

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: THE CASE OF TIBET



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1 - RELIGIOUS REPRESSION AND CULTURAL GENOCIDE

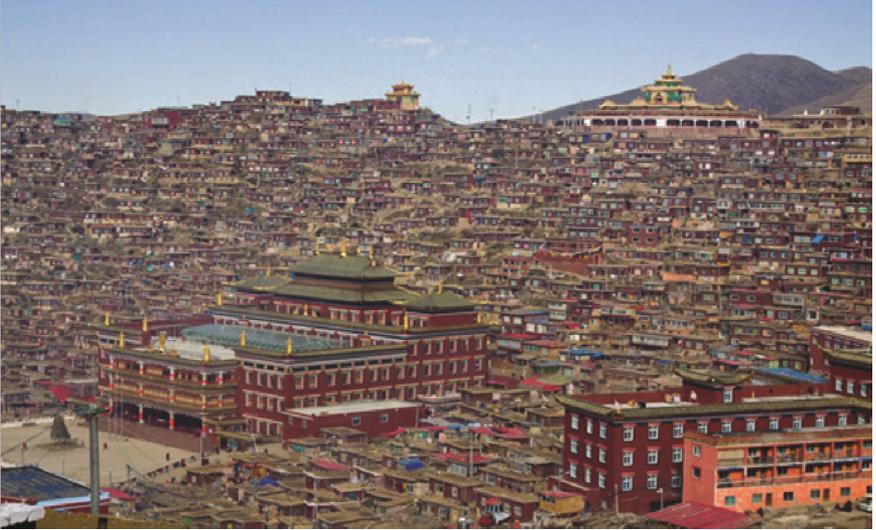
Tibetan Buddhism forms the core of Tibetan way of life and is practiced by majority of Tibetans. It sets the foundation for Tibetan cultural identity. However, the Chinese government has designed policies to place restrictions on Tibetan monastic institutes. The state interference in religious affairs has reduced the space for practice of Tibetan Buddhism in the wake of State interference in religious life of Tibetan people. Monasteries are barred from giving traditional monastic education and are instead replaced with ‘Patriotic Education’ enforced on monks and nuns.

In mid-July 2018, Chinese authorities in Kham Sershul forced Tibetan monks below the age of 16 out of their monasteries and instead, were ordered to join government-run schools. As many as 200 young monks were removed from Dza Sershul Monastery, Dzachuka on July 10, 2018 according to news reports. If the monks refuse to abide, the monasteries will face closure while their administrators, the monks’ religious teachers, as well as their parents will be punished, warned the authorities. The parents of the young monks were also threatened that the authorities would close the monastery if the monks refused to leave.



Tibetan monks below 16 years old are forced out of the monastery to join government-run schools. Photo: RFA

The Case of Larung Gar: Demolition and Eviction at World's Largest Buddhist Academy



Larung Gar Buddhist Centre

Larung Gar, one of the largest Buddhist study centers in the world, is facing wide-scale demolitions under the directions of the Chinese authorities. Beginning in 2001, the institute faced severe threats of destruction and expulsion of monks, nuns and lay practitioners. In June 2016 the Chinese authorities ordered Larung Gar to slice its population of estimated 10,000 monks, nuns and lay practitioners by half and the demolitions were subsequently carried out in the following month. This led to the forced removal of at least 4,800 residents and dismantling of homes to a similar extent. Residents were neither consulted about the demolition plan prior to the government order, nor did they receive any legal remedy or corresponding compensation. The evicted monks and nuns were forced to sign a document undertaking that they will not return to Larung Gar and that they will not join any other monastic institutes in their hometowns.



Distressed over the demolition, three nuns hanged themselves to death in denouncing China's repression on religious freedom.

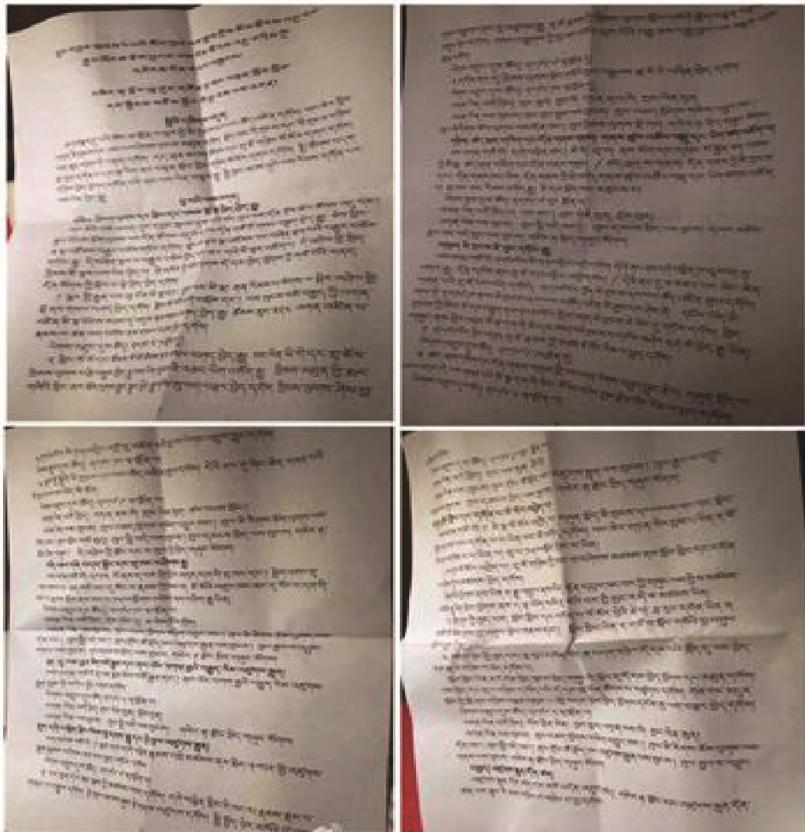
Video footages received despite the crackdown on communication show nuns wailing helplessly as they watch their fellow nuns being shoved into buses and sent back to their hometowns. Monks and nuns were seen weeping in grief and some losing consciousness after witnessing the forced separation from their friends, while government-sponsored Chinese military trucks transport monks and nuns out of the Buddhist institutes.

