee**, age 30, Serwa Monastery, Chamdo Pashoe County. Detained 29 March 1994, sentenced to 15 years for "counter-revolutionary sabotage" and "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement."
2. **Dradul**, ex-PLA, age 26, Lhasa. Detained 5 March 1989, sentenced to 16 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa, and for being involved in the death of a Chinese soldier.
3. **Jampa Jorden**, age 35, Chushul County, Lhasa, Gaden Monastery, India. Detained 11 November 1995. Sentenced to six years for "espionage" on returning to Tibet.
4. **Jampa Lodroe**, a.k.a **Lobsang Tenpa (Poloe)**, age 23, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 7 May 1996, sentenced to 15 years for protesting the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.
5. **Jampel Jangchup**, lay name **Yugyal**, age 30, Toelung Dechen County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 17 March 1989, sentenced to 19 years for founding a "counter-revolutionary clique", "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda and inflammatory agitation", and "engaging in espionage".
6. **Jigme Gyatso**, businessman, age 34, Amdo Lhadang. Detained 30 March 1996, sentenced to 15 years for "disseminating counter-revolutionary propaganda", "incitement" and for having illegally formed an organisation, the "Association of Tibetan Freedom Movement".
7. (**Tanak**) **Jigme Sangpo**, teacher, age 74. Detained 3 September 1983. Sentenced to 15 years for criticising Deng Xiaoping. First sentence extension on 5 October 1987 of five years for shouting pro-

independence slogans in prison. Second sentence extension of eight years in 1991 for shouting pro-independence slogans to a visiting Swiss delegation. Current total 28 years.

8. **Konchok Dhondup**, age 29, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 9 May 1996 for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures, sentenced to 11 years.

9. **Lhasang**, age 30, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gonsar Monastery. Detained 22 October 1995, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of four years in 1998 for participation in the 1 May protest. Current total nine years.

10. **Lhundrup Dorjee**, age 23, farmer, Meldrogungkar County. Detained 30 June 1992, sentenced to 15 years for "promoting negative propaganda against the revolution."

11. **Lobsang Sherab** a.k.a. **Tsephel**, Pashoe County, Chamdo, age 19, Drongsar Monastery. Detained 11 August 1995, sentenced to 12 years.

12. **Lobsang Tendar** a.k.a. **Lobsang Tsegyal**, age 31, Pashoe County, Chamdo, Serwa Monastery. Detained 29 March 1994, sentenced to 15 years for "counter-revolutionary sabotage" and "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement."

13. **Lobsang Tsultrim**, layname **Choesang**, age 20, Drongsar Monastery. Detained 11 August 1995. Sentenced to 14 years.

14. **Ngawang Dorjee**, age 25, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gonsar Monastery. Detained October 1994, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of three years in 1998 for participation in the 4 May protest. Current total

eight years.

15. Ngawang Gyaltzen, lay name Ngodup Gyaltzen, age 29, Toelung Dechen County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 16 April 1989, sentenced to 17 years for "actively participating in criminal activities, engaging in espionage, and illegally crossing the national border."

16. Ngawang Kalsang, lay name Norbu Phuntsok, age 30, Toelung Dechen County, Jang Taglung Monastery. Detained 22 February 1995, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of three years for participation in the 1 May protest. Current total eight years.

17. Ngawang Ngonkhen, lay name Kalsang Phuntsok, age 28, Nyethang County, Lhasa, Tashigang Monastery. Detained 27 March 1994, sentenced to six years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of 4 years in 1998 for participation in the May protests, and solitary confinement for two months. Transferred to *rukbag* #4 which holds non-political prisoners. Current total 10 years.

18. Ngawang Woebar, lay name Wangdu, age 31, Taktse County, Dechen Sa-nga Khar Monastery. Detained 2 December 1994, sentenced to four years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of four years in 1998 for participation in the 1 May protest. Was originally due for release December 1998. Current total eight years.

