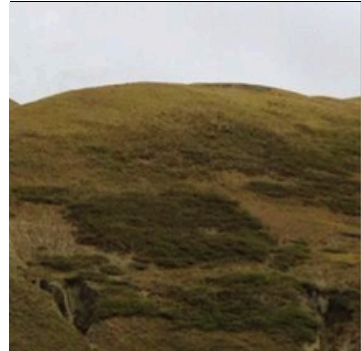


'IF GYALMO NGULCHU COULD FEEL :



**CRIMES AGAINST
HUMANITY IN DRIRU**



Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is a registered nongovernmental human rights organisation established in January 1996 in Dharamsala (India) with the mission to protect the human rights of the Tibetan people in Tibet and promote the principles of democracy in the exile Tibetan community. The centre is entirely run and staffed by Tibetans in exile. TCHRD's work entails monitoring, researching, translating, and documenting human rights violations in Tibet. The centre conducts regular, systematic investigations of human rights abuses in Tibet. It brings out annual reports, thematic reports, testimonies of victims of human rights violations, electronic newsletters, and briefings on human rights issues that confront Tibetans inside Tibet. The centre engenders awareness on various issues relating to human rights and democracy through grassroots and diplomatic means, using regional and international human rights mechanisms and community-based awareness campaigns.

The TCHRD logo features the image of a white dove rising out of the flames. The dove and olive branch are universal emblems of peace. The flames, drawn in traditional Tibetan style, represent the suffering of the Tibetan people, as well as the devastating and purifying force of truth.

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***Turning deaf ears to honest appeals
They beat up people in hundreds
This body has no freedom
This land has no democracy***

***Yellow and dark armored vehicles
Roll down [the streets]
Pointing their blazing gun barrels
At helpless masses***

***Beneath the fluttering red flags
Violent decrees are issued
Throughout upper and lower villages
They destroy all happiness***

***Walking three steps forward is illegal
Waving hands three times is a crime
Speaking out three words is criminal
Is there a place more wretched than this?****

*Translated excerpts from a poem titled 'Sad Song of Driru' written by Tibetan nomad Topden (Pseudonym: Dro Ghang Gah) who was sentenced to five years in prison on 30 November 2013. The full poem can be found on page 44.

INTRODUCTION

On 28 September 2013, local Tibetans in Driru (Chinese: Biru) County dumped the five-starred Chinese flags into the Gyalmo Ngulchu (Nujiang/Salween) river in defiance of the coercive Chinese flag-flying campaign. To observe the 1 October founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China,¹ local Tibetans had been ordered to hoist the flags on their rooftops, a space traditionally reserved for prayer flags. Those disobeying the directive had been warned of dire consequences: no school admission for their children, no medical treatment in state hospitals, cutting off of state subsidies, and no right to harvest yartsa gunbu (caterpillar fungus), a valuable medicinal plant that has become the main source of income for local Tibetans.² The stern imposition of the Chinese flag mandate led to clashes between Tibetans and security forces resulting in a harsh security clampdown, including detention, torture, and severe restrictions on daily activities.³

About a week later on 6 October, security forces opened fire on unarmed protesters injuring at least 60 people four of whom sustained critical injuries in Dathang (Chinese: Datang) Township in Driru.⁴ A man named Tragyal was injured with a broken thighbone and another named Tsewang had both his jawbones broken. Two other men, Lobsang Wangchen and Pador, as well as an unidentified elderly woman, were among the critically injured.⁵ Police also used teargas causing many to become unconscious. Local Tibetans had gathered there to protest the detention of another Tibetan man named Dorje Dragtsel who had openly spoken out

against the flag flying campaign at a meeting organised by a Chinese work team.⁶ The shooting was followed by about 300 armed police quickly fanning across the length and breadth of Driru setting up checkpoints on all the major roads to restrict movement and impose information blockade. Local Tibetans had their mobile phones seized, phone and internet communication blocked, and those who could not show their ID cards were arbitrarily detained.

The extremely harsh security clampdown has turned Driru into one of the most tightly-controlled areas in Tibet. Cases documented by TCHRD and other human rights organisations demonstrate that in little over a year in 2013 and 2014, thousands of Tibetans had become victims of arbitrary detention, inhumane torture, and extrajudicial killings in the intense security clampdown not seen in recent decades in the county's history.⁷ Sources with close knowledge of the situation in Driru believe that the exact number could well be higher because there were many cases that remained unreported either due to restrictions on communication or fear of government reprisals.⁸

More than a decade later, Driru Tibetans continue to face extreme restrictions on basic freedoms. A large majority of the several hundreds of Tibetans from Driru living in exile have been unable to contact their family members for years. Official decrees have long banned local Tibetans in Driru from maintaining contacts with their family members and relatives or face severe consequences.⁹ Many had been arbitrarily detained and convicted for

national security crimes merely for maintaining contacts with relatives living in foreign countries, and many more had been threatened with loss of livelihood sources and denial of educational and health facilities. Local Tibetans continue to face unprecedented restrictions and severe retribution, making information sharing a life-threatening activity. In some cases, information could take years to surface. For instance, a self-immolation protest by a 26-yr old Tibetan named Shurmo on 17 September 2015 in Driru's Shagchukha village became known in 2021.¹⁰ Again in 2021, it could be known that a 34 yr-old Tibetan named Namdak and six other Tibetans had each been sentenced to 13 years in prison in 2013 for aiding some Tibetans to flee into exile.¹¹

The harsh and often irrevocable consequences of human rights abuses encompass various dimensions including social and emotional, including the forced separation of families and communities in Driru. Mass detentions and torture tear families apart, leaving spouses, parents, and children uncertain about the fate and well-being of their loved ones. The emotional toll of such separation is immense, leading to anxiety, fear, and grief within the affected individuals and communities.

The loss of identity, particularly regarding cultural and religious heritage, is another profound consequence. Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism are integral to the identity and way of life of the Tibetan people. However, due to the Chinese government's sinicization policy of targeting and suppressing Tibetan cultural

and religious practices, and promotion of Chinese cultural norms have eroded the foundations of Tibetan identity. This loss of cultural and religious identity contributes to a sense of displacement, alienation, and trauma among Tibetans.

There has also been a severe disruption of lifestyle, such as education and employment opportunities for Tibetans in Driru. The restrictions on Tibetan language education make it impossible for Tibetan students to receive quality education in their mother tongue. The preference for Mandarin Chinese creates barriers for Tibetan students, hindering their academic achievements and limiting their future prospects. Moreover, restrictions imposed on the harvesting of the prized Yartsa Gunbu ('summer grass winter worm' cordyceps fungus) has had disastrous consequences on the region's economic situation.

The Chinese government's prioritisation of resource extraction policies and projects in Tibet, such as large-scale infrastructure development and extractive industries, has led to the degradation of fragile ecosystems and the exploitation of natural resources and sacred spaces. These activities have severe environmental implications, including deforestation, habitat destruction, natural disasters like landslides and pollution of rivers and lakes. The degradation of the environment not only threatens the livelihoods of local communities, including herders and farmers but also undermines the ecological balance of the region.

In terms of long-term consequences, the

widespread and systematic oppression and suppression of Tibetan rights and freedoms have far-reaching implications for society and future generations. The pervasive climate of fear, surveillance, and control hampers the development of a free and open society. Furthermore, the intergenerational transmission of trauma and the loss of cultural heritage poses significant challenges for the future generation of Tibetans, who may struggle to reclaim their identity and rebuild their society. These wide ranging consequences of Chinese government policies and practices underscore the gravity of the situation in Driru. Addressing these consequences and working towards restoring human rights, cultural preservation, and sustainable development in Tibet are crucial steps towards justice and healing for Tibetans.

A 2016 report by the Human Rights Watch on the series of detention and prosecution carried out from 2013 to 2015 under China's 'stability maintenance' policy summed up the situation in Driru as follows: "The aggressive state response to the incidents in Driru, many of which seem to have been mainly of local significance, suggests that officials during this period were not primarily worried about demands for independence or about anti-mining protests as such. Rather, they seemed to have been concerned with halting the spread of dissent of any kind in rural areas. This reflected the pressure placed on local officials at the grassroots level as part of stability maintenance to suppress any issues, however minor or local, that might lead to further unrest, particularly among the grassroots

population. Local officials were therefore under extreme pressure from the central authorities to crack down on any incidents or potential incidents of unrest."¹²

Driru has long been viewed as a major source of political instability and therefore a leading threat to the Chinese government's "stability maintenance" policy in TAR. Tibetans in Driru have been particularly targeted since 2006 when they launched a campaign to ban the use of animal skin and fur clothing to protect endangered wildlife after a public call issued by the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama.¹³ The self-immolation protests by three Tibetans including the 43 yr-old writer Gudrup in Driru in October 2012 discredited the Chinese government's propaganda that there had been no self-immolation in TAR.¹⁴ In his 6 November 2013 address¹⁵ to a gathering of the TAR Armed Police Corps and other high-ranking officials in Driru, the then TAR deputy Party secretary Wu Yingjie called on the armed police force to continuously fight in maintaining stability in Driru and "further strengthen patrol duty, control and grid management".¹⁶

The purpose of this report is to draw much needed global attention to the situation in Driru, one of the most overlooked and repressed places in Tibet. It is generally believed that Tibetans in the TAR are more tightly controlled than Tibetans in the Tibetan areas outside TAR. And within the TAR, Driru remains one of the most difficult places to access, with ordinary civilian communication is closely monitored and local authorities harassing

and intimidating ordinary civilians for merely maintaining contacts with their family members and relatives in exile.

In the last decade, Chinese authorities have undertaken no investigations into credible allegations of widespread and systematic human rights abuses perpetrated by the Party-state officials and security personnel against the Tibetans in Driru. It is hoped that this report will help galvanise and mobilise the international community including governments and civil society actors to pressure China to allow UN human rights experts to conduct a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation in Driru.

Based on the information documented by TCHRD between 2013 and 2015, this report provides evidence and argues that Chinese authorities committed acts of crimes against humanity such as persecution, arbitrary detention, torture, and murder in Driru as part of a widespread and systematic attack against civilian population with the Chinese authorities having knowledge of the attack. The report identifies the Chinese leaders and officials responsible for the commission of crimes against humanity in Driru in order for them to be held accountable for their crimes. Due to the inevitable limitations in accessing the full extent of the crimes committed by the Chinese Party-state in Driru, this report highlights the urgent necessity to undertake a thorough and transparent investigation into the human rights abuses committed by Chinese authorities in Driru.

Because China is not a party to the Rome Statute, the International Criminal Court (ICC) cannot investigate the situation in Driru. However, international criminal justice can still be enforced by a wide range of actors in myriad ways such as States launching domestic criminal prosecutions for international crimes or governments at all levels and corporations can boycott and refuse to work with individuals and entities including governments responsible for international crimes. Individuals and NGOs can also launch grassroots boycotts and advocate for action from governments and corporations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT

- Abolish the use of torture and ratify Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture to allow access to detention centres and prison in Driru for independent assessment.
- Conduct transparent and independent investigations into the arbitrary detention, torture and murder of Tibetans in Driru and hold offending officers accountable for their crimes.
- Allow Tibetans in Driru to freely communicate with their family members and relatives without fear of government surveillance and reprisals.
- Remove all barriers to freedom of movement and travel including the intrusive security checkpoints so that Tibetans in Driru can travel within their own country.
- Sign and ratify the Rome Statute.
- End the widespread and systematic attack on the civilian population in Driru by allowing Tibetans to exercise their basic human rights and freedoms without fear of violent and ruthless government reprisals.
- Hold the people responsible for commission of crimes against humanity accountable in public and transparent trials.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Encourage the Chinese government to sign the Rome Statute and cooperate with the International Criminal Court.
- Encourage the Chinese government to prosecute individuals responsible for international crimes domestically.
- Refuse, both individually and collectively, to invest in areas in the PRC where international crimes are being committed.
- Impose targeted sanctions and travel ban on the individuals responsible for the commission of international crimes in Driru.

METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared by the research section of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), in consultation with about 50 Tibetans in exile who hail from Driru and are knowledgeable about the situation in their hometown. Some of them provided information and insights based on their lived experiences and accounts of their family members and relatives who had either survived or succumbed to the political repression and human rights abuses perpetrated by the Chinese Party-state.

Between 2013 and 2015, TCHRD was at the forefront of collecting and publishing information and updates about one of the worst crackdowns ever witnessed in recent decades in Driru. This report draws on the information published during this period as well as interviews conducted with Tibetans from Driru living in Asia, Europe, Australia and the United States in 2023 and 2024. A large number of these interviews were conducted remotely via phones and online chat groups.