The evictees were forced to undergo patriotic education exercise. Video shows Tibetan nuns dressed in military uniform forced to sing “Chinese and Tibetans are Children of One Mother.” Another video shows Tibetan nuns performing on stage to Chinese pop songs. This is not only a violation of their monastic vows but also the highest level of humiliation a nun can face. Images received from Tibet show that the evictees were housed in concentration camps. This is also a case of revival of Cultural Revolution in Tibet and case of Cultural Genocide.

Saddened by the demolition of the institution, three Tibetan nuns—Rigzin Dolma, Tsering Dolma and Semgha, committed suicide and

left notes referring to the institution’s demolitions and government “harassment.”

Additionally, the Chinese authorities later also ordered the closing down of Larung Gar for the new enrollments to further tighten its control over the academy.



A photo of the four-page demolition notice

Expulsion Drive Resumed at Yachen Gar Buddhist Academy



Thousands of nuns from Yachen Gar Buddhist centre forcefully being sent away in buses in May-June 2019.

Around May 2019, the Chinese authorities in Tibet's Karze region resumed mass eviction of Tibetan nuns from the Yachen Gar Tibetan Buddhist center. The demolitions of the two major Buddhist institutes, Yachen Gar and Larung Gar, were thought to have been completed within a year since they began in 2016. However, reports received last summer indicate that the expulsion at Yachen Gar is anything but over.

The mass expulsion of Tibetan Buddhist practitioners at Yachen Gar in 2019 began in May. According to reliable sources, close to 3,600 nuns, monks and lay practitioners have been forced out of Yachen Gar. Residents who had come from areas outside Sichuan Province have been mainly targeted. A Tibetan living in the area reported to *Radio Free Asia* that most of the monks and nuns evicted were from Jomda (Ch: Jiangda) and Palbar (Ch: Bianba) Counties, in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and they had been sent back for political re-education. Many of the

detainees at Jomda were taken to Chamdo due to overflowing numbers at the Jomda County detention center.

Disturbing reports of torture and forceful confinement of the evicted residents including the beatings of the evicted nuns who were confined in Jomda County have emanated from Tibet. The nuns have been subjected to the so-called patriotic re-education camp where they were forced to wear military uniforms instead of their Buddhist robes.

In the images obtained via social media, the nuns are seen in line receiving traditional farewell whereas in other images, a number of buses are seen waiting to transport the expelled practitioners. Those staying behind were deterred from accompanying their evicted friends as they were taken to the buses.



Belongings of the evicted nuns piled-up in open at Yachen Gar, May-June 2019

No concrete dwellings were known to have been destroyed at that time but authorities are keeping a tight watch over the center with “around 600 Chinese officials now permanently stationed at Yachen Gar”.

Conditions of the Yachen Gar and Larung Gar evictees continue to remain uncertain due to tight surveillance and censorship over communication in Tibet.

Yachen Gar continues to remain under tight surveillance with hundreds of military personnel monitoring in and around the center; thus making it difficult to acquire timely information regarding the situation there. Yet, from satellite images collected by a UK-based organization Free Tibet, a huge difference can be witnessed before and after the mass demolition at Yachen Gar. The west bank of the river running through Yachen Gar was once a largely populated community (as in 2013 image), compare to the latest one (24 August 2019) which reveal just a bare ground.



Satellite images of Yachen Gar. Photo: FreeTibet

Expelled Yachen Gar Nun Commits Suicide in 2019

According to an anonymous source, a Tibetan nun who was amongst the thousands of Tibetans that were evicted from Yachen Gar Buddhist study center, committed suicide in an internment camp because of the unbearable hardships she had to endure inside the camp, reports *Radio Free Asia*.

The nun, whose name is still not known, was originally from Jomda (Ch: Jiangda) in Chamdo prefecture, located in Tibet Autonomous region.

“She was defiant of the political reeducation in the camp and always protested against the Chinese official’s instruction which often resulted in her being beaten. The management and reeducation instructor in the camp had developed a different attitude (against her),” the source added.

Detail information on when and how the nun killed herself remains unknown to date.

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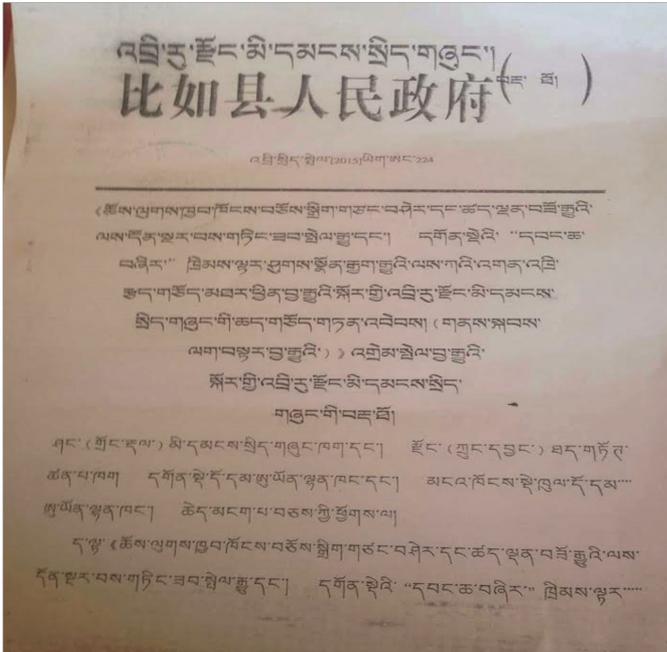
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- Tibetan Nun Expelled from Buddhist Center Commits Suicide in Internment Camp
<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/nun-02142020172455.html>

Administration of Monasteries

The Communist government-controlled Democratic Management Committee (DMCs) has taken over the administrative role of abbots, traditional heads of monastery. Human Rights Watch has reported that the Chinese authorities have established Monastery Management Committees in 1787 monasteries since November 2011. The committee is composed of state-approved ‘patriotic’ monks and nuns, party cadres and government officials, in some

cases ‘trusted’ Tibetan officials. It is given the responsibility of administering monasteries and imposing rules and regulation through ‘patriotic education.’ It serves as a link between the Chinese government and the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and monitors activities and movements of monks and nuns.