19. Ngawang Pekar, lay name Paljor, age 27, Toelung Dechen County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 12 July 1989, sentenced to eight years for participation in a demonstration and putting up independence posters. Sentence extension of six years in 1996 for

drafting a list of political prisoners to be smuggled out. Current total 14 years.

20. **Ngawang Pulchung**, lay name **Anu**, age 34, Toelung Dechen County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 18 April 1989, sentenced to 19 years for "organising and joining a counter-revolutionary clique", "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda and inflammatory agitation", and "collecting information and passing it on to the enemy, seriously undermining national security."

21. **Ngawang Sungrab**, lay name **Dawa Tsering**, age 35, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 27 September 1991. Sentenced to 10 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of three and half years in 1998 for participation in the 4 May protest. Current total 13 ½ years.

22. **Ngawang Tensang**, lay name **Penpa**, age 32, Toelung Dechen County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 14 September 1991, sentenced to 10 years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of five years in 1998 for participation in the 1 May protest. Current total 15 years.

23. **Ngawang Woesser**, lay name **Jamyang**, age 25, Lhoka Gongkar County, Drepung Monastery. Detained 16 April 1989, sentenced to 17 years for founding a "counter-revolutionary clique", "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda and inflammatory agitation".

24. **Pasang Tsegye**, lay name **Pasang Tsering**, 38, Gaden Monastery. Detained 7 May 1996, sentenced to 12 years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

25. **Phuntsok Dhondrup**, lay name **Tsering Bakdro**, age 28,

Lhasa, Gaden Monastery. Detained 7 May 1996, sentenced to 10 years for protesting the ban on Dalai Lama pictures.

26. Phuntsok Rigchog, lay name Migmar, age 35, Chushul County, Tashi Gang Monastery. Detained 31 May 1994, sentenced to six years for initiating a demonstration in Lhasa – “counter-revolutionary activities”. Sentence extension of four years in 1998 for participation in the May protests. Current total 10 years.

27. Phuntsok Samten, lay name Penpa, age 27, Chushul County, Tashi Gang Monastery. Detained 4 September 1991, sentenced to 10 years for participation in a demonstration.

28. Sonam Choephel, a.k.a. Nagril, age 29, Damshung County, Khangmar Monastery. Detained 10 April 1995. Sentenced to four years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence increase of three years for 1 May protest. Current total seven years.

29. Sonam Tsering, interpreter, age 39, Meldrogungkar County, Kartsel Monastery. Detained 5 June 1994, sentenced to eight years.

30. Tasang Norbu, age 21, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 7 May 1996, sentenced to 10 years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

31. Tenzin, age 30, Lhoka Dranang County, Dargye Choede Monastery. Detained June 1995, sentenced to four years for the pasting pro-independence posters in his monastery. Sentence extension of four years for participation in the May 1998 protest. Current total eight years.

32. Tenzin Gelek, lay name Penpa, age 23, Taktse County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 9 May 1996, sentenced to 12 years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

33. Tenzin Jigme, lay name Ka Pasang, age 26, Jang Taglung Monastery. Detained 15 February 1995, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension in 1998 of three years for participation in 1 May protest. Current total eight years.

34. Tenzin Namdrak, lay name Pasang, age 26, Taktse County, Lhasa, Phagmo Monastery. Detained 18 August 1993, sentenced to five years for opposition to a "work-team". Sentence extension of four years in 1998 for participation in the 1 May protest. Current total nine years.

35. Tharpa, age 24, Meldrogungkar County, Phurbu Chok Ritro Monastery. Detained 2 July 1994, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of two years in 1998 for 4 May protest. Current total seven years.

36. Thupten Yeshe, age 42, Meldrogungkar County, farmer. Detained 6 July 1992, sentenced to 15 years for "co-operating with demonstrators".