As for the analysis of secondary sources, TCHRD researchers carefully studied all reports published between 2012 and 2022 by international human rights organisations, as well as information published in the media about the situation in Driru. While every care and caution was taken to collect secondary sources for analysis, it still remains a challenge to verify every information due to the ongoing restrictions on all communication channels in Driru.

BACKGROUND

Driru is located in the traditional Tibetan province of Kham and is administered as a county in present-day Nagchu (Chinese: Naqu) City in TAR. Although the literal meaning of 'Dri' is female yak in Tibetan, it is the name of one of the nine tribes that settled in the traditional Nagshoe region. The 'ru' means military regiment and reflects Driru's role as one of the many military regiments during the ancient Sumpa Kingdom (a confederation of nomadic tribes that inhabited the areas in present-day northeastern Tibet)¹⁷ and the Tibetan empire (7th to 9th century AD). Driru's location is environmentally significant as the source of the Gyalmo Ngulchu (Salween) river and as one of the richest biodiversity hotspots on the Tibetan Plateau. The total population of Driru, according to official Chinese sources, is about 40,000 out of which 90 per cent is Tibetan.¹⁸

In 1942, Driru was administered as one of the six counties - Driru, Drachen, Nyenrong, Tengchen, Trido, and Sardeng in the historical territory of the "39 Hor tribes" by the then independent Tibetan government in Lhasa. The Tibetan name for Mongols is Hor and the 39 tribes located in the counties of Driru, Drachen (Chinese: Daqen), Nyenrong (Chinese: Nièróng), and Khyungpo Tengchen (Chinese: Dengqen) had come under the rule of Mongol chieftains between 1637 and 1728.¹⁹ In 1951, following the Chinese invasion, Driru was administered as part of the Chamdo (Chinese: Qamdo) jurisdiction. It was only in 1960 that Driru became a county under the newly-established Nagchu Prefecture and the neighbouring township of Gyashoe

Bhenkar was included in Driru.

Similar to other parts of Tibet, the early years of Chinese occupation saw Driru plunged into widespread destruction, chaos and oppression in the name of 'democratic reforms' and 'collectivisation'. In 1958, the religious and secular leaders of Driru including the 11th Driru Shabdrung Khedrub Tenzin Jigdre Choekyi Gyaltzen,²⁰ Driru Pon Sonam Tobgyal, and Traring Pon Dorje Shonu agreed to join forces with Chushi Gangdruk ('Four Rivers Six Ranges'), a voluntary Tibetan guerilla movement²¹ founded in 1956 to fight the Chinese occupying troops. On 15 December 1958, the Driru pongsang ('tribe leaders') and other leaders in neighbouring counties pledged military support in writing to Chushi Gangdruk.

Before actively joining the Chushi Gangdruk, the Driru leaders recruited and led fighters from the six counties to defend the Tsenden Monastery from the occupying Chinese troops in neighbouring Sog (Chinese: Suo) County. To this end, they gathered at Choeling Monastery in Driru and founded the short-lived armed group called the Tensung Choegyal Wangdrak Maggar whose members wore a yellow cloth strapped on their shoulders. They put up a formidable fight for about a month before the Chinese aerial bombing made it impossible to continue defending Tsenden monastery. They were then forced to move to Pelbar in Chamdo where they, along with Chushi Gangdruk volunteer soldiers from 18 different parts of Kham, continued to fight the Chinese troops for about six months.

Driru Shabdrung was one of the three commanders selected to lead the volunteer army based in upper Pelbar. By 20 January 1960, the Chinese troops had captured Driru Shabdrung and others in his group. Driru Shabdrung was taken to Lhasa where he was imprisoned for 18 years, first in Gutsa prison and later in Drapchi prison, where he eventually passed away.

Throughout the 1960s, Driru much like other areas all over Tibet was subjected to further destruction and oppression with the advent of the 'People's Communes' and the Cultural Revolution. Eyewitness accounts collected by the Tibetan government in exile revealed that Driru along with Nyemo county in Lhasa were the worst affected in 1969 with Driru bearing the larger brunt.²² A considerable amount is known about the situation in Nyemo due to the scholarly attention it received compared to Driru.²³

In Driru, one of the fiercest grassroots resistance against the Chinese occupation was witnessed during the winter of December 1968 and January 1969 when Tibetans began attacking the Chinese authority structure and mobilised a 3800-strong grassroots army known as the 'Driru Lhamag Karpo'. All Tibetan men aged 18 to 60 led by their respective religious and tribe leaders from villages and towns across Driru had joined the grassroots resistance army, which is also known as 'the 18-60 army'. For about seven months, they engaged in numerous acts of resistance including raiding and taking absolute control of the Chinese military garrisons in towns such as

Shagchu, Mowa and Chagtse. In the final battle in August 1969, they faced severe defeat at the hands of a reinforced Chinese army and heavy artillery bombardment. The number of Tibetans who died in this battle ran into thousands with villages in the historical Gyashoe area losing all their male population above the age of 18. "Following many years, women had to do the man's jobs and plough the barley fields," a Tibetan source was quoted as saying to VOA.²⁴ "Local rivers, turned crimson with blood, were filled with floating corpses impeding the flow of water," Driru Karma, a Tibetan from Gyashoe Yangshok Township recalled hearing from his parents about the massacre in 1969.²⁵ Gyen Tenzin Choedrak, one of the Tibetans who took part in this battle fled to exile in 1996 after serving about 12 years in Chinese prison.²⁶ He passed away at the age of 79 in 2020. His memoir was published in Tibetan language in 2005 by the Tibetan government in exile in India.²⁷

In 2006, Driru Tibetans responded to a call issued by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to stop using clothing and jewellery made of animal fur and skin by burning huge piles of animal hides and skins they owned and pledging to abandon any future use.²⁸ This public display of loyalty to their exiled leader was followed by Driru Tibetans travelling to the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa where they offered elaborate prayers for the long life of the Dalai Lama.

Since 2008, Tibetans in Driru have faced severe restrictions on daily activities and movement due the heavy deployment of security forces in the run-up to the Beijing

Olympics. Chinese security personnel had blocked all roads leading to Lhasa and expelled Tibetans who were not permanent residents in Nagchu in preparation for the upcoming crackdown. The details of all male Tibetans in Nagchu were collected long before the sensitive March 10 uprising in 2008, Driru had been subjected to heavy restrictions and government 'work teams' were stationed in villages and monasteries to conduct 'patriotic re-education' campaigns. These campaigns intensified after widespread protests erupted against Chinese occupation in Lhasa on 14 March. The 'patriotic re-education' campaigns, earlier targeted at monastic institutions that had long been considered bastions of political dissidence, were now expanded to cover the secular sections of the Tibetan communities such as government employees, farming and nomadic communities, entrepreneurs and educational institutions.²⁹ Tibetans overwhelmingly rejected these coercive brainwashing campaigns that included demonising His Holiness the Dalai Lama and enforcing loyalty for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The monastic population was at the forefront in resisting the 'patriotic re-education' campaigns resulting in the forced closure of numerous monasteries and arbitrary detention of monastic staff and ordinary monks. Ngawang Gyaltsen, the abbot of Tarmoe Monastery and head of the monastery's Democratic Management Committee was detained in June 2008 and subsequently imprisoned along with other monks Ngawang Jampel aka Ngawang Jamyang, Ngawang Sangye

and Kalsang Lochok.³⁰ Among them, Ngawang Jampel, following his release in 2010 after serving two years' sentence, was again arrested in 2013 and died of brutal custodial torture less than a month of his detention.³¹ Two monks from Bhenkar Monastery in Bhenkar Township were sentenced to two years in prison in March 2008, followed by the sentencing of three monks and six lay people each to nine years' in prison in May that year.³² Around 270 monks from the monastery had also been detained and held in the county detention centre. The 'patriotic re-education' campaign was conducted at Shabten Monastery in March by the 'work teams' followed by the deployment of a large number of armed police.

On the pretext of China's National Day celebrations on 1 October 2008, Chinese authorities doubled down on security measures by dispatching the so-called 'Safe Driru' work teams to suppress dissent in Driru.³³ With increased security presence in Driru and neighbouring Sog (Chinese: Suo) and Bachen (Chinese: Baqin) counties, local Tibetans were subjected to relentless 'patriotic reeducation' campaigns and heightened restrictions on basic freedoms and human rights resulting in further resistance from local Tibetans. In March 2010, a protest staged by primary school students in Tsala township calling for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet ended in the detention of 20 students.³⁴ The known names of those detained were Thupten Jungney, Thupten Wangtsok, Norbu Jungney, Norbu Tenzin, Thekchok Gyamtso, Rinchen Phuntsok, Yonten Lhundrub, and Tsetan Dorje.³⁵

In September 2010, one of the biggest protests in recent years was witnessed in September 2010 when about 5000 Tibetans gathered at the sacred Naglha Dzamba mountain to protest planned mining and damming activities.³⁶ Local authorities quickly detained many of the protesters including Dorje Draktsel and Palden Choedrak. Buphel, Tsegon, and Samten were also detained even though they had not taken part in the protest but merely submitted a petition against mining activities. The crackdown continued in October 2010 when 20 residents of Dathang town and Tsachu village were severely beaten up for petitioning against resource extraction plans.

By October 2011, the situation had further deteriorated with the deployment of 'work teams' all over TAR to enforce new and repressive campaigns to manage monasteries such as 'Nine Must-Haves' and 'Harmonious Model Monastery'.³⁷ The aggressive implementation of these campaigns resulted in monks and nuns getting detained or fleeing into nearby mountains and forests following the closure of their monasteries. Almost all the 13 monasteries in Driru were shuttered making it difficult for local Tibetans to even hold religious rites for the deceased.³⁸ The 'Nine Must Haves' requires, among others, every Tibetan household and monastery to fly the Chinese national flag and display portraits of Chinese leaders. Chinese authorities first enforced the flag-flying mandate in early 2012 in Driru and neighboring areas³⁹ as part of the "stable and prosperous Driru" campaign.⁴⁰ For instance, in January

2012, in addition to conducting 'patriotic re-education' campaigns at Bhenkar Monastery, local Chinese officials ransacked the monks' residences and seized photos of the Dalai Lama. The monastery was ordered to hoist Chinese flags, establish a new police office in the monastic compound and appoint Chinese government officials to monitor the monastery's finances. When the monastery refused to comply, its abbot Thupten Dhonyoe, disciplinarian Nyendak, chant master Gyatso, and treasurer Lhundrub, were detained. Fourteen more monks and lay people that were detained and sentenced to prison. By July 2013, the campaign to project stability and prosperity had been conducted for the third time in Driru covering about 30000 of its residents in 21 monasteries and villages.⁴¹ Monasteries came under severe attack leading to the detention of monks and lockdown of monasteries in the region.⁴² The Chinese Communist Party cadres permanently stationed in monastic institutions took absolute control of all monasteries and nunneries in Driru.⁴³

Lay Tibetans in Driru were at the forefront in defending the monasteries and resisting the government repression of non-violent protests. Four Tibetans including the well-known writer Gudrup,⁴⁴ Tsepo, Tenzin and Tsegyal⁴⁵ died in 2012 of self-immolation protests calling for freedom and return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet. The same year, a plan to carry out self-immolation protests by seven Tibetans from Bhenkar village on the eve of the International Human Rights Day on 9 December got leaked resulting in the detention of two and death of the five others from jumping into the local Gyalmo

Ngulchu river.⁴⁶

CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

In the last decades, international criminal law has developed substantially, making it possible to hold individuals criminally responsible for war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Originally, these crimes and their attribution to individuals were only codified in treaties and resolutions creating international criminal tribunals. Today, they are binding on all States as customary international law.⁴⁷ The Rome Statute, which created the International Criminal Court (ICC) is the most definitive statement of the existing customary international law concerning the definition of international crimes and their attribution to individuals.⁴⁸

The adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998 and the creation of the ICC in 2002 led to numerous international and domestic courts relying on the Rome Statute as a source of definitive statement regarding international criminal law and modes of liability.⁴⁹ So far, 125 States have acceded to the Rome Statute.⁵⁰ Article 7 of the Rome Statute provides an extensive list of specific criminal acts that may constitute crimes against humanity such as murder, torture, arbitrary detention, and persecution.⁵¹

Due to China's growing international influence and the fact that it is not a party to the Rome Statute, it is impossible for the ICC to investigate the situation in Driru in particular, and Tibet in general. However, the ICC's lack of jurisdiction does not change the nature of the crimes China has committed and this report will go on to prove that international crimes as defined by the Rome Statute have been committed in Driru.