Leaked document exposes new level of religious repression

A leaked document obtained by Tibetans in exile in 2015 reflects an entirely new level of repression in the monastic institutes. Document entitled “Notification of the Driru County People’s Government on the need to intensify and deepen the work of cleaning up and reforming the religious institutions [For temporary implementation]” reveals the systematic efforts to convert Tibetan monastic institutions into Chinese government offices and the monastic population into Chinese Communist Party members. The document contains a set of regulations that identify activities through which religious institutions will be reformed. It further says, the Chinese authorities will control all financial activities of

religious institutions including offerings made to reincarnate or senior monks. Every Thursday monks and nuns at all religious institutions in Driru County are required to attend political education sessions. The Chinese authorities will keep an account of all monastic properties, and retain the sole authority to decide over their storage and repair.

Patriotic Re-education

Patriotic re-education (or simply patriotic education) was initially launched in Tibet in 1996 as a part of Beijing's "Strike Hard" campaign against crime and corruption. The campaign has been expanding ever since, and today it has reached the entire region, even the remotest part of Tibet. The core message of the campaign preaches, "loyalty to the State is a pre-requisite to be a good monk or nun". Under this campaign, a 'Work Team' (Tib: *ledon rukhag*), consisting both Chinese and trusted Tibetan officials, visit monasteries and nunneries and force the monks and nuns to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama and declare their allegiance toward the Communist Party leadership either via an examination, or by making them sign a pledge. Moreover, under "Nine Must Haves" program, which is under the umbrella of patriotic re-education campaign, all monasteries and nunneries must display the portrait of the Chinese communist leaders and the Chinese national flag. Any attempts to boycott patriotic re-education sessions or defy the demands of the Work Team may result in expulsion, arrest or torture.

Order No. 5

In January 2007, China's State Administration of Religious Affairs issued a new regulatory measure on "management measures for the reincarnation of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism" called "Order No. 5." The decree makes it compulsory for all the Tulkus (reincarnated teachers) to register and get government approval.

Article 2 of the regulation says, “reincarnating living Buddhas shall not be interfered with or be under the dominion of any foreign organization or individual” and that they shall be (article 7) “recognized by the provincial or autonomous regional Buddhist Association or the China Buddhist Association in accordance with religious rituals and historically established systems.”

In addition to the 2007 illegitimate “Order no. 5”, the Chinese government moved a step further in gaining control over religious matter in Tibet. On 23 August 2019, the Chinese government convened a training session in Lhasa, for about 100 Tibetan Buddhist monks from 73 monasteries in which they were instructed about the Chinese government’s “management of the reincarnation system” and the history and rituals for the reincarnation approved by the Chinese Communist Party.

The “training” was attended by important figures in the TAR including the Chinese-installed Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu or the *Gya* (Eng: Chinese) *Panchen* as many Tibetans address him.

During the training session, they emphasized that the Chinese government will not allow His Holiness the Dalai Lama to get involved in the matters of His own reincarnation, and in turn will shut down any possibilities of a return to His homeland Tibet.

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Ban on Religious Activities

Around early August 2019, the Chinese Communist Party has issued a notice banning retired elderly Tibetans from performing the *kora* (a Tibetan Buddhist practice of circumambulating monasteries or sacred religious sites while reciting prayers) and other religious observances.

According to a September 2019 report by Human Rights Watch, the “notice was issued by the department under the TAR Party Committee charged with overseeing retired government employees.” The notice required all TAR governments and party offices in charge of retired government employees to “submit a written personnel name list and suggestions sanctions” to impose on retired government workers found performing *kora*. The practice is a standard form of religious devotion among any Tibetan Buddhist, particularly the elderly, for whom it is often a daily religious practice as well as a form of exercise. Punishments would be imposed on those named.

Ironically, in its third Universal Periodic Review in November 2018 before the UN Human Rights Council, China proclaimed to have already implemented the recommendations of member states to guarantee and ensure freedom of religion and belief of Tibetans

and other so-called minority groups. The reports of demolition of nearly half of Yachen Gar on the heels of the destruction of Larung Gar raises questions on the credibility of China's claims of religious freedom in Tibet.

中共西藏自治区委员会老干部局文件
[Translation: CCP TAR Committee Old Cadre
Bureau Document]

关于摸排核查离退休领域有关主题教育
谈话中反映问题的通知
[Translation: Notice on surveying and checking retired
cadres regarding problems reflected during themed
education discussions]

各市地委老干部局，区直各单位政工人事部门：
[Translation: To all city and prefecture Old Cadre Bureaus, and all regional work unit and
government personnel departments]

区党委“不忘初心、牢记使命”主题教育领导小组办公室要求就谈话中反映的“**退休人员转经转的比较多、比较普遍，有党员，今年比以往年少，公开版公开。**”问题进行排除，请你们认真开展自查、摸排，调查核实本地本部门本单位离退休干部和离退休党员中有无此类现象和此类人员，请将人员名单和处理意见于8月18日上午12:30前书面报区委老干部局党建工作处。

[Translation: The regional Party committee's "Do not forget your intentions, remember your mission" Themed Education Leading Small Group Office requires discussions that reflect "Retired personnel performing the *kora* are numerous and widespread, and there are Party members, less this year than in previous years, openly and semi-openly [performing the *kora* and other religious observances]". This problem is being removed, and you are requested to earnestly carry out a self-inspection and to conduct a survey to ascertain whether or not there is such a phenomenon and whether or not there are such personnel among retired cadres and retired Party personnel in local departments and work units. Please submit a written personnel name list and suggestions for sanctions to the Party Building Office of the regional Party Committee Old Cadre Bureau prior to 12:30 on 18 August.]

A screenshot of the CCP order banning Kora in TAR

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2 - MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE

Restriction on Freedom of Movement: Grid-Based Surveillance



Under the guise of “social stability maintenance,” Tibet is under heavy surveillance and control. With the launch of “grid-system of social management” since 2012, and imposition of over 600 “convenience police-posts” with high-tech equipment to monitor daily life, particularly of “special groups” in the region, former prisoners and those who have returned from the exile community in India, among others are under constant watch.