37. Ugyen Tashi, age 53, nomad, Pashoe County, Chamdo. Detained 28 August 1995, sentenced to nine years, for suspected involvement in a bomb blast in Lhasa.

38. Yeshe Jinpa, lay name Pema Samdup, age 28, Lhoka County, Sungrabling Monastery. Detained 28 June 1993, sentenced to six years from a "work-team" arrest. Sentence extension of five years in 1998 for 1 May protest. Current total 11 years.

39. Yeshe Ngawang, lay name Migmar, age 23, Lhokagongkar County, Sungrabling Monastery. Detained 13 March 1989, sentenced to five years for pasting pro-independence posters. Sentence extension

of nine years in 1993 for "leaking state secrets" - the handing over of a list of political prisoners and prison conditions to his family. Current total 14 years.

40. **Yeshe Rabgyal**, lay name **Bhagdro**, age 28, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 7 May 1996, sentenced to 15 years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

41. **Yonten Gyalpo**, lay name **Tenzin Norbu**, age 29, Meldrogungkar County, Gaden Monastery. Detained 9 May 1996, sentenced to 12 years for protesting against the ban on the Dalai Lama's pictures.

42. **Karma Dawa**, a.k.a. **Kadar**, age 33, Gonjo, Chamdo Prefecture, non-political prisoner. Detained 1995, sentenced to 13 years. Instigated the demonstration on 1 May 1998. Placed into solitary confinement and received sentence extension of nine years. Current total 22 years. Was not shot or executed as previously reported.

43. **Lodroe Gyatso**, age 32, cultural entertainer from Sog County Drama Association. Detained 17 January 1993, sentenced to 15 years as a criminal prisoner. Sentence extension of six years in 1995 for "instigating unrest to overthrow the government and split the motherland." Current total 21 years. 4 March 1995 - Lodroe Gyatso circumnavigated the prison shouting pro-independence slogans, distributed pamphlets, and hung posters while reading them aloud for everyone to hear. Interrogated for a month before officials endeavoured to obtain approval for his execution. The prisoners managed to smuggle the information to personnel of 'Voice of America' and an urgent appeal was transmitted to China from the appropriate UN body. Lodroe Gyatso is reportedly suffering physical and mental health problems due to maltreatment received in prison.

Female Political Prisoners

New *Rukhag* and Old *Rukhag* 3

1. **Che Che**, age 28, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of two years in 1998 for participation in the May protests. Current total seven years.

2. **Chogdrup Dolma**, lay name Namdrol, age 29, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995. Sentenced to six years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of five years in 1998 for participation in the May protests. Current total 11 years.

3. **Dolma Tsamchoe**, age 59, farmer, Meldrogungkar County. Detained on 23 April 1993 for independence demonstration. Sentenced to eight years.

4. **Gyaltzen Dolkar**, lay name Dawa, age 23, Meldrogungkar County, Garu Nunnery. Detained 21 August 1990, sentenced to four years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of eight years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 12 years.

5. **Jamdrol**, age 26, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995, sentenced to seven years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa, which included 22 months period in a solitary confinement cell.

6. **Jangchup Dolma**, lay name Palkyi, age 29, Damshung County, Galo Nunnery. Detained 28 February 1995, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of six

years in 1998 for participation in the May protests. Current total 11 years. She is currently the longest-serving female prisoner in the new *rukhang* #3.

7. **Jigme Yangchen**, lay name **Yangchen**, age 33, Lhoka County, Shugseb Nunnery. Detained 1 October 1990, sentenced to seven years for participation in a demonstration. Sentence extension of five years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 12 years.

8. **Lhundrup Wangmo**, 65, Lhasa. Detained on 20 August 1998, sentenced to four years.

9. **Migmar**, age 37, Tselguthang, Lhasa, employee at Telecommunication Department. Detained in January 2001, sentenced to six years for watching a video of the Dalai Lama.