The defining characteristic of crimes against humanity is not the commission of the underlying offenses such as murder, torture, or arbitrary detention, but the surrounding context in which the offenses are carried out. All the underlying criminal offenses for crimes against humanity were already prohibited by international law. These already internationally wrongful acts become crimes against humanity only when they are committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population with knowledge of the attack.⁵² The required elements to provide the context for crimes against humanity are referred to as the *chapeau* elements.

The Rome Statute requires that crimes against humanity be committed "as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack."⁵³ The attack on the civilian population is specifically defined as consisting of multiple commissions of the underlying offenses pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy.⁵⁴ These two phrases contain the four chapeau elements that together provide the context for crimes against humanity: 1) a widespread or systematic attack; 2) against any civilian population; 3) multiple acts pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy; and 4) knowledge of the attack.

Once the chapeau elements are fulfilled, the next step is to prove that the underlying criminal offenses have been committed. The ten specific acts listed in the Rome Statute form the underlying offenses for crimes against humanity. This report examines the commission of

underlying criminal offenses namely murder, torture, detention in violation of international law, and persecution in Driru. The report will also attribute these crimes to individual Chinese government officials.

Under the Rome Statute, a person can be criminally responsible for a crime in five ways: 1) committing the crime individually, jointly or through another person; 2) ordering, soliciting, or inducing the attempt or commission of the crime; 3) facilitating the commission of the crime by aiding, abetting or assisting their commission; 4) intentionally contributing to the commission of the crime by a group of people with a common purpose; and 5) by attempting the commission of the crime.⁵⁵ It is also possible for somebody to be criminally responsible for doing nothing. Civilian and military commanders have the legal or actual authority to stop the commission of crimes and this creates a special responsibility whereby their inaction can result in criminal responsibility. People can be responsible for crimes they commit jointly with others or through another person.⁵⁶ Regarding crimes against humanity, which can require the creation of a policy and its implementation, there will be multiple perpetrators.

CHAPEAU ELEMENTS

WIDESPREAD OR SYSTEMIC ATTACK

A widespread attack encompasses either a large geographic area or a large number of civilians. An attack is systematic if it is well organized and unlikely to be a random occurrence. However, there is no requirement that the attack be both widespread and systematic but only that the attack be either widespread or systematic, based on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).⁵⁷ The term ‘civilian’ has not been defined in the Rome Statute but the relevant tribunals have defined the term broadly.⁵⁸ In some cases, it was held that civilians include the general population and people who may be actively involved in the conflict or resistance movements in certain circumstances.⁵⁹ In others, the definition of civilian was taken from international humanitarian law and thus excluded members of resistance movements. Under international humanitarian law, a civilian is anyone who is not a member of the armed forces or an otherwise legitimate combatant. In determining whether a population is civilian, it must be predominantly, but not exclusively civilian in nature. In cases of doubt, individuals and groups are treated as civilians.

In Driru, the attack against the civilian population is both widespread and systematic, with Driru covering a large

geographical area with 90 percent of the 40000 residents being Tibetan. The attack was not random but systematic and well organised from the deployment of thousands of Public Security Bureau and People’s Armed Police personnel to conducting the coercive ‘patriotic reeducation’ campaigns and imposing brutal punishments and retribution for those who disobeyed. The security clampdown in 2013 was so intense that Tibetans in Mowa township had about half a dozen security personnel kept watch on each household making it difficult to venture outside.

Furthermore, a regulation enforced by the Driru County government in September 2015 further revealed a systematic and widespread intensification of state-sanctioned religious repression to ‘purge and reform’ all religious institutions and systems in the county.⁶⁰ Evoking the memory of the Cultural Revolution, the regulation targeted the whole structure of the society, from top to bottom, subjecting it to sweeping state scrutiny and punishment. Each level of the Party and government offices and units, from county to village, is held responsible for any leniency in their duty to enforce the regulation.” Any signs of laxity were to result in responsible officers and staff from the County United Front Work Department, relevant party committees, Religious Affairs Bureau, Finance office,

relevant government offices, and permanent work team officers at religious institutions warned, blacklisted, deprived of salaries, or fired.

AGAINST CIVILIAN POPULATION

The victims of the atrocities in Driru included all sections of the society, spanning different age groups, occupations, and identities. These atrocities demonstrate an utter disregard for and brutal suppression of basic human rights and freedoms. Children were forced to bear the trauma of living in the fear of violence, forced separation from their families, and disruption of their education and wellbeing. Monks and nuns, who had dedicated their lives to spiritual practice and service, also faced severe consequences. They were subjected to harassment, arbitrary arrests, and forced reeducation. Their monasteries, which serve as important cultural and religious institutions, were targeted with further restrictions and clampdown.

Both monastic and lay Tibetans were targeted for a wide variety of government reprisals. For instance, the 2015 regulation warned that those who failed to comply with the repressive decree would be banned from harvesting caterpillar fungus for two years. Lay Tibetan families and parents of monks and nuns were warned of six months of 'patriotic reeducation' sessions, cancellation of government subsidies and benefits as well as detention and imprisonment.

MULTIPLE ACTS PURSUANT TO OR IN FURTHERANCE OF STATE POLICY:

China's 'stability maintenance' policy is at the root of the egregious and persistent human rights abuses committed in Driru. The objective of the 'stability maintenance' (Chinese: *weiben*) policy is to preserve and sustain the ruling status of the Chinese Party-state and president Xi Jinping's perennial leadership of the 'world's largest political organization'.⁶¹ To achieve this objective, local Chinese authorities in Driru commit underlying criminal offenses for crimes against humanity such as torture, detention in violation of international law, and murder primarily targeting activists, dissidents, religious leaders, and petitioners who are viewed as "destabilizing elements" against the Party-state.

Policy for Tibet is devised and formulated at the highest level notably the Tibet Work Forums that are attended by top central Party leadership, government and military officials including President Xi Jinping in Beijing. The nature of the Tibet Work Forums highlights the 'top-down' or 'statist' approach of the Chinese government that oversees almost every step in the formulation of Tibet policy from design, to implementation, to goals, crafted and coordinated by the central government in Beijing. The most recent Seventh Tibet Work Forum held in Beijing on 28 and 29 August 2020 saw President Xi Jinping doubling down on the 'stability first' strategy. Xi called for "forging an

ironclad shield to safeguard stability" to 'comba[t] separatist activities'.⁶²

Clearly, Chinese authorities have signaled a break from its past strategy of '[economic] development for stability' by prioritizing 'stability first' in its dealings with Tibet and Xinjiang.⁶³ The 'stability first' strategy has long been implemented in the TAR at least since 2011 with particular emphasis on the "three-dimensional preventive control" (*litihua shehui zhi'an fangkong tixi*), which mainly involves putting in place various forms of digital surveillance, as well as "eliminating unseen threats" (*xiaochu yinhuan*) under which even small issues or complaints irrespective of their threat levels are perceived and dealt with as forms of serious unrest.⁶⁴

In Driru, the most severe and widespread escalation of 'stability maintenance' policy occurred between 2013 and 2014 when local Chinese authorities implemented various campaigns and programs such as the 'Nine Must Have' to neutralize dissent in Driru and neighboring areas in Nagchu City. Hoisting Chinese flags on Tibetan houses, monasteries and offices was one of the mandatory requirements under the 'Nine-Must-Haves' program⁶⁵ that was enforced throughout the 5453 villages and 1787 monastic institutions in TAR. The 'Nine-Must-Haves' along with the 'The Six Ones'⁶⁶ were part of coercive programs

introduced during the tenure of the then TAR Party secretary Chen Quanguo in 2011 to further strengthen and bolster the overall “stability maintenance” policy of the Chinese Party-state. In his address to the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth TAR Party Committee on 26 June 2012, Chen had urged Party members to ensure that “the Party’s voices and images be heard across 1.2 million square kilometers of the vast territory” of TAR and that “no voices and images of the hostile forces and Dalai clique can be heard and seen.”⁶⁷ Preventive policing and the deployment of thousands of cadres and work teams in grassroots communities are at the heart of the TAR’s “stability maintenance” policy, which is established at the highest levels of the government through the periodic Tibet Work Forums.⁶⁸

KNOWLEDGE OF THE ATTACKS

The perpetrator of the crime must have knowledge of the attack on the civilian population and of the fact that his act is part of that attack.⁶⁹ The knowledge requirement consists of two sub-elements: the perpetrator must have knowledge of the attack and that his or her conduct was part of the attack. The perpetrator's knowledge could be inferred from his or her legal authority, the historical and political environment, and the role he or she played in the broader criminal campaign. In this context, the political office responsible for overseeing the Party secretaries in the Tibet Autonomous Region held legal authority over the abuses committed in Driru County. The Party secretary and other heads of government from county to township levels had the requisite knowledge of the attacks. Chinese authorities cannot claim ignorance or lack of awareness given their extensive involvement and absolute control over the region. They must be aware that their own conduct contributed to and formed an integral part of the attacks against civilians, and this means that they understood the systematic nature of atrocities being committed and recognised their direct role in implementing or perpetuating them. Their position granted them the power to enforce policies and engage in actions that directly contributed to widespread and systematic human rights violations in Driru.

Leaked official documents of the Driru County government in 2014 and 2015 provide irrefutable evidence that the attacks were not only planned but also implemented in a systematic manner wherein each Part and government agency and department and individuals working for them were tasked with enforcing coercive policies and practices against Tibetans in Driru. For instance, the regulations announced by the Driru County government in 2015 required government and Party officials from the County United Front Work Department, relevant party committees, Religious Affairs Bureau, Finance office, relevant government offices, and permanent work team officers at religious institutions to carry out systematic attacks against Tibetan religion and cultural identity.⁷⁰ A regulation introduced in September 2014 detailed collective punishment of a monastic or lay community as a consequence of an individual's alleged actions by.⁷¹ Another extensive regulation passed in June the same year targeted economic sources of Tibetans in exchange for political loyalty for the Chinese Party-state and those protesting against government policies were threatened with dismissal from their monastery, cancellation of state subsidies, and prohibition on the harvesting of the caterpillar fungus.⁷²

UNDERLYING CRIMINAL OFFENSES

MURDER

Murder is the first underlying criminal offense for crimes against humanity listed in the Rome Statute. Additionally, Article 30 of the Rome Statute establishes that all crimes must be committed with both knowledge and intent. In addition to chapeau elements explained in the preceding sections of this report, murder as a crime against humanity requires the intentional and knowing killing of one or more people, committed by the use of excessive force and live ammunition.

Murder is one of the most commonly committed crimes in Tibet. While such an act is punishable by the Chinese Law, no officials have been recorded to have received punishment; instead have received a promotion in some instances. Other than premeditated death caused by mass shootings during the protest, it happens mostly in police custody due to severe physical beatings and torture.

A large number of known Tibetans have been subjected murder or extrajudicial killings as part of the pervasive and brutal human rights violations committed by the Chinese government to suppress dissent and maintain control over the Tibetan population.

In Driru, Kunchok Jinpa, 51, died on 6 February 2021 in a hospital in Lhasa, after suffering brain hemorrhage and paralysis



Kunchok Jinpa

in prison.⁷³ His death was a direct consequence of the mistreatment and torture he endured in Chinese custody. Kunchok Jinpa was initially detained without his family's knowledge on 8 November 2013, as part of a wave of arrests following peaceful protests against the forced flag-flying campaign in Driru. He was later convicted of leaking state secrets for sharing information with foreign media about the protests in his region, resulting in a severe 21-year prison sentence.

In August 2020, Lhamo, a 36-year-old mother of three, died of torture in police

custody after her detention in March that year. In January 2014, the body of a youth named Kunchok Dakpa from Chamram Village was returned to his family after he had been held incommunicado since his detention in December 2013.

These known cases and others detailed in the later section of this report highlight the systematic and widespread use of violence and murder as tools of control and suppression employed by Chinese officials against Tibetans.

TORTURE

The definition of torture as a crime against humanity is derived from the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Torture Convention), which prohibits the use of torture in all circumstances. By and large, the definition of torture as a crime against humanity in the Rome Statute reflects the customary definition of torture that States have applied internationally and domestically.

The systematic and widespread use of torture by the CCP is well documented, and the issue of torture in Tibet is a continuing testament to the violation of fundamental human rights. Although torture is forbidden under Chinese law, torture of Tibetan detainees continues while those responsible go unpunished.