With already stringent measures against freedoms, of expression, belief, association and movement of Tibetans, the “grid system of social management” further exacerbates the situation. Under the system, a designated place is divided into smaller sub-divisions; for instance, the municipal district in Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet, with an area of 525sqkms is divided into 175 divisions. The system intends to facilitate the officials to closely monitor and identify “potential trouble makers,” and gather real-time information from the community worker stationed within the areas.

Every movement of the residents is monitored on screens in offices and information is fed to these officers by grid staff stationed in respective areas equipped with smartphones, which can upload geo-tagged photographs.

The ID cards issued are smart chip enabled. Beijing-based writer Woesser described about her experience on her visit to Lhasa in 2012 that she noticed the Chinese authorities were scanning ID cards of only the Tibetans who arrived with her on the train. The ID cards are scanned around Lhasa at all the checkpoints to limit movement and that those flagged are turned back.

“All villages become fortresses, and everyone is a watchman” is the official slogan used to describe the objective of the village-based grid management teams.

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High-Tech Repression and New "Social Security Card"

The official Chinese media announced the distribution of about 2.7 million social security cards across TAR by the end of June 2019 and had expected to complete the distribution by issuing 3 million cards altogether by the end of 2019. According to International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), the card gives access to a wide range of facilities including banking, welfare, medical services etc. which will be cut off to those Tibetans whom China arbitrarily deems to be disloyal based on the social credit system.

China has intensified distribution of new social security card to Tibetans aimed at exercising more social control over Tibetans. "The new system—which authorities say achieves 'one person, one card,' in TAR—and the rollout of the social credit scheme will strengthen the Chinese government's comprehensive system of 'grid management' (the 'Iron Grid') in the TAR," ICT said.

Grid management in the TAR primarily targets Tibetans who had returned from India, those who had attended His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teachings and former political prisoners and sees them as potentially problematic citizens.



Photo: RFA

Cash Prizes Over \$40,000 for Information on "Illegal" Activities



A screenshot of the announcement on official Chinese website

In an attempt to encourage Tibetans to spy on each other, the Public Security and Communications Department of TAR issued a public notice on 28 February 2019 announcing anonymity and cash rewards to Tibetan informers for information on so called illegal activities. The cash rewards up to \$42,750 depending on the sensitivity of the information. This policy is a part of Chinese authorities' attempts to increase control over Tibetans and Tibet.

Illegal activities mentioned in the notice refer to using network communication tools to propagate “malicious attacks” on the Communist Party of China and “disseminating defamatory information.” The notice also mentions ban on “participation in illegal organization for ‘environmental protection’, ‘education, medical, and poverty alleviation.’”

Citizens are encouraged to actively report information regarding “illegal activities” such as providing funds to “member of ethnic separatist forces, religion extremist forces, violent terrorist forces, and related personnel.”

China: Least Free Country on Internet Freedom for the Fourth Consecutive Year

In the “*Freedom on the Net 2019: The Crisis of Social Media*”, an annual report ranking countries according to internet freedom, China was named the worst abuser of internet freedom for the fourth consecutive year. China, with 854 million internet users as of June 2019, scored 10 out of 100.

The report assessed internet freedom in 65 countries from June 2018 to May 2019 and assigned each country with a score between 0 to 100 where 0 indicates least free and 100 indicates most free. The score received by each country was given on grounds of obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights.

According to the report, “Censorship reached unprecedented extremes in China as the government enhanced its information controls ahead of the 30th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre and in the face of persistent anti-government protests in Hong Kong”. It also cited examples of government shutting down individual accounts on WeChat, social media platform for “deviant” behaviour like “commenting on environmental disasters” which encouraged pervasive self-censorship.

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Nepal and China - Travel Restriction on Tibetans

According to available information, Tibetans are arrested when no other witnesses are present at the border or within Nepali territory and are forcibly returned by Nepali authorities. Officials who work at the Department of Immigration at one of the major crossing points between China and Nepal admitted that Tibetans are occasionally forced back due to pressure from China.

Where some Tibetans travelling to India to attend Buddhist teachings are caught by the Chinese Authorities while entering back into Tibet, they are refused re-entry even though they carry the documents proving their citizenship of China. Human Rights Watch mentioned that there have been several cases of China refusing re-entry to its own citizens of Tibetan ethnicity since 2012. In some cases, the Tibetans were simply refused entry, and had no choice but to stay in Nepal; in others the Chinese police told them that they should go to the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi and apply for a special permit to re-enter Tibet.

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Discriminatory Practices in Issuing Passport for Tibetans



The United Nations’ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) recently concluded its review of the “combined 14th to 17th periodic reports of China” and published its concluding observations on 30 August 2018. The UN Committee in its report has raised concerns over the significant restrictions on movement of Tibetans within and beyond Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and also abroad. It has further raised concerns about

the entire banning of issuance of passports to Tibetans for foreign travel and has recommended China to revise its regulations and practices to ensure non-discriminatory determinations on passport applications and freedom of movement of Tibetans within and beyond TAR, and abroad.

China has heightened its restrictions on freedom of movement of Tibetan people by denying them passports since 2012. (Annexure 1) It has been reported that in 2012, in Tibet's Changdu (Tib: Chamdo) prefecture with a population of 650,000, only two passports were issued.

“Getting a passport is harder for a Tibetan than getting into heaven. This is one of those “preferential policies” given to us Tibetans by [China’s] central government.” – Posted by a Tibetan blogger on a Chinese-language website, October 2012.

According to Human Rights Watch, since 2012, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) authorities have ordered the confiscation of all ordinary passports held by registered residents of the region, over 90 percent of whom are Tibetans.

A discriminatory regulation placed two-systems in issuing passports:

- 1- Quick and straight-forward,
- 2- Extremely slow (Annexure 2)

The quick and straightforward system is available in areas that are largely populated by Chinese majority, while the extremely slow system has been imposed in areas populated mainly by Tibetans and other religious minorities. In case of the fast-track system, a passport application only requires approval from one office—the local branch of the Exit and Entry Administration under the Ministry of Public Security—and these offices are required to issue a passport to any citizen within 15 days of an application or to explain the delay. But residents of areas under slow-track processing are subjected to extremely long delays, often lasting several years, before passports are issued, or are routinely denied for no valid reason.