10. **Namdrol Lhamo**, lay name **Nyidrol**, age 28, Rinpung, Shigatse, Tashi Choeling Nunnery. Detained 12 May 1992, sentenced to six years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of six years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 12 years.

11. **Ngawang Dolma**, lay name **Jampa**, age 24, Phenpo Lhundrub County, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995, sentenced to seven years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa.

12. **Ngawang Choekyi**, lay name **Yeshi**, age 28, Meldrogungkar County, Samdrup Dolma Lhakhang Nunnery. Detained 14 May 1992, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of eight years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 13 years.

13. **Ngawang Choezom**, lay name **Pasang Lhamo**, age 30, Toelung Dechen County, Chubsang Nunnery. Detained 21 March

1992, sentenced to five years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of six years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 11 years.

14. Ngawang Sangdrol, lay name Rigchog, age 24, Lhasa, Garu Nunnery. Detained 17 June 1992, sentenced to three years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of six years in October 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Second sentence extension of eight years in July 1996 for participation in a protest within her *rukhang*. Third sentence extension of four years for participation in the May 1998 protests. Current total 21 years.

15. Ngawang Tsamdrol, lay name Deckyi Wangmo, age 28, Toelung Dechen County, Samdrup Dolma Lhakhang Nunnery. Detained 14 May 1992, sentenced to five years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of five years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 10 years.

16. Nyima Choedon, 30, care provider, Lhasa, Gyaltso Orphanage. Detained 30 August 1999. Sentenced to three years.

17. Nyima Dolma, a.k.a. Ngawang Dolma, age 29, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Garu Nunnery. Detained on 16 June 1999 for pasting independence posters, sentenced to three years.

18. Pema Tsomo, lay name Tasang, age 28, Nyemo County, Takchen Nunnery. Detained 16 November 1994, sentenced to seven years for pasting up pro-independence posters in her village.

19. Phuntsok Nyidon, lay name Tseten Wangmo, age 30, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Michungri Nunnery. Detained 14 October 1989, sentenced to nine years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of eight years in 1993 for recording a song

of freedom. Current total 17 years.

20. **Rigzin Choekyi**, lay name **Yangzom**, age 25, Lhoka, Shugseb Nunnery. Detained 28 August 1990, sentenced to seven years for participation in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of five years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 12 years.

21. **Tenzin Thupten**, lay name **Dawa Yangkyi**, age 23, Meldrogungkar County, Michungri Nunnery. Detained 21 August 1990, sentenced to five years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa. Sentence extension of nine years in 1993 for recording a song of freedom. Current total 14 years.

22. **Thupten Jungne**, lay name **Chime Dolkar**, age 25, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Gyabra Nunnery. Detained 15 February 1995, sentenced to seven years for participating in a demonstration in Lhasa.

23. **Tseten Dolma**, age 36, farmer, Nyemo County. Detained 9 July 1996, sentenced to seven years for pasting pro-independence posters.

24. **Tseten Dolkar**, age 28, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Nakkar Nunnery. Arrested in August 1995 for independence demonstration in Lhasa, sentenced to six years.

25. **Tsondru Wangmo**, lay name **Kalsang Dolma**, age 36, Nyemo County, Takchen Nunnery. Detained 25 November 1994, sentenced to seven years for pasting pro-independence posters.

26. **Yeshe Palmo**, age 21, Phenpo Lhundrup County, Reting Samtenling Nunnery. Detained 1 January 1997, sentenced to six years.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is the first Tibetan non-governmental organisation (NGO) to be formed with the mission "*to highlight the human rights situation in Tibet and to promote principles of democracy in Tibetan community.*" TCHRD is independent of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, and is based in Dharamsala, India. It is funded by foundations and from individual supporters around the world. It was founded in January 1996 and was registered as an NGO on 4 May 1996. In addition, a branch office has been set up in Kathmandu, Nepal. Our objectives are to protect and promote human rights of Tibetan people and to build our society based on the principles of human rights and democracy.

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