In Tibet as in Driru, torture is primarily used to target individuals who are seen as threats to the absolute control and authority of the Chinese Party-state. Tibetan activists, human rights defenders, religious leaders and anyone involved in advocating for Tibetan independence or cultural preservation are subjected to torture as a means of coercion, punishment, or extracting confessions.

Torture is commonly used as an interrogation technique to extract information, forced confessions, and intimidate individuals into silence.

The methods of torture includes severe beating with electric batons, butts of guns and other heavy objects, burning with iron, cigarette buds, or boiling water, suffocation, sexual abuse, and psychological torments such as threats, intimidation, and isolation.

On 3 September 2013, Dayang, a 68-year-old man from Donglha village in Tsachu Township, was brutally beaten up by local police after he courageously expressed his desire for Tibetan independence and demanded the withdrawal of Chinese security forces. He was hospitalized in critical condition and sentenced to two years and six months in prison.⁷⁴

A senior Tibetan monk named Tenzin Lhundrup from Driru's Lenchu township suffered torture and other cruel and degrading treatment before he was sentenced in May 2015, a year after his arbitrary detention in May 2014. Throughout his pretrial detention, police did not provide any information to his family and friends about his whereabouts or condition. The news of his sentencing was the only confirmation his family had about his status in over a year, that he had somehow survived the beatings and torture in detention.

Lobsang Yeshi, a former village leader and father of eight children, died at the age of 64, on 19 July 2015 in a hospital in Lhasa,

after being detained on 12 May 2014. He died due to excessive torture, maltreatment and medical negligence at Chushur Prison in Lhasa. In November 2014, Bachen Gyewa aka Ngawang Monlam, another village leader in Driru County was removed from his post, arrested and then died in police custody. Two other village leaders Ngangtak, 54, and Rigsal, 31 were each sentenced to 10 years in prison on 14 January 2014 after their secret detention on 24 November 2013.

These known cases of torture are illustrative of the treatment suffered by many other known and unknown Tibetan detainees and prisoners throughout Driru. The torture they suffered was part of China's 'stability maintenance' policy to suppress all dissent in Driru. The experiences of these Tibetans prove that torture as a crime against humanity was committed in Driru.

IMPRISONMENT & OTHER SEVERE DEPRIVATION OF PHYSICAL LIBERTY

The Rome Statute lists “imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of international law” as an underlying criminal offense for crimes against humanity. In addition to the chapeau elements, there are three elements that must be fulfilled with both knowledge and intent: 1) the perpetrator imprisoned or otherwise severely deprived one or more persons of physical liberty; 2) the conduct violated fundamental rules of international law; and 3) the perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that made the conduct a violation of fundamental rules of international law. An arrest or detention is arbitrary if it is not in strict accordance with the law or under the control of independent, impartial authority.

In Driru, Tibetans are subjected to arbitrary arrests and detention for exercising basic human rights such as freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. Using vaguely defined charges of ‘splittism’ or ‘separatism’, Tibetans are held in prolonged pretrial detention in undisclosed locations without access to due process or legal representation. Advocating for the study and use of Tibetan language and culture is deemed a ‘splittist’ activity and therefore prosecuted as a criminal activity in violation of Chinese constitutional guarantees for regional and ethnic autonomy. In January 2014, Thardoe

Gyaltsen, the principal chant master of Drongna Monastery was sentenced in secret to 18 years in prison for running a popular Tibetan language and culture classes at his monastery.⁷⁵

Others like Dorje Dragtsel were sentenced to 11 years in prison in January 2014 for protesting the Chinese government’s plan to mine the sacred Naglha Dzamba mountain in May 2013.⁷⁶ Dorje Dragtsel had been missing since his arrest on 3 October 2013. On 6 October 2013, Dragtsel’s secret detention triggered a protest among local Tibetans in Dathang Township, which was violently suppressed by about 300 security forces using guns and iron batons.

The arbitrary arrests and detention in Driru was so swift and intense that more than 1000 known Tibetans had been detained in the course of three months beginning September 2013.⁷⁷ Tibetan community leaders both monastic and lay received heavy sentences in Driru due to the influence they wielded and to use them as examples to deter the larger community from engaging in any acts deemed illegal by the Chinese authorities. Tenzin Rangdrol, a village leader from Shagchu township in Driru, was detained in October 2013 and given a 5-year sentence on charges of ‘splittism’.⁷⁸ Two village leaders from Driru – Ngangtrak, 54, and Rigsal, 31– were given 10-year sentences for allegedly failing to fulfill

their duties as village leaders and in the case of Ngangtak, for instigating fellow villagers against the Chinese authorities.⁷⁹

In December 2013, Chinese authorities had reportedly extended the 'patriotic re-education' campaign in Driru by locking down at least three monasteries and calling back locals who were studying outside of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR).⁸⁰ These campaigns involve detention of monks as well as lay persons for a specified period of attending political education sessions where they are taught to display loyalty and pledge allegiance to the Chinese Party-state and denounce the Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The arbitrary detention and imprisonment of Tibetans without due process as part of a continuing crackdown on dissent is in violation of international law and an underlying criminal offense for crimes against humanity.

PERSECUTION

Persecution is defined as “the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights” in violation of international law by “reason of the identity of the group or collectivity”.⁸¹ Persecution is considered a crime against humanity if the perpetrator commits a discriminatory act or omission against one or more persons based on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, and gender or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law. The perpetrator knew that such conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

Tibetans in Driru have been systematically targeted for their political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious beliefs, by suppressing dissent and silencing any opposition to the Chinese government. Tibetans who dare to express differing political ideologies or advocate for a free Tibet are subjected to harassment, arbitrary arrests, and imprisonment. Therefore, basic rights and freedoms such as freedom of expression, assembly, and association are ruthlessly curtailed, creating an environment of fear and silence that suppress any form of dissent.

Many Tibetans in Driru became victims of persecution without any justifiable charges or legal basis for their actions. China’s ‘stability maintenance’ policy

particularly targets Tibetans in a discriminatory manner as can be seen in the detention, torture and extrajudicial killings of Tibetans in Driru for merely asserting pride and dignity in their cultural identity and/or advocating for the protection and promotion of Tibetan language and culture.

Because all cases involving Tibetans are deemed controversial and politically sensitive regardless of the charges involved, Tibetan detainees find it an uphill task to find legal representation or access to a fair trial.⁸² After his detention in October 2020, Tibetan businessman Tenzin Tharpa’s family members had a hard time finding a lawyer to defend his case despite having the financial means to do so.⁸³ When the family finally managed to find a lawyer from faraway Beijing, the lawyer had to face relentless roadblocks from the authorities bent on forcing him to give up the case. Still Tharpa’s case is one of the very few wherein a Tibetan managed to hire a lawyer, which for a vast majority of Tibetans is not possible.

These are a few cases that exemplify the persecution faced by Tibetans who express dissenting views or criticise Chinese policies in Tibet. They also demonstrate the relentless efforts on the part of Chinese authorities to suppress any form of advocacy for Tibetan rights and identity.

Tsegyal, 27, father of two, died of burn injuries in police custody on 18 November after his protest on 7 November at Tingser Village of Bekar/Bhenkar Township.⁸⁵ For less than two weeks, from 7 to 18 November, Tsegyal received no treatment for his burns while being held at the local police station in Nagchu town. Tsegyal died in the evening of 18 November in police custody.

On 25 October, cousins **Tsepo**, 20, and **Tenzin**, 25, from Bekar/Bhenkar monastery self-immolated near a government building in Nagchu City. Tsepo died on the way to hospital while Tenzin's status remained unknown.⁸⁶



Tenzin

ATTACKS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

Beginning October 2011, Chinese authorities launched campaigns such as 'Nine Must-Haves' and 'Harmonious Model Monastery' in Tibet. In Driru, the government's 'work teams' visited about 22 monasteries and conducted 'patriotic re-education' classes. Feeling harassed and traumatized by the relentless 'political education' sessions, many monks and nuns left their respective monasteries. Monasteries such as Bhenkar have been closed. After Bhenkar's closure, local Tibetans reportedly took a dead body to the township office complaining to the authorities that there were no monks to perform religious rites for the deceased and urged the local authorities to reopen the monastery and to let the monks return.⁸⁷

By April 2012, the newly established Monastery Management Committee (MMC), an unelected committee made up of Communist Party cadres, had begun managing monastic affairs replacing the power and authority of the erstwhile Democratic Management Committees (DMCs) leading tighter surveillance and control. A Communist Party cell is embedded in every MMC to keep a check on the activities of the monasteries and bar any political activities. All major monasteries in Tibet now have police stations in their compounds. Tibetan monasteries and nunneries are required to

hang portraits of the four past and present Chinese Communist Party leaders and the Chinese national flags in their inner compounds. Refusal to comply with these directives have resulted in the arrests of monks and nuns, closure of monasteries and even caused the death of some monks.⁸⁸

By March 2012, monasteries in Driru County had been forced to hand over the entire administration and management of the monasteries to 'work teams' sent by the Chinese government.⁸⁹ In February 2012, the 'work teams' visited Taklung Monastery and Choeling Monastery and held meetings where the officials decided to transfer all rights and authority of the monasteries to the Chinese government. The 'work teams' also documented details of the monasteries' assets including all antique pieces and ordered the monastery officials not to make any transaction without official approval.

Monasteries such as Bhenkar, Drong-na, Rabten, and Roggyen had to be closed down after monks staged mass boycotts leaving the monasteries empty. In these monasteries, government officials held many 're-education' sessions and attempted to hoist Chinese national flags.

The local officials have ordered heads of 'neighborhood committees' to monitor goings-on in every neighborhood in the

county. Under this order, no family can shelter monks or monks who had left their monasteries in protest. And if a family gets information on such monks, they are required to inform the officials.

Meanwhile, the village headman of Driru's Layok village, Mr Soegyam, a Tibetan, was fired after he refused to carry out the order of forcing monks to return. Mr Soegyam told the officials that the monks did not want to live under constant suffering and surveillance.

At a meeting in Layok village, local Tibetans again challenged the 'work team' officials complaining about the absence of any monks to carry out religious rituals following the closure of monasteries in the area. The officials in turn asked the Tibetans to handover the ritual money so that they, the officials, could perform the rituals.

SHOOTING UNARMED PROTESTERS

2013

In October 2013, Chinese security forces shot dead four Tibetan villagers and wounded 50 others in a continuing crackdown on protests in Driru opposing a government campaign of forced displays of Chinese flags.⁹⁰ The protesters were demanding the release of a villager who had led protests against the Chinese orders.



Chinese troops moving into Garchung Valley in Driru county, October 9, 2013. (Photo courtesy of an RFA listener.)

Protesters shot

On 6 October 2013, police shot at unarmed Tibetans protesting the secret detention of another Tibetan named **Dorjee Dragtsel** in Dathang Township. At least four Tibetan men have sustained gunshot injuries and among them, Tragyal

has sustained a broken thighbone and **Tsewang** had both his jawbones broken. Police also used teargas which caused many to become unconscious. About 60 Tibetans have sustained serious injuries during the crackdown in Dathang Township.

On 3 October 2013, police detained **Dragtsel** in the Nagchu area and since then he has gone missing. Dragtsel hails from Yangthang Village no. 4 in Dathang Township. He had been involved in earlier protests against the government's move to station permanent cadres in Driru. He was especially vocal about his disapproval of Communist cadres running political education sessions and other propaganda campaigns in Driru.



Dorjee Dragtsel

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND TORTURE

On 3 September 2013, **Dayang**, 68, was detained and severely beaten for shouting slogans for Tibetan freedom at a Driru cultural show where Tibetans were required to wave Chinese flags, triggering protests. While being treated in hospital with internal injuries resulting from police torture, he was ordered jailed for two-and-a-half years.⁹¹

About 1000 detained in less than three months

By early December 2013, it was reported that Chinese authorities had arbitrarily detained at least a thousand Tibetans since crackdown began in October, as authorities expanded a ‘re-education’ campaign in Driru by locking down at least three monasteries and calling back locals who were studying outside of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR).⁹²

Arbitrary detention and arrests:

On 3 November 2013, at least 15 Tibetans, among them were three women identified as **Sarkyi**, 49, **Tsophen**, 47, and **Yangkyi**, 25, were detained at Tengkhar Village in Shamchu Township. Others detained in Tengkhar village were **Tsering**, 22; **Tsering Phuntsok**, 21; **Tador**, 21; **Kundak**, 17; **Gabug**, 41; **Tsering Tenpa**, 22; **Thupchen**,

27; **Soeta**, 25; **Tsering Jangchup**, 21; and **Jigme Phuntsok**, 23.⁹³



Kundak



Tador & Tsering Phuntsok



Top (Thupchen) & bottom (Kunchok Jinpa)



Tsering Tenpa



On 8 November 2013, **Kunchok Jinpa**, a Tibetan tour guide from Village no. 5 in Chaktse Township was detained and held in an undisclosed location. Another man, Dhargyal, from the same township had been missing for the past two weeks.