Minority Areas Excluded from Fast-Track Processing (Human Rights Watch Report)

Provinces with prefectures that are not permitted fast-track passport processing	Number of prefectures not permitted fast-track processing	Number of prefectures not permitted fast-track processing that have substantial Tibetan or Muslim populations
Xinjiang	14	14
TAR	7	7
Jiangxi	1	0
Sichuan	2	2
Yunnan	1	1
Gansu	2	2
Qinghai	8	8
Total	36	35

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, “UN Expert Group Observes China’s Discriminatory Practices in Tibet”: <http://tibet.net/2018/09/un-expert-group-observes-chinas-discriminatory-practices-in-tibet/>
- Independent, “China 'Bans' Tibetans and Other Religious Minorities from having Passports”: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-bans-tibetans-and-other-religious-minorities-from-having-passports-10384709.html>

- Human Rights Watch, “One Passport, Two Systems- China’s Restrictions on Foreign Travel by Tibetans And Others”:
<https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/07/13/one-passport-two-systems/chinas-restrictions-foreign-travel-tibetans-and-others>
- The Telegraph, “China ‘Restricts’ Passports For Tibetans”:
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/11735590/china-restricts-passports-for-tibetans.html>

ANNEXURE 1

**Internal Notice issued by the TAR authorities, April 29, 2012
(Unofficial translation from Chinese)**

[Page 1]

TAR Party Committee General Office Document

TAR Party Committee General Office Document (2012) No. 22

TAR Party Committee General Office

TAR People's Government General Office

**Notice on Printing “Suggestions on Further Strengthening Our
Region’s Passport Handling, Approvals, and Issuance
Management”**

All prefecture and prefecture-level city Party committees, all administrative offices and the Lhasa City People’s Government, the Regional Party committee and all departmental committees, all committees, offices, departments and bureau in the autonomous region, and all People’s collectives:

“Suggestions on Further Strengthening Our Region’s Passport Handling, Approvals and Issuance Management” has been approved by the regional Party committee and government, and is hereby issued to you in print. Please integrate realities and implement conscientiously and thoroughly.

[Page 2]

TAR Party Committee General Office

TAR People’s Government General Office

April 29, 2012

(This document has been sent to prefectural department levels, and to county Party committees and county governments.)

[Page 3]

Suggestions on Further Strengthening Our Region's Passport Handling, Approvals, and Issuance Management

In order to further regulate our Region's passport handling, approvals and issuance work and in accordance with relevant national laws and regulations, and by integrating the work realities of our region, the following work suggestions are specially proposed:

I. Earnestly strengthen management work over citizens' handling, approvals and issuance of ordinary passports

1. Using the opportunity of the national launch of ePassports in May of this year, all still-valid ordinary passports in our region shall be withdrawn without exception.

Those needing to apply for an ordinary passport shall be re-issued with an ordinary e-Passport following strict review and approval.

2. Strictly control approvals for the issuance of ordinary passports. Ordinary passport applications and issuance shall be carried out under a system of "apply in the domicile, examine at the prefecture, unified approval by the regional Public Security Department." First, all citizens in the region without exception and in accordance with the principle of local management, when applying for an ordinary passport shall apply to the prefecture-level (prefecture-level city) public security agency where their household is registered; the regional Entry and Exit Administration of the Public Security Department shall no longer accept or handle applications. Second, ordinary passport applicants must provide a self-completed application to be delivered in person to their local

village (neighborhood) committee, township (town) People's Government (neighborhood affairs office) and police station for initial examination. The police station shall submit the application materials to the township (town) People's Government (neighborhood affairs office) for review by the leaders, and report it to the county (county-level city, district) Public Security Bureau for handling. Following a review by the county (county-level city, district) Public Security Bureau, the application materials shall be sent to the county (county-level city, district) People's Government leaders for examination and approval and for them to provide their opinions. After reporting to the prefecture-level (prefecture-level city) Public Security Exit and Entry Administration, the application materials shall be delivered to the principal leaders of the prefecture-level (prefecture-level city) Public Security Bureau (Office) for examination and approval, and then reported to the principal leaders of the [prefecture] administration (Government) for review and approval. Once all formalities are complete, the prefecture-level (prefecture-level city) Public Security Entry and Exit Administration departments shall report to the Regional Public Security Department Entry and Exit Administration for review and approval, and issuance. Upon returning to the country, passport-holders without exception must hand their passport in to the local prefecture-level (prefecture-level city) Public Security Exit and Entry Administration department for unified safe-keeping.

3. Strictly limit state workers holding ordinary passports. When prefecture (prefecture level city) Public Security Exit and Entry Administration departments receive a citizen's application for an ordinary passport, an examination should be carried out of the applicant's application materials and the applicant should be interviewed to ascertain whether or not they are a state worker. On the principle of not issuing ordinary passports to state workers in our region, if an

ordinary passport is required for crossing the border due to exceptional circumstances, cadres at county-level and below shall be reviewed and approved by their local prefecture (prefecture-level city) Party committee Organization Department; cadres above county level applying for an ordinary passport shall be reviewed and approved by the autonomous regional Party committee Organization Department. Upon returning to the country from traveling abroad, all passports without exception must be handed in to the passport-holder's local Organization Department at the county-level (county-level city, district) or above for unified safe-keeping.

4. Implement a system of persons [Ch.: renyuan] with ordinary passports signing a declaration of responsibility [Ch.: zeren shu]. When such persons collect an ordinary passport for the purpose of private foreign travel, they must sign a declaration of responsibility in person at the prefecture (prefecture-level) Public Security Exit and Entry Administration, guaranteeing that on leaving the country they will not engage in any activities that threaten national security or national interests, or other illegal criminal activities. The Public Security Exit and Entry Administration must seek out a visit with the passport holder on their return and conduct a face-to-face interview, and if any illegal activities are discovered, the passports without exception shall be canceled or declared invalid.

II. Conscientiously carry out good work on tour group passport applications in accordance with Article 9, Chapter II of the “Tourist Agency Regulations” promulgated by the State Council, and the provisions of Article 10, Chapter II of the “Detailed Implementation Measures,” earnestly strengthen the handling of tour groups’ ordinary passports.

1. When travel agency tour groups travel abroad, citizens from our region applying for an ordinary passport necessary for travel must carry out their passport application in strict

accordance with the relevant provisions, being checked and approved one by one, and in strict accordance with the principle of “whoever checks also approves and is also responsible.” Travel agencies must sign a formal travel contract with the traveler.

2. When travel agencies complete their handling of passports, a responsible person shall go to the autonomous regional Tourism Bureau Supervision and Management Office to receive a “Form for a Name list of Chinese Citizens Leaving the Country in a Tour Group,” and complete it conscientiously. Once completed by the tour group operator, the third copy of the “Form for a Name list of Chinese Citizens Leaving the Country in a Tour Group” shall be retained by the autonomous regional Tourism Bureau Supervision and Management Office.
3. Strict tour-group management of passports. Regarding citizens from our Region who have participated in a tour group and applied for an ordinary passport, and upon such tour group participants’ return to the country, without exception, their passports shall be collected and handed in to the prefecture (prefecture-level city) Public Security Exit and Entry Administration department by the travel agency organizing the tour group for safe-keeping.

III. Further strengthen management work on the approval and issuance of public affairs passports

1. Strictly strengthen management work on public affairs passports in accordance with the “Notice on Printing ‘Diplomatic Passport, Service Passport, and Public Affairs Passport Retrieval Measures’ (MFA Doc [2006] No. 60)” issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the “Notice on ‘Detailed Measures on the TAR Public Affairs Passports Issuance and Management Implementation’ (Experimental)”

and the “Notice on the ‘TAR Public Affairs Passport Retrieval and Management Detailed Implementation Measures’ (TAR External Affairs Doc [2007] No. 53)” issued by the TAR External Affairs Office, and in accordance with the spirit of the “Notice on Printing ‘Diplomatic Passport, Service Passport and Public Affairs Passport Issuance and Management Measures’ (MFA Doc [2006] No. 23).”

2. All tour groups and individuals traveling abroad on public affairs who apply for a public affairs passport must handle formalities through application channels for going abroad on public affairs. Public affairs passports must be returned to the agency nominated by the issuing department within seven days of returning to the country for safe-keeping or for cancellation. Individuals or work units which delay handing in passports or who do not carry out document management provisions shall be temporarily prevented from going abroad on public service.
3. Strengthen passport management for foreign travel by enterprises and work units in our region, increasing the rigor of approvals for public affairs passports for going abroad on public affairs, and put an end to ordinary passport-holders going abroad to conduct public affairs.

Copies sent to:

TAR Military District Political Department, Air Force Lhasa Command Office Party

TAR Party Committee General Office Private Secretary's Office.

Printed on April 29, 2012

ANNEXURE 2

The 10 Stages of the Application Process for an Ordinary Passport in the TAR

A summary based on the instructions given in Notice No. 22, on 29 April 2012

Source: Human Rights Watch

1. Applications are submitted to the applicant's local Village (or neighborhood) Committee, Township (or Town) People's Government (or neighborhood affairs office), and police station for initial examination.
2. Applications are submitted by the applicant to the applicant's local police station for initial examination.
3. The local police station submits the application to the Township (or Town) People's Government (or neighborhood affairs office) for "review by the leaders" [Ch.: yiba shou].
4. The application is submitted to the County-level (county-level city, district) Public Security Bureau for review and approval.
5. The application is then submitted for examination and approval to the County-level (county-level city, district) People's Government leaders, who "provide their opinions" on the application.
6. The application is then filed with the prefecture-level Public Security Exit and Entry Administration for review and approval.
7. Following approval, the application is passed on to the "principal leaders" [Ch.: zhuyao lingdao] of the prefecture-level Public Security Bureau [the Exit and Entry Administration's controlling agency] for examination and approval.

8. The application is then submitted to the “principal leaders” in the prefecture-level government for review and approval.
9. The prefecture-level Public Security Exit and Entry Administration files the application with the autonomous regional Public Security Department Exit and Entry Administration for review and approval.
10. The autonomous regional Public Security Department Exit and Entry Administration issues the passport.

3 - LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

The Chinese Constitution and Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy say that minorities have the right to use and develop spoken and written language. There are many other provisions including PRC's compulsory education that provides language rights to minority nationalities. However, these same documents also promote the use of *Putonghua* (the standard Chinese) as the national language. There is no access to one's own mother tongue in Tibet. To survive and sustain any culture, the protection and promotion of its linguistic heritage are unquestionable.

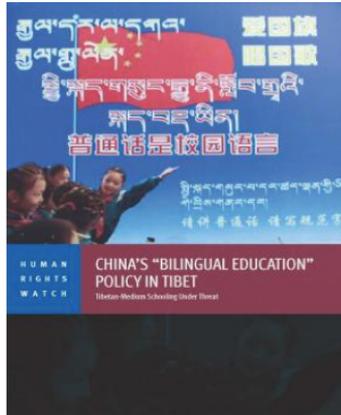
Under the guise of “bilingual education” policy, the Chinese government has been promoting Mandarin Chinese as the primary medium of instruction in schools in Tibet. The current education policy of promoting Mandarin Chinese as the common national language is driven by the PRC's assimilationist language policy.

In January 2019, Tibetan students in Nangchen were barred from attending informal Tibetan classes in local monasteries during winter break as Chinese authorities declared these sessions as “dangerous”. In January 2019, China's oldest university for Tibetan students ended instruction in Tibetan language. In May 2019, Golog Prefecture Education Department issued a notice ordering all the classes in primary and middle schools to be conducted in Chinese language instead of Tibetan.

The so-called “bilingual education” policy which was introduced throughout ethnic minority regions under China in the year 2010 sounds positive and appealing but in reality, this education policy is nothing but China's agenda of sinicizing Tibetans in Tibet.

Human Rights Watch released a new report in March 2020 highlighting the diminishing use of the Tibetan language and the threat Tibetan-medium schooling face in Tibet. The report noted that the so-called “bilingual education” policy in TAR is a growing threat to the extinction of Tibetans and other ethnic minorities to study in their mother tongue. China's education policy in TAR is

aiding their agenda in replacing Tibetan-medium of teaching with the Chinese language as the medium of instruction in primary schools in the region. Tibetans who advocate Tibetan language are arrested, tortured and sentenced to long prison term under fabricated charges.