A Tibetan man named **Zom Lhagya** was arrested in the aftermath of the 4 October 2012 self-immolation protest by Gudrup. Lhagya was sentenced to a year in Chushur Prison. His prison term was extended by a year due to unknown reasons.

China disappears more Tibetans in Driru as crackdown spreads

19/10/2013

In Lhasa, on 17 October 2013, Chinese police arrested two monks, Jampa Lekshay and **Kelnam** (probably a shortened form of Kelsang Namgyal), both 20 years old from Shugding Monastery in Yarding Village in Driru's Shamchu Township. They were arrested on charges of 'leaking state secrets', a month after their arrival in Lhasa.⁹⁴



Dawa Lhundup



Kelnam

On 15 October 2013, a Tibetan youth named **Dawa Lhundup**, 19, and a nun, Jampa, 20, were arrested on charges of ‘revealing state secrets through mobile phones and other means’. Both of them hail from Driru’s Yarding Village in Shamchu Township.

Kelsang, mother of three girls, was detained on 11 October 2013 near the gate of Dejang guesthouse in Nagchu for ‘keeping the pictures of Dalai Lama and Tibetan patriotic songs on her mobile phone.’ She hails from Village no. 1 located in Tsala Township in Driru.

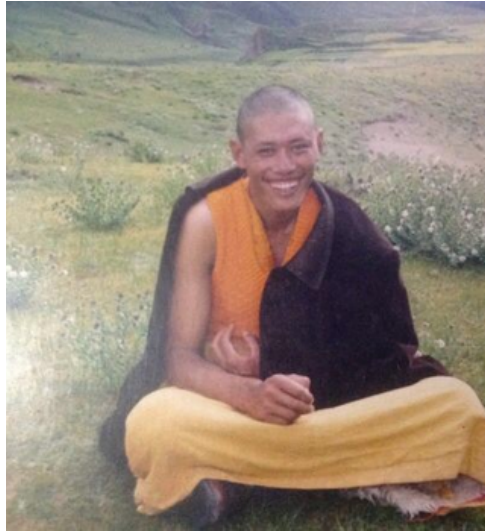


Kelsang and her Daughters

Death in detention:

19/12/2013

On 17 December 2013, less than a month after his secret detention, Buddhist scholar and master **Ngawang Jampel** aka **Ngawang Jamyang**, 45, died of torture in police custody.⁹⁵ His body was returned to his family. He was among the three monks from Tarmoe Monastery detained on 23 November 2013 while on a vacation in Lhasa. The second detained monk was **Kelsang Choklang** and the identity of the remains unknown. **Kelsang Choklang's** whereabouts remained unknown.



Kelsang Choklang



Ngawang Jampel

Arbitrary detention:

06/12/2013

Two singers **Trinley Tsekar**, 22, and **Gonpo Tenzin**, 25, have been arrested in

separate incidents in late November 2013 in Driru.⁹⁶ Tsekar from Serkhang Village in Driru Township was arrested on around 20 November 2013 when he visited the local driving school to get his driver's license. He was arrested for distributing a DVD that contained songs he had sung on Tibetan identity, culture and language. One of his most famous DVDs is titled Ring of Unity (Tib: Thundil ki Along).

Gonpo Tenzin, 25, was arrested on 30 November 2013 in Lhasa on unknown charges. Hailing from Septha Village in Shagchu Town, he was most likely arrested in connection with his songs that contained lyrics calling for the promotion and propagation of Tibetan culture, literature and language.



Gonpo Tenzin

Gonpo Tenzin's special album titled "No Losar for Tibet" touched a chord among many Tibetans who felt that celebrating Losar (Tibetan New Year) would be inappropriate given the situation in Driru. Gonpo Tenzin's popularity increased after the song became a major hit. Gonpo Tenzin hails from.

Unjust imprisonment

23/12/2013

Singer **Trinley Tsekar**, 22, was imprisoned for nine years; **Choekyap** to 13 years; and **Tselha** to three years.⁹⁷All three of them had been charged with instigating one of the largest anti-mining protests at the sacred Naglha Dzamba Mountain in Driru.



Cover of Trinley Tsekar's DVD 'Ring of Unity'



Tselha



Choekyap

Arbitrary detention:

14/8/2012

On 29 July 2012, Chinese authorities arbitrarily detained Tibetan singer Choksal from Tashi Darlung Village in Nagshod Driru County. Choksal was arrested at approximately 10 p.m. while sending a letter at an internet café in Xining City, Qinghai Province. He was likely detained for his music, which included lyrics praising the Dalai Lama and expressing Tibetan national identity. Choksal's first CD featured several songs celebrating the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader and advocating for cultural pride. Following its release, Chinese authorities strictly banned the distribution of the CD's second and third editions in both Lhasa and Nagshod Driru County. Chinese police reportedly raided a store in Lhasa, confiscating a large number of third-edition CDs and threatening the shop owners with severe consequences should they continue to sell the recordings.

21/10/2013

A Tibetan father of three, Tenzin Rangdol, 34, was detained on 18 October 2013 and held incommunicado in Shagchu Town in He was arrested on his way home in Gochu Village no. 4 after walking his children to school.⁹⁸

On 19 October 2013, Rangdol's arrest triggered an overnight protest outside the local government office in Shagchu, following which more than 10 protesters hailing from Gochu Village were detained. Those arrested include Shodhar, Dorgyal, Lhamo, Kelsang Namdol, Mengyal, and an unidentified son of Mrs Sangmo.

On 20 October 2013 outside the premises of the local government office, armed police clothed in riot gear detained 10 protesters and warned other protesters: "You all are just like eggs hitting a rock. We will put you in the same situation like in 1959 and 1969."



Choksal



Tenzin Rangdol



Chinese armed police surround Tibetan protesters in Shagchu Township



Local Tibetans make their way to support the protesters in Shagchu Township

Unjust sentencing

03/12/2013

Tibetan nomad and writer **Topden** (pseudonym: Dro Ghang Gah) 30, from Shagchu town was arrested on 28 October 2013 and sentenced to five years in prison on 30 November 2013.⁹⁹



Topden

Topden was imprisoned for “keeping contacts with the Dalai [Lama] clique and for engaging in activities to split the nation”. He had published a poem, ‘Sad Song of Driru’, detailing the atrocities faced by local Tibetans in Driru. The poem covers events during the early years of Chinese rule in Driru particularly in 1969 when thousands of Tibetans were starved, imprisoned and killed. It also contains details on some of the recent crackdowns

in Driru including the beating and continued incommunicado detention of an elderly Tibetan man named Dayang.

Sad Song of Driru

by Dro Ghang Gah

*Beautiful landscape of Kham, [one] of the
three provinces of Tibet
Majestic Naglha Mountain and its
surroundings
Rich village inhabited by nomads and
farmers
It is called Nagshoe Driru*

*Old and new history of these villages
When I remember them from the depth of
my heart
With each and every heartbeat
Tears wet my dark eyes*

*In the year 1969
For the sake of Tibetan freedom
Hundreds of brave souls
Were massacred by the Chinese*

*Then the blue river Drulchu
Shrouded by a storm of red blood
Amid melancholic sound of the falling river
Merged with the great Gyalmo Ngulchu*

*The carrier of our brethren’s blood
If Gyalmo Ngulchu could feel
Shrouded by the darkness of suffering
Heartbroken tears would overflow*

*Looking up at the vast blue sky
Vultures hover
The narrow space and group of widows
Is there a time more miserable?*

*After such painful, dramatic karma
Chinese oppress us
In the flow of blood
We wait for our suffering to end*

*In the year 2012
For the cause of Tibet
Many heroes like Gudrup
Offered their bodies to fire*

*When the heroes sit
On the red burning flame
Tears of sadness flow
From six million Tibetans*

*Truth-tellers of this land
Have destroyed ignorance from its root
By arresting all educated Tibetans
Freedom of mind, body and speech is denied*

*More than terrors of oppression
Naglha Mountain is on the verge of
destruction
The inhabitants of the villages are
massacred
Monasteries have turned into empty houses*

*In the year 2013
Old man Dayang
Who called on his supreme lama
Was brutally punished by repressive law*

*Turning deaf ears to honest appeals
They beat up hundreds of people
This body has no freedom
This land has no democracy*

*Many heroes like Dodrak
Sentenced to prison*

*No freedom to express a few words
Is there a karma more unfortunate than this?*

*Yellow and dark armored vehicles
Roll down [the streets]
Pointing their blazing gun barrels
At helpless masses*

*Beneath the fluttering red flags
Violent decrees are issued
Visiting upper and lower parts of villages
They destroy all their happiness*

*Walking three steps forward is illegal
Waving hands three times is a crime
Speaking out three words is criminal
Is there a place more wretched than this?*

*Alas, oh The Wish-fulfilling Jewel
The protector Tenzin Gyatso
Please bestow us the moment
To wipe out tears and blood of this land*

*Alas, oh Lobsang Sangay
Leader of the Tibetan people
With heroic strength and power
Cut the final [chain] of this suffering*

*In this extensive universe
They say just laws exist
If these laws have power
Just look at the fate of the Land of Snows.*

On 18 November 2013, **Kunchok Choephel**, 28, was arrested and sentenced on 30 November 2013 to six years in prison. Choephel hails from Nga-yang Village in Shagchu town



Kunchok Choephel

Lobsang Tashi, a monk from Rabten Monastery, was arrested on 23 September 2013 when local Public Security Bureau officers also seized the monk's personal cell phone and “other electrical gadgets”. Lobsang hails from Village no. 8 in Dathang Township and has since disappeared. There are no additional details on Lobsang Tashi. The identities of six others sentenced remain unknown.

Arbitrary detention and unjust imprisonment

On 28 October 2013, Tibetan writer **Tsultrim Gyaltzen**, also known by his pseudonym **Shokdril**, and his friend Yulgyal, from Driru County were sentenced to 13 and 10 years in prison respectively.¹⁰⁰ Both of them are being imprisoned at Chushur Prison near Lhasa. After their arrests in October 2013, family members of Shogdril and Yugyal were only able to meet them for 10 minutes in prison in October 2014. Tibetans from Tengkar and Rishing villages in Bomphen Township who petitioned for their release were detained and imposed monetary fines.



Top photo on left (his book) & bottom right Tsultrim Gyaltzen

Shogdril was detained on 11 October during a nighttime raid at his home in Tengkhlar Village in Shamchu Township on accusations that he “engaged in separatist activities and disrupted social stability by spreading rumours”.¹⁰¹ Tsultrim Gyaltsen is known for his incisive, often irreverent essays and poetry, which he composed in both Tibetan and Chinese languages. In 2007, he published two books, ‘Chimes of Melancholic Snow’ and ‘The Fate of SnowMountain’.

Yulgyal, 26, hails from Tengkhlar Village in Shamchu Township, Driru County. He joined the Driru County Public Security Bureau as a policeman in 2005 and worked there for seven years. Given the complicated nature of police work in Tibet, he resigned from his service in 2012 and began engaging in small business to earn his living. **Yugyal** has a wife named **Lhakyi Dolma** and two children.

Arbitrary detention and torture

In October 2013, **Dayang**, 68, was sentenced to two years and five months for shouting slogans for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetan freedom at a cultural show in Tsachu Township. On 3 September 2013, during the cultural show organised by the Chinese authorities, when Tibetans were required to wave Chinese flags and appear happy, Dayang raised slogans challenging the spectacle of forced happiness.¹⁰² The next morning at about 2 am, he was detained from his by a group of Public

Security Bureau officials as other officers put a cloth over his wife’s head. Following his secret detention, he was admitted to the Driru County hospital from where on 7 October, he was taken to the Lhasa People’s Hospital for further treatment.



Yugyal

ILL-TREATMENT AND TORTURE

Ill-treatment and Torture

Tsering Gyaltzen, 25, was among the 40 Tibetans severely beaten up during the crackdown in Mowa Village on 29 September 2013. On 5 October 2013, he was admitted to the Lhasa People's Hospital. He sustained serious internal injuries as he has been passing blood in his urine and stool.