The HRW report on China's "Bilingual Education" Policy in Tibet

Arbitrary Arrest, Detention and Unjust Sentencing:

A. Language Rights Advocate Tashi Wangchuk



Tashi Wangchuk in an undated photo

- *Went missing in January 2016*
- *News of his arrest emerged in March 2016*
- *January 2018 trial held in closed doors*
- *Charged with "inciting separatism"*
- *Sentenced to 5 years imprisonment on 22 May 2018*
- *August 2018 appeal dismissed, 5 years sentence upheld*
- *Denied access to his lawyer in January 2019*
- *Refused visitation by his lawyer in Sept 2019*

Tashi Wangchuk, a well-known Tibetan language rights advocate who was arbitrarily detained by Chinese authorities in January 2016, a few months after he appeared in a *New York Times* documentary about his concerns for Tibetan language and his efforts in reaching out to Chinese officials. He mainly talked about Tibetan language and culture preservation in the documentary released in November 2015.

Tashi Wangchuk remained missing since January 2016 for more than 2 months. After enormous attention generated by international media outlets on his case, his family was finally informed of his arrest on 24 March 2016.

Tashi Wangchuk had travelled to Beijing in May 2015 to file a formal complaint against officials in his hometown, Kyegudo (Ch: Yushu) in Kham, Eastern Tibet now incorporated into China's Qinghai Province, for their failure to support Tibetan language education.

Tashi Wangchuk was seen explicitly expressing his concern over the deterioration of Tibetan language education in his hometown Kyegudo. Under the pretext of promoting bilingual education, the Chinese government has promoted Mandarin as the medium of instruction in Tibetan schools. He had made clear in his interviews with *New York Times* that he was not an advocate of Tibetan 'independence,' and that he was concerned about the protection and preservation of Tibetan language and culture, and called for implementation of the rights and freedoms associated with the

equal protection and promotion of Tibetan language and culture, as stipulated in the Chinese Constitution and the law on Regional National Autonomy. However, Tashi Wangchuk was charged with “inciting separatism,” and after a 4-hours closed-door trial he was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment in May 2018.

Despite the provisions in Chinese laws for language rights, Tashi Wangchuk was detained and charged with political crimes for simply expressing his concern over the marginalization of Tibetan language, and for filing a lawsuit against the Chinese authorities for their failure in implementing the legal provisions.

On 10 December 2016 World Human Rights Day, the American ambassador to China, Max Baucus, released a statement in which he mentioned a number of people being held by China, including Tashi Wangchuk, who is “in jail for his peaceful advocacy of Tibetan language education,” and called for his immediate release.

On 23 August 2018, Tashi Wangchuk's lawyer Liang Xiaojun tweeted that the Appeals Court dismissed his appeal against the sentencing. The arguments presented by Tashi Wangchuk and his defense lawyer was rejected and the Qinghai High Court upheld Tashi Wangchuk's five-year sentence.

Tashi Wangchuk continues to face denial of access to his defense lawyers Liang Xiaojun and Lin Qilei and other judicial remedies. In January 2019, he was denied access to his lawyer despite his request to discuss about filing a new appeal with his lawyer. In September 2019, he was again refused visitation by his lawyer Lin Qilei.

Further Sources:

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- The Guardian, “Human Rights Day: US and EU Call on China to Release Political Prisoners”:
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- Human Rights Watch, “China: Drop Charges Against Tibetan Education Activist - Shopkeeper Faces 15-Year Sentence For Promoting Minority Language”:
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/15/china-drop-charges-against-tibetan-education-activist>
- Central Tibetan Administration, “Tashi Wangchuk’s Five Year Imprisonment Upheld By Appeal Court”:
<http://tibet.net/2018/08/tashi-wangchuks-five-year-imprisonment-upheld-by-appeal-court/>
- Free Tibet, “China bars lawyer of jailed Tibetan activist from visiting client as "tense" anniversary approaches”:
<https://freetibet.org/news-media/na/china-bars-lawyer-jailed-tibetan-activist-visiting>

B. Sonam Palden



An undated picture of Ven Sonam Palden

Sonam Palden, a Tibetan monk from the Ngaba Kirti Monastery in Tibet was taken away from his room on 19 September 2019. According to Kanyag Tsering from the Dharamshala-branch of Kirti Monastery, Sonam Palden was put under incommunicado detention since September 2019.

Although the exact reasons for Sonam Palden's arrest are not known, it is suspected that his arrest could be linked to his recent WeChat posts about the deplorable state of Tibetan language under Chinese policies.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration: "Monk from Tibet's Amdo Ngaba Arrested over Social Media Posts on Tibetan Language."
<https://tibet.net/monk-from-tibets-amdo-ngaba-arrested-over-social-media-posts-on-tibetan-language/>

4 - ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE OF PANCHEN LAMA



Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet

Chinese authorities continue to arbitrarily arrest, sentence and disappear Tibetans who express their devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and advocate for Tibetan cultural and language rights and express their opinion against the Chinese policies or who attempt to publish their views. One of the longest standing case of enforced disappearance is that of Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama.

On 14 May 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, aged 6, as the next Panchen Lama in accordance with the traditional Tibetan religious traditions.

But on 17 May 1995, the Chinese authorities abducted the 11th Panchen Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, thus making him one of the world's youngest prisoners of conscience. Since then, his whereabouts remain unknown. Later, the Chinese government installed another young boy of the same age as their choice of the 11th Panchen Lama.

The so-called urn ceremony orchestrated by the Chinese government is not only against the Tibetan traditional religious traditions but this so-called urn ceremony was also rigged by the Chinese authorities to ensure that a Communist Party members' son was thereby selected to be installed as 11th Panchen Lama.

On 8 April 2011, the United Nations' Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances has publicly stated that Gedhun

Choekyi Nyima disappeared in 1995 when he was only six years old. The Chinese authorities have “admitted to taking him away. They have continually refused to divulge any information about him or his whereabouts, making his case an enforced disappearance”.