In Tsachu Township, about 100 Tibetans sustained injuries after they were beaten up by security forces for protesting against police violence. The protesters, hailing from Taklha, Lahog, Kona, Baro and Bhalag villages in Tsachu Township, had been injured but were not allowed to leave their homes to seek medical treatment.



Tsering Gyaltzen

DRIRU UNDER LOCKDOWN

Driru was brought under total lockdown with all communication lines including the phone and internet blocked in late September 2013. Residents of Driru living in Nagchu City and Lhasa were not allowed to visit their homes in Driru. Many residents of Driru had been stranded in Nagchu unable to return due to strict restrictions on movement.

On 28 September 2013, Mowa village was put under lockdown for defying official order to fly Chinese flags on their rooftops. For more than 48 hours, residents of the village were left with no access to food and water. They were barred from going out to graze their cattle or feed their animals.

Protesters beaten up and detained

On 28 September 2013, a confrontation lasting about three hours broke out between armed Chinese security forces and local Tibetans in Mowa Village in Driru. Local Tibetans in Mowa had refused to fly Chinese flags on their rooftops, a space traditionally reserved for sacred prayer flags; instead they threw the flags into a nearby river to express their disapproval. Armed police and the military arrived later to rein in the Tibetans. This led to open confrontation between the two sides as Tibetans used sticks and stones to respond to the firing from Chinese security forces.¹⁰³ About 40 Tibetans

from neighbouring villages of Taklha, Baro, Neshod and Taring appealed to local authorities to refrain from using force on Tibetans in Mowa. But they were beaten up and detained.



Chinese security forces arrive in Driru County



A partial view of hunger strikers outside the Driru County government office

SCHOOL STUDENT PROTEST

On 29 September 2013, a protest erupted among the students of the Driru County Primary and Middle schools after news reached that the authorities had threatened to expel students whose parents had participated in protests against the government. The County Middle School was closed indefinitely. In the County Primary School, only 60 students, all children of Chinese government employees, had stayed behind.



Chaos outside the Driru County Primary school

PERSECUTION OF DRIRU TIBETANS

A directive issued in October 2013 to numerous ‘convenience police posts’ in both Lhasa and Nagchu specifically targeted Tibetans from the three eastern counties in Nagchu namely Driru, Bachen and Sog travelling between Lhasa and Nagchu cities subjecting them to 24-hour police surveillance.¹⁰⁴

Police officers used secret codes when relaying information in real time about the movement and activities of Driru Tibetans visiting Lhasa.

Following is a translation of the Chinese language notification issued on 8 October



Locations of ‘convenience police stations’ in old Tibetan neighbourhood of Lhasa City as mentioned in the notification.

2013 by Old Lhasa Neighbourhood Committee:

To All Convenience Police Stations in [Lhasa] Old Neighbourhood,

To thoroughly implement the spirit of stability maintenance meeting held in Lhasa City and to normalise the stability maintenance regulations in the old neighbourhood, following instructions must be followed when using secret codes to identify and share information about three eastern counties in Nagchu Prefecture:

How to Use Secret Codes: When using secret codes [to identify Nagchu Tibetans], Nagchu men must be called “male tourists” while Nagchu women must be called “female tourists”. Likewise, the secret code for Biru County is “A”; secret code for Suo County is “B”; and secret code for Bachen County is “C”.

How to Send Secret Codes: For instance, if convenience police station no. 89 learns that three male individuals from Driru County have entered the area under convenience police station no. 91, police station no. 89 must relay this information to station no. 91 through mobile handsets by saying: “Station No. 91, three male

tourists from “A” have entered your area, please extend hospitality!”

First, police checkpoints in the inner circle of Barkhor must keep track of Nagchu Tibetans in areas under their jurisdiction. The movement and activities of Nagchu Tibetans must be monitored all through their stay in this area. If [Nagchu Tibetans] leave this area for another, police officers in the previous area must inform a police checkpoint closest to the next area where they have entered.

Security checkpoint 1 and 2 must inform police station no. 89 located in front of the Jokhang Temple square when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighbourhood.

Security checkpoint 3 must inform Xia Sasu [Tib: Shasarsur] police station no. 92 when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighbourhood.

Security checkpoint 4 must inform police station no. 93 in the northern part of Barkhor market area when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighbourhood.

Security checkpoint 5 must inform Tsetan Khangsar police station no. 94 when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighborhood.

Security checkpoints 6 and 7 must inform police station no. 95 in the eastern part of Barkhor market area when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old

neighbourhood.

Security checkpoint 8 must inform police station no. 96 in the southern part of Barkhor market area when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighbourhood.

Security checkpoints 9 and 10 must inform police station no. 97 in the southern part of Barkhor market area when they learn about Nagchu Tibetans entering the old neighbourhood.

Second, security checkpoints located in the outer circuit of Barkhor must monitor the movement and activities of Nagchu Tibetans and share information through mobile handsets.

Third, be careful when using secret codes through mobile handsets to monitor the above mentioned individuals. And suspicious persons must be subjected to thorough search and vigilance.

Issued by Old Lhasa Neighbourhood Committee, 8 October 2013

Below is the original Chinese version of the notification:

关于各站接力交接那曲籍人员的通知

老城区各便民警务站：

深入贯彻落实市局维稳防控会议精神，按照支队领导的安排部署，为确保老秘区社会治安秩序平稳正常，现将有关手台上报那曲东三县人员代号及方法通知如下：

代号描述方法：那曲籍男子（代号：男游客）、那曲籍女子（代号：女游客），比如县（代号：A区）、索县（代号：

B区）、巴青县（代号：C区）如：89号站发现那曲比如县男子3名进入91号站辖区，手台用语描述为：“91号站，A区男游客3名进入你辖区，请接待！”

一、八廓内圈各警务站在接、到辖区安检站交接的那曲籍人员后，应注意人员动态，并在其离开本辖区时通过手台向临近警务站进行交接。

一号安检站、二号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由89号大昭寺广场警务站负责接力交接；

三号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由92号夏萨苏警务站负责接力交接；

四号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由93号八廓北街警务站负责接力交接；

五号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由94号次旦康萨警务站负责接力交接；

六号安检站、七号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由95

号八廓东街便民警务站负责接力交接；

八号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由96号警Y站八^廓南街警务站负责接力交接：L

九号安检站、十号安检站进入老城区的那曲籍人员由97号大昭寺南门警务站负责接力交接；

二、八廓外圈各警务站在接到临近警务站交

接信息后，应注意人员动态，并在其离开本辖区时通过手台向临近警务站进行交接。

三、严格使用手台用语，注意观察此类人员动态，并加大对可疑人员的盘查检查力—

此通知

老城区指挥部 2013年10月8日

UNJUST IMPRISONMENT

2014

In January 2014, Thardoe Gyaltzen, the principal chant master of Drong Na Monastery was sentenced in secret to 18 years in prison.¹⁰⁵ He was detained in December 2013 and held in undisclosed location until his sentencing. Gyaltzen was primarily targeted for starting Tibetan language and culture classes in the monastery, which became quite popular as around 300 students attended these classes.



Doors of Drong Na Monastery sealed off

Death in detention:

On 20 January 2014, the body of Konchok Dakpa, a youth from Chamram Village in Driru Township, was returned to his family. He had been held incommunicado for weeks since his arrest in December 2013.¹⁰⁶ He was severely beaten up and tortured in custody.

Unjust sentencing:

In January 2014, Kelsang Choklang, a monk from Tarmoe Monastery Yuthang Village in Tsachu Township was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

In January 2014, a Tibetan layman named Dorje Dragtsel was sentenced to 11 years in prison for being one of the ringleaders of the May 2013 anti mining protest at the Naglha Dzamba Mountain and for obstructing the work of permanent cadres stationed in Driru. Dragtsel had been missing since his arrest on 3 October 2013.

On 6 October 2013, his secret detention triggered a protest among the local Tibetans in Dathang Township. The protest was violently suppressed by about 300 security forces using guns and iron batons.

Enforced disappearance:

The whereabouts and condition of **Tsultrim Nyendak**, a monk from Rabten Monastery in Tsachu Township, remain unknown since his arrest from Lhasa in late 2013.



Tsultrim Nyendak

ARBITRARY DETENTION

Six monks had been detained for defying the mandatory Chinese flag-flying campaign by removing and burning a Chinese national flag hoisted on the rooftop of Drong-ngur Kagyu Phelgyeling Monastery at Wathang town in Driru.¹⁰⁷ The current situation at the monastery and in Wathang town is said to be tense with the deployment of a large number of security forces.

Religious repression:

20/11/ 2014

A new 'rectification campaign', dated 12 September 2014 was imposed in Driru, as part of a broader political campaign and paramilitary crackdown following Tibetan resistance against the authorities' efforts to compel Tibetans to display the Chinese national flag from their homes.¹⁰⁸

In the aftermath of the new measures, 26 nuns characterized as 'illegal' by the authorities were expelled from the historic Jada Nunnery in Driru on 15 November 2014 after a police raid. Many of the nuns had refused to denounce the Dalai Lama during their visit and this led a work team of officials to examine the registration records of the nunnery to check that its population was in line with the officially-imposed quota of 140 nuns. The language in the regulations on what constitutes an offence is deliberately

opaque, meaning it can be subject to interpretation by local officials according to the political climate and drive to secure a conviction of a specific individual or set a particular example.

The Driru rulings are unambiguous in their assertion of punishment for displaying or 'secretly keeping' Dalai Lama images. They state: "Monks and nuns who hang pictures of the Dalai[8] or secretly keep them will be expelled from the monastery community, and forced to complete six months of education in the law" (Point 37).

In the Driru measures, not even officials are exempt from scrutiny in enforcing such prohibitions on Dalai Lama pictures; milder punishments of 'official warnings' and loss of status for monasteries are detailed for those who are in charge and either do not notice or do not report cases of display of Dalai Lama images.

One of the most serious measures is the instruction that "Religious facilities such as temples, hermitages and retreat cells that are illegally constructed since January 1, 2011 must all be closed down and, within a specific time period, demolished".

Detention facility expanded

18/09/ 2014

In September 2014, Chinese authorities

reportedly enlarging a paramilitary police facility in Tsamda town in Driru which “is meant to accommodate more prisoners” in anticipation of further waves of detention of residents who resist forced displays of loyalty to Beijing.¹⁰⁹

Though the number of Tibetans detained at the unofficial detention facility in Tsamda had recently dropped from a total of about 400 held in May and June 2014, there were still about 200 Tibetans being held.

“They are subjected to an intense regime of political re-education classes designed to ‘change their thoughts,’ are forced to sing the Chinese national anthem every day, and are made to suffer physically through beatings and torture.”

Some of those currently detained at the camp are held for only a week, with others held for a month or as long as six months.

Death in detention:

05/12/2014

On 21 November 2014, **Bachen Gyewa** aka **Ngawang Monlam**, the headman of Ushung Village in Gyashoe Yangshok Township (also known as Sentsa Township) in Driru County was removed from his post, arrested and then killed on the order of the secretary of the Driru County Party Committee.¹¹⁰

The exact circumstances of his death remain unclear but it appears that

Bachen Gyewa posed a formidable challenge to the Chinese government’s ongoing ‘stability maintenance’ measures that have been implemented since late 2011. The late village headman was a former monk at the local Bhenkar Monastery.

According to local Tibetans, “[Bachen Gyewa] was a courageous and patriotic Tibetan leader who served the village with utmost dedication for many years. Tibetans respected him as their leader, but Chinese authorities didn’t have a positive view of him.”

“At the village he built a huge community hall, where he invited Tibetan lamas to give religious teachings and organized prayer ceremonies and cultural performances. He built a school, where he invited educated Tibetans to teach illiterate Tibetans, including the young and elderly. He helped found Tibetan opera and dance institutes, built hospitals, shops and roads in the locality.”

Tibetans sympathetic to the fate of Bachen Gyewa were detained at the Driru County detention centre, and four of those detained were identified as **Paga**, **Nemed**, **Droril** and **Tashi**.

Unjust imprisonment:

In May 2014, Tenzin Lhundrup, a senior Tibetan Buddhist scholar at Gom Gonsar monastery in Lenchu Township, was detained and taken to an undisclosed location.¹¹¹ In May 2015, he was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Tenzin Lhundrup had been on the radar of Chinese security forces ever since he spearheaded the local opposition to Chinese mining activities at the Naglha Dzamba Mountain in May 2013.

Tenzin Lhundrup is a resident of Geney Village in Shagchu Town and was ordained a monk at a young age. He is an accomplished Buddhist scholar, having extensively studied Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, literature and culture. For three years since 2002 he underwent meditation retreat at Drikung Thil Monastery, the main seat of the Drikung Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. After his return to home monastery of Gom Gonsar, he served as the head of the prayer sessions and taught Buddhist philosophy to the monks.



Tenzin Lhundrup



Tenzin Lhundrup offering khatas (Tibetan ceremonial scarves) to anti-mining protesters in 2013

Unjust sentencing of village leaders

On 14 January 2014, two Tibetan village leaders Ngangtak, 54, and Rigstal, 31, were each sentenced to 10 years in prison for failing to fulfill their duties as village leaders to enforce stability and in the case of Ngangtak, for also instigating fellow villagers against the Chinese authorities in Mokhyim Village. Ngangtak was accused of holding a secret political meeting with 17 others at his home last year.¹¹² Both men were detained on 24 November 2013 and remained in undisclosed locations. News of their sentencing became known through unnamed sources in the Driru County police office.

In 2013, local Tibetans defied official orders to hoist Chinese flags and took part in a protest in Driru County town where about 1,000 Tibetans from different villages had gathered.

Mokhyim villagers also protested against the closure of Drongna Monastery in which many monks were arbitrarily detained and some were sentenced in secret. Born in 1960, Ngangtak had been a village leader since 1980 in Mokhyim. He has a wife and an unknown number of children. **Rigsal**, born in 1983, became a village leader around 2007. He has a wife and three children.



Rigsal

2015

Three businessmen imprisoned for eight years imprisonment each, poet for seven years

In May 2015, three businessmen - **Sonam Dharwang**, **Lhanam** and Tsering Lhadup, were each sentenced to eight years, while poet Tenzin Kalsang received seven years of imprisonment.¹¹³

The businessmen are natives of Kado Village in Lenchu Township. They were charged of 'inciting quarrels among the public' and 'opposing the government'. They had been arrested for causing 'political instability' in 2014.

Tenzin Kalsang, 25, from Lenchu Township had been secretly detained in the later part of 2014. After completing his elementary education, he studied as a monk at Jhopu Monastery and thereafter at the Larung Buddhist Academy in Sertha County in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province. He was forced to return from Larung Gar following the Chinese policy of forcing monks studying outside of their respective prefectures to return to their own hometowns. Back in his village, Tenzin Kalsang began teaching Tibetan language, literature and Buddhism to local Tibetans instilling pride in their hearts for Tibetan identity and culture.

He had learned Chinese language in Lhasa



Right (Sonam Dharwang) & left (Lhanam)

and in 2014 studied for more than two months as a student of Khangsar Tsultrim a popular Tibetan scholar at the Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou. His book, *Tsolnyik* ('The Search'), was supposed to be published by the Gansu People's Publishing House but was dropped last minute.



Tenzin Kalsang

2016

Died of torture after serving two years of a 13-year prison sentence

In February 2016, news of the death of a Tibetan man named **Trigyal** serving a 13-year sentence for defying the Chinese government's order to fly Chinese flags emerged. Trigyal from Mokhyim Village died of injuries sustained under torture.¹¹⁴

A father of five children, Trigyal stood up against the compulsory Chinese flag-flying campaign by participating in the protest that saw more than 1000 Tibetans rejecting the flags by throwing them in the local river.

Along with **Trigyal**, two other men - **Ngangdrak** and **Rigsal** were each handed 10-year terms, in 2014.¹¹⁵



Trigyal

2018

31 Tibetans including village leader detained for anti mining protest

In April 2018, Chinese authorities detained 31 Tibetans, among them the village leader of Markor Village, who went missing after being taken into custody by security officials in Markor, Wathang and Gochu villages. They were detained for protesting the mining of Sebtra Zagyen, a sacred mountain with 800 year-old history in Shagchu Town.¹⁶ All of them were beaten up and detained after news about the detention and the mining project was leaked to exile Tibetan sources.

Karma was detained in late February for challenging an official order that required all residents of Markor, Wathang and Gochu to sign on a document allowing local authorities to mine the sacred mountain. Not signing the document would be considered a 'separatist' act and prosecuted accordingly. Karma did not sign and asked for evidence of approval to the mining project from veteran Party leaders such as Tenzin and Ragdi, veteran Party members of Tibetan descent hailing from Driru. At a meeting called by local authorities, Tibetans suspected of involvement in leaking the information about Karma were detained.

Among the nine identified from 30 detainees were two women and Khenrab, 36, a government official in Shakchu Town

and member of the village cadre team. He was detained for engaging in "separatist activity" which was "lecturing the villagers on the importance of environmental protection." His whereabouts remain unknown. He had earlier been detained in 2015 and held for six months at an undisclosed location on the charge of "maintaining contacts with separatists [exile Tibetans]".

Rinchen Namdol, 39, and **Tsultrim Gonpo**, in his 50s, from Drong-ngur monastery in Wathang, had been imprisoned for a year in 2015 on the charge of engaging in "separatist activity". The monastery has been under heightened surveillance for years since 2014 when six monks were arrested for taking down and burning a Chinese flag. Relatives of the monks were also detained for interrogation. The head of the monastery, Rechung Rinpoche, 72, was subjected to severe and repeated interrogations.

Others detained were Jangchup Ngodup, in his 60s, from Markor. Dhongye, 51, is a businessman from Gochu who had won the government organised 'Clean Environment' competition at Sernye village in the past.

Along with Namsey, 39, from Dakra, Sogru Abhu, 39, a doctor from Lhegyen village was detained. Sogru Abhu had earlier served two years' imprisonment for

'separatism' in 2009.

Local Tibetans were concerned that mining would desecrate the Sebtra Zagyen Mountain, which is home to endangered animals such as Tsoe (Tibetan antelope), Nah (Blue Sheep) and Gowa (Tibetan gazelle). They believed that mining would cause landslides in neighbouring mountains in Drakar potentially blocking water supply to local villagers.

Sebtra Zagyen is one of the three "secret and supreme places" sanctified by the spiritual practice of the Drong Ngur Choje Gyalwa Gangpa Rinchen Woser who founded the Drong-ngur Kagyu

Phelgyeling Monastery in 1248. Representing the Buddhist practice of taming the body, mind and speech, the monastery is considered the supreme place of body, followed by the place of speech in Drakar mountains and of mind represented by Sebtra Zagyen.

Sebtra Zagyen is part of a series of sacred mountain ranges including the Naglha Zambha where, on 24 May 2013, armed police suppressed an anti-mining protest staged by 4500 Tibetans. Protesters managed to put a temporary halt to mining at Naglha Zambha but persecution of those involved in the protest continued long after the protest.



Clockwise from top left: Khenrab, Tsultrim Gonpo, Rinchen Namdol, Jangchup Ngodup, Dhongye, unidentified women, Sogru Abhu and Namsey.



Tibetans at the protest site near Naglha Zambha in 2013



Singer sentenced to 3.5 years in prison

On 15 April 2015, Gonpo Tenzin, 27, was sentenced to three years and six months in prison and deprived of political rights for four years.¹¹⁷ He was detained on 30 November 2013 in Lhasa and kept in an undisclosed location until his sentencing. He was last seen with police officers with a shaved head and wearing a surgical mask at a hospital.

It is believed that he might have been arrested in connection with his songs that contained lyrics calling for the promotion and propagation of Tibetan culture, literature and language. He had distributed DVDs of his songs among local Tibetans.

In 2013, he released a special album titled “No Losar for Tibet”, the title song of which became hugely popular among Tibetans. Given the dire situation in Driru, the song “No Losar for Tibet” touched a chord among many Tibetans who felt that celebrating Losar (Tibetan New Year) would be inappropriate. Gonpo Tenzin hails from Sebtra Village in Shagchu Town.



Gonpo Tenzin before arrest



Gonpo Tenzin after

2020

Mother of three dies of torture in police custody

29/10/2020



Lhamo

In August 2020, shortly after her hospitalisation by police, **Lhamo** died while her cousin **Tenzin Tharpa** remained detained.¹¹⁸ She had been detained in June for having sent money to family members or other Tibetans in India, a common practice among Tibetans. In August, her family members were summoned to the hospital, where they found her badly bruised and unable to speak. She died two days later, and her body was immediately cremated, which prevented a medical examination. “The death of Lhamo, a Tibetan herder, is the latest in a pattern of apparent torture and death in Chinese state custody,” said Sophie Richardson, China director. “Tibetan regional authorities should be held accountable for serious violations, including arbitrary detention, torture or ill-treatment, and deprivation of the right to life.”



Tenzin Tharpa

Although sending money outside the country is not formally a crime under Chinese law, the authorities regard contact between Tibetans in Tibet and those abroad as “endangering national security.”

Businessman imprisoned for 2.5 years sending money to relatives in India

On an unknown date, **Tenzin Tharpa**, a 39-year-old entrepreneur from Chaktse Township dealing in medicinal herbs and other local products, was imprisoned for two and half years¹¹⁹ for having sent money to family members or other Tibetans in India, a common practice among Tibetans.

He is a former monk, who had been under suspicion by local authorities since 2012, when he was among a number of monks from the Tibet Autonomous Region forced out of the famous Larung Gar monastery in a Tibetan area of Sichuan province.¹²⁰ Tharpa then started a Tibetan-medium school for children in Chaktse, but the authorities closed it down, contending that it was “illegal.” After that, he started this own business, which became successful.

‘Black Hat’ singer imprisoned for six years

30/10/2020

In June 2020, popular Tibetan singer **Lhundrub Drakpa** was sentenced to six years in prison for performing ‘Black Hat’, the lyrics of which criticised government repression in Driru. Drakpa was detained in May 2019, less than two months after the song was released in March.¹²¹

Drakpa had been detained briefly several times between 2013 and 2014 in connection with another song called “Tashi Yardo” for which he collaborated with the famous singer Gonpo Tenzin, who was later sentenced to prison.¹²²

While still under surveillance, he had continued to post short verses on his WeChat account expressing pride in Tibetan culture and traditions and bemoaning destruction of the natural environment and Tibetan language. He also criticised the destruction of farmlands and land grabbing by local authorities to construct urban housing facilities.

'Black Hat'

By Lhundrub Drakpa



*A noble and truthful nationality
Forced to wear a black hat of subterfuge
Months and years of wearing the hat
Enduring undesired hell of suffering on earth*

*A language more valuable than a wishful gem
Chained by a net of thousand strategies
Months and years without loosening the net
Gagged the speech of red-faced six million
Tibetans*

*Months and years of the cloud-covered sun
Days and nights of the darkened moon
The time when gloom enveloped the universe
Became the defeat for me and all Tibetans*

2021

“If there is no word from me, that means I have been arrested”

On 6 February 2021, **Kunchok Jinpa**, 51, died of brain hemorrhage and paralysis in a hospital in Lhasa, less than three months after being transferred from prison where he was serving a 21-year sentence.¹²³ He was detained on 8 November 2013, held in undisclosed location, and later convicted of ‘leaking state secrets’ to foreign media about protests in Driru. No information about his trial or conviction has been made public by Chinese authorities. He was imprisoned in Nyetang (Chinese: Nidang) near Lhasa and in November 2020 moved to a hospital where he later died.

Kunchok Jinpa was a tour guide and citizen journalist in Village No. 5 in Chaktse (Chinese: Qiaze) township. He had provided crucial information about the May 2013 anti-mining protest to Tibetan media outside China.

His final post in April 2013 on his WeChat account read: “I am now at the bank of a river. There are many people behind me watching me, and I am sure to be arrested. Even if they arrest me, I am not afraid, even if they kill me, I have no regrets. But from now on, I will not be able to give reports. If there is no word from me, that means I have been arrested.”

In February, news emerged of the July

2013 sentencing of **Namdak**, 34, from Meri village in the Tsala area, to 13 years for assisting Tibetans trying to travel to India. No one has been allowed to visit Namdak in the past two years, because he is said to be suffering from a contagious disease. Seven other Tibetans were each given 13-year prison sentences.

Self-immolation death

On 17 September 2015 at around 1 pm local time near a bus station in Shagchukha village, Shurmo, 26, self-immolated to protest China’s repressive policies.¹²⁴ Police immediately took him to a hospital where he died the same day. Three of his relatives were detained and their whereabouts remain unknown.

Detained for contacting Tibetans in exile

In April 2021, **Gyajin**, 44, from Meri village in Tsala township, was detained for contacting Tibetans living in exile.¹²⁵ Several others had been detained but their details remain unknown. Gyajin was a passionate advocate of Tibetan language education and environmental conservation.

Imprisoned environmentalist in near-death condition

13/12/2021

Tibetan businessman **Dhongye**, 50, from Dakar village in Shagchu town was found

to be in critical condition due to torture and medical neglect in prison.¹²⁶ He was charged in 2018 for “leaking state secrets” about the anti-mining protest at the sacred Sebtra Zagyen mountain.¹²⁷ As an environmental protection advocate, he had organized several environmental events and participated in many others. During these events, he would voice his concerns and call for the urgent need to protect Tibet’s environment.

2022

Tibetan entrepreneur and philanthropist Tenzin Choephel sentenced to 18 years in prison for “inciting separatism”

25/7/2022

Mr Choephel, about 45 years of age, was sentenced on 24 May 2019 to 18 years’ fixed-term imprisonment and five years’ deprivation of political rights for allegedly committing various crimes including “inciting separatism”, “illegally sending intelligence overseas”, and “financing activities that endangered state security”. Chinese authorities also confiscated all of his personal property.

Following the sentencing, Mr Choephel’s family filed an appeal that was rejected by the TAR Higher People’s Court in October 2019. The rejection of his appeal was a foregone conclusion due to the discriminatory criminal justice system, which is subservient to political and ideological considerations of the Chinese party-state. In practice, the right to appeal is just a paper exercise.

Mr Choephel is being imprisoned in Chushur (Ch: Qushui) Prison in Lhasa city. Mr Choephel was detained on 30 March 2018 and had been held incommunicado for more than a year before his sentencing.

In a May 2020 update, TCHRD reported on the enforced disappearance of Mr Choephel after his arbitrary detention from Gongkar airport in Lhasa. At the time of his detention, the successful entrepreneur had just landed from a business trip to Chengdu city. He is known for his notable work on protecting Tibetan culture and environment, promoting unity among Tibetans, and other philanthropic activities such as helping the poor and needy in the community.

In recent years, Chinese authorities have unleashed a persecution campaign against prominent and influential Tibetans such as human rights defenders, intellectuals, writers and community leaders as part of a widespread and systematic policy to crush dissent against the Chinese party-state in Tibet.

Particularly since the ascension of Xi Jinping as the party-state’s president, local Tibetans in the counties of Diru (Ch: Biru) and Sog (Ch: Suo) as well as the traditional Shak Rongpo region in Nagchu City have suffered harsh repression at the hands of Chinese police and state security agents. The extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary detention reported from Nagchu City have been unprecedented in scope and intensity in recent times.

Sources informed TCHRD in 2020 that in Diru alone, more than 600 known Tibetans had been imprisoned in Chushur Prison since crackdown began in 2013.¹²⁸



Tenzin Choepel

ATTRIBUTION OF CRIMES

This list contains information on seven Chinese party officials who have served as Party and government officials in Driru County and Nagchu Municipality where human rights abuses such as murder, torture, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, and persecution were committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population with knowledge of the attack in the furtherance of the Chinese Party-state's 'stability maintenance' policy.



1. Chen Quanguo (陈全国) In early years, Chen Quanguo spent the majority of his Party career in Henan province from 1981 to 2009 working from the county level to eventually becoming the deputy Party secretary of the province from 2003 to 2009. From 2009 to 2011, he was the deputy Party secretary and governor as well as acting governor of Hebei province.

Chen came into prominence in 2011 when he was appointed the Party secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region where he remained until 2016. Under his direction, there was a dramatic rise in security presence in Tibet with the introduction of various surveillance methods and imposing cultural assimilation practices.¹²⁹

After becoming the TAR Party secretary in May, unveiled a raft of innovative security measures including the “convenience” police stations, part of a “grid-style social management” system. This was followed by the publicised promotion in October of the 2,500 police posts, with 458 of them designated for Lhasa’s new police stations. Under his watch, the TAR authorities had advertised 12,313 policing-related positions—more than four times as many positions as the preceding five years.¹³⁰ By 2015, more than 7,000 party cadres had been sent to 1,787 Tibetan Buddhist monasteries to expand party work, and more than 20,000 Party members and cadres were sent to 5,464 villages as part of the controversial ‘Solidify the Foundation, Benefit the Masses’ (Ch: qianji huimin) campaign in TAR.¹³¹ These cadres and ‘work teams’ strictly implemented a host of Chen’s new repressive policies and practices such as ‘Nine Must Haves’ and ‘The Six Ones’ all over TAR including Driru.

His tenure as the Party secretary in East Turkestan (Ch: Xinjiang) from 2017 to 2021 led to unprecedented levels of human rights abuses and crimes against humanity.¹³²

More than a million people had been arbitrarily detained in 300 to 400 facilities, which include “political education” camps, pretrial detention centers, and prisons.¹³³

In 2022, he became a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, deputy director of the Central Rural Work Leading Group.



2. Wu Yingjie (吴英杰) Wu Yingjie has been the Party Secretary of the TAR and First Secretary of TAR Party Military Region since August 2016. Wu Yingjie’s ascension to the top post in TAR coincided with the intensification of hard-line policy in Tibet owing to his predecessor Chen Quanguo’s iron-handed approach to building a police state in TAR as well as the overall deterioration in human rights situation under president Xi Jinping.

As Commander of the ‘Stability Maintenance Corps’, Wu Yingjie has been particularly associated with the harsh and violent crackdown in Nagchu Municipality particularly following the refusal of villagers in Driru to display Chinese national flags in October 2013. This sweeping crackdown has involved an incident in which police fired into unarmed crowds, Tibetans have died under torture, including a senior monk who was beaten to death, and the arrest and imprisonment of hundreds of Tibetans.¹³⁴

Ahead of his appointment as the TAR Party secretary, Wu visited a monastery in Driru in early August, underlining that “the deepening oppression in Nagchu and elsewhere in the TAR is imposed as part of a more systematic, quasi-legalistic approach that aims to strengthen Communist Party control over Tibetan Buddhist practice and weaken religious institutions still further, as well as escalating the crackdown in lay society.”¹³⁵

During his visit in early August 2016, Wu Yingjie declared that monasteries must ‘unswervingly’ stand with the Chinese Communist Party in “struggling against the Dalai clique”, and that monks and nuns must follow the guidance of Xi Jinping in order to carry out their religious work. Wu warned that it was imperative for monks and nuns to become ‘politically reliable’. The CCP, which promotes atheism, requires monks and nuns to respect the Party above all other priorities. A harsh ‘rectification’ drive that was launched in Driru in 2014 as part of the crackdown stated that monasteries deemed ‘illegal’ will be torn down and Tibetans who possess images of the Dalai Lama or

place traditional prayer (mani) stones will be severely punished.

Wu also met with Party cadres based in villages in Driru, underlining the emphasis on more intrusive and rigorous strategies that have been in place in the TAR in the aftermath of the protests in Lhasa in March 2008.

In March 2019, Wu Yingjie defended the decision to bar foreigners from visiting Tibet from January 30 to April 1 calling it “normal annual closure period”. The annual travel ban to TAR was extended by two weeks that year forcing travellers to postpone their plans and foreign diplomats included in the temporary blacklist and banned from entering. The prolonged sealing of Tibetan borders during sensitive political anniversaries allows Chinese authorities to block information on its brutal crackdown on Tibetan activists and hide the large scale arbitrary detention, torture and extrajudicial killings in TAR.

In October 2021, he was appointed vice chairperson of the National People’s Congress Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee. From March 2023–July 2024, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and Director of the Committee on Culture, History and Learning.

In December 2024, news emerged of Wu being expelled from the CCP for corruption during his time working in the TAR where he spent a large part of his career from 1974–2021.¹³⁶



3. Penpa Tashi (边巴扎西) Penpa Tashi has spent a major part of his party career in Nagchu, which includes a four-year tenure as the party secretary of Nagchu Prefecture from January 2008 to January 2013. He was also the first secretary of the Party Committee of the Nagchu Military Sub District from January 2012 to January 2013.

As a party member since 1985, he had also been the director of the Seventh Bureau of the Central United Front Work Department in 2017, where he had worked from 2005.

From May 2017 to 2020, he was a member of the standing committee of the TAR Party committee; minister of TAR propaganda department; and secretary of the Party internet working committee. For a year, he had been the vice chairman of

TAR from January to December 2013. As the party secretary of Nagchu Prefecture, he was responsible for commissioning the crime of human rights violations in the region.

From 2020 to March 2023, he was a member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Director of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission. Since March 2023, he has been a member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Director of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Deputy Director of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

4. Dothok (多托) Dothok has been deputy secretary and deputy director of the Party Leadership Group of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress since January 2017.

On 30 January 2018, the First Session of the Eleventh TAR People's Congress appointed Dothok as the deputy director of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress.

He served as secretary of the Nagchu Party Committee twice from 2003 to 2008 and from 2012 to 2014, both periods marked by widespread and systematic political repression and human rights abuses in Driru and surrounding areas.

From 1982 to 2003, he worked in Nagchu Prefecture (now Municipality) as a cadre, deputy Party secretary of Sog County, deputy director, deputy commissioner and deputy secretary.

In 2014, he was promoted as a member of the Standing Committee of the TAR Party Committee and deputy secretary of the Party Leadership Group of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress.





5. Sangye Tashi (松吉扎西) Sangye Tashi is a former party secretary of Nagchu City who has spent significant years of his career in Nagchu working as Nagchu City's deputy party secretary (2014-2016) and party secretary (2016 - 2020).

On 21 January 2020, the TAR party committee announced the removal of Sangye Tashi from all his posts.

On 9 June 2020, the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress also announced that Sangye Tashi submitted his resignation as a representative of the 11th TAR People's Congress, which said Sangye Tashi's was relieved of his duties in accordance Article 49 of the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the National People's Congress and Local People's Congress Representatives".



6. Ao Liuquan (敖刘全) Ao Liuquan had been the Party secretary of Nagchu Municipality from January 2020 to September 2021. He was the deputy party secretary of Nagchu City from April 2018 to January 2020 as well as the deputy party secretary of Nagchu Prefecture from January 2016 to April 2018. He had spent the majority of his postings in Chamdo Prefecture, where local officials are notorious for their harsh and brutal approach to ‘stability maintenance’ in the Tibetan region.

His elevation in the rank and file of the party in Nagchu Prefecture has been marked by intensification of violent crackdowns in Driru and Sog (Chinese: Suo) counties. Local authorities in Nagchu have issued repressive directives that have been enforced to fine and imprison local Tibetans for contacting relatives and friends living abroad. Numerous acts of mass atrocity such as torture, arbitrary detention and murder have been carried out in the furtherance of the Chinese state’s “stability maintenance policy”.

Since September 2021, he has been a member, standing member, and secretary of the Kongpo (Ch: Linzhi) Municipal Party Committee.



7. Chen Gang (陈刚) Chen Gang, born in 1969, began his Party career in 1989 as a hydraulic technician in Dzogang (Ch: Zuogang) County in Chamdo Municipality in TAR. Between 1995 and 2001, he worked as Party secretary and governor of various townships and towns in Dzogang County.

From 2001 to 2004, he became the deputy Party secretary of Drakyab (Ch: Chaya) County as well as member of the Standing Committee of the Drakyab County Party Committee and the TAR executive deputy county magistrate.

From 2005 to 2007, he became the deputy Party secretary, deputy general manager, and chairman of the Labor Union of Tibet Yulong Copper Co., Ltd. He then became a member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Director of the Land and Resources Bureau of Chamdo Prefecture from 2008 to 2011.

From 2011 to 2012, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Markham (Ch: Mangkang) County Party Committee, chairman of the CPPCC, member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Director of the Chamdo Regional Land and Resources Bureau. For a year between 2012 to 2013, he was the deputy Party secretary and magistrate of Markham County.

In November 2013, he became the Party secretary of Driru County in which position he served until April 2018. He was also made a member of the Nagchu Party Committee in 2014. From April 2018 to April 2022, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Naqu Municipal Party Committee as well as the Party secretary of Driru County.

Until June 2022, he remained a member of the Standing Committee of the Nagchu Municipal Party Committee before he was appointed as a member of the Ngari (Ch: Ali) Prefectural Party Committee and deputy commissioner of the TAR Administrative Office.

Chen Gang was expressly deputed by the TAR Party leadership to quell the protests among local Tibetans in November 2013 in Driru County. As the Party secretary of Driru and later as a standing committee member of Nagchu prefectural Party committee, he oversaw the human rights abuses committed in Driru and elsewhere in the prefecture.

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