In September 2019, during the United Nation Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance’s 119th session in Geneva, Switzerland, China responded to the experts with the usual practice of vague, unverifiable and insufficient information when asked about the fate of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

In addition to the rhetoric reply stating that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima has “received free compulsory education,” this time China, added that “he went to university,” and currently he has found a job.” However, the UN working group stated that the enforced disappearance of Panchen Gedhun Choekyi Nyima “will remain under the consideration” as this year marks 25 years since his disappearance.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, “Ten Facts about the Missing Panchen Lama”: <http://tibet.net/2017/05/ten-facts-about-the-missing-panchen-lama/>
- TCHRD, “China: Allow Independent International Bodies to Verify fate of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, The 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet”: <http://tchrd.org/china-allow-independent-international-bodies-to-verify-fate-of-gedhun-choekyi-nyima-the-11th-panchen-lama-of-tibet/>
- BBC, “China Urged to Release Panchen Lama after 20 years”: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-32771242>
- Free Tibet, “Gedhun Choekyi Nyima-Panchen Lama”: <https://freetibet.org/about/human-rights/case-studies/panchen-lama>

5 - ARRESTS AND SENTENCING



(From L-R) Nyimey, Yonten and Choegyal

A. Pro-independence protest and arrests in Dza Wonpo

Chinese authorities arrested six Tibetan monks and two youth from Dza Wonpo town in Sershul county, Karze (Ch: Ganzi) Prefecture in Tibet's traditional Kham province after leaflets calling for Tibet's independence appeared in the premises of the local Chinese government office. The arrests were made during three different incidents in the same month.

On 7 November 2019, local authorities came to Dza Wonpo Gaden Shedrup Monastery at night and arrested the four monks Kunsal (20), Tamey, Soetra and Tsultrim (all around 18) and their religious teacher Shergyam, said a source in exile with contacts in the region. Four of the monks are still arbitrarily detained in Sershul county while the fifth monk, their teacher was held for 11 days before he was released on 18 November.

In a separate incident, on 18 November at around midnight, a sixth monk from the same monastery, identified as Nyimey in his mid-teen was arrested by local police for expressing his support to the protest on 7 November and criticizing the Chinese policies against the Tibetans on the internet.

Three days later, Sershul authorities arrested two more Tibetans youth, Yonten and Choegyul from same town totalling the known arrests of Tibetans in Sershul, Karze to eight so far. The duo had distributed leaflets calling for Tibet’s independence and posted statement in WeChat expressing solidarity with the monks arrested from Dza Wonpo town.



Screenshots of Yonten and Choegyul’s WeChat posts

Following the November pro-independence demonstrations in Karze’s Dza Wonpo, which resulted in the arbitrary arrests of eight Tibetans, the Chinese authorities have again arrested more than 30 Tibetan locals including both monks and laypeople for two weeks in a harsh crackdown in Sershul (Ch: Shiqu) in eastern Tibet.

According to Jampa Yonten, a former monk from Dza Wonpo monastery who now lives in exile, the 30+ local people were held in the town detention center from around 21 November to 12 December 2019.

The Chinese authorities have put the Dza Mey area, including Dza Wonpo town, under severe restrictions and surveillance to keep a close watch on the activities of the local residents.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, “Six Tibetan Monks and Two Youth Arrested for Pro-independence Leaflets in Dza Wonpo, Sershul, Tibet”: <https://tibet.net/six-tibetan-monks-and-two-teenagers-arrested-for-pro-independence-leaflets-in-dza-wonpo-sershul-tibet/>
- Central Tibetan Administration, “China Crackdowns on Tibetans in Sershul, Karze after Independence protests”: <https://tibet.net/china-crackdowns-on-tibetans-in-sershul-karze-after-independence-protests/>
- International Campaign for Tibet, “More Than 30 Tibetans imprisoned after protests in Sershul”: <https://savetibet.org/more-than-30-tibetans-imprisoned-after-protests-in-sershul/>

B. Anti-corruption activist A-nya Sengdra sentenced

On 6 December 2019, A-nya Sengdra, a Tibetan nomad and community activist in Tibet’s Golog region was sentenced to 7 years prison term after a sham trial by the Chinese court in Golog Prefecture, Amdo, eastern Tibet. He was falsely charged for “gathering people to disturb social order” and “picking quarrels and provoking troubles.”

A-nya was arrested on 4 September 2018 by security forces in Gade (Ch: Gande) County and was detained for almost 14 months before he was tried in December, 2019. During his long detention period, A-nya was severely tortured and denied access to a lawyer for several weeks. Moreover, his detention period was extended several times and a request from his lawyer for his bail in January 2020 was rejected.

A-nya Sengdra is a respected environment and anti-corruption activist in his community for his campaign work against illegal mining activities and the Chinese government's officials' corruption. For instance, in 2014 A-nya formed a voluntary organisation called '*Mang Dhon Ling*' (Public Affairs Forum) along with his friend to discuss and fight against these issues.



A-nya Sengdra with his lawyer Lin Qilei. Photo: Lin Qilei

Beside A-nya Sengdra, nine other Tibetan nomads were sentenced by Gade (Ch: Gande) County court. They were identified by Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy as Soedung, Chinthrum, A-shol, Do Sang, Wangyal, Gyaltsen, Ngogbey, Orgyen Tsering, and Wangchen.

The Chinese government's relentless efforts to manipulate its own laws to criminalise the local Tibetan activists and human rights defenders in Tibet continues unabated. The 6 December verdict is primarily to silence dissent and crush anti-corruption campaigns at the grass-root level.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, “Tibetan community activist sentenced to seven years in a Sham Trial”:
<https://tibet.net/chinese-government-sentences-seven-years-prison-term-to-a-tibetan-nomad-and-community-activist-after-sham-trial/>
- International Campaign for Tibet, “Tibetan anti-corruption campaigner to appeal 7-year prison sentence”:
<https://savetibet.org/tibetan-anti-corruption-campaigner-to-appeal-7-year-prison-sentence/>

C. Six Tibetans Arrested after Refusing to Participate in CCP Celebrations

In the run up to the 70th anniversary of the founding of People's Republic of China, the security has been tightened in the already very-securitized Tibet region. Six individuals have been arrested in the Tarchen Township in Nagchu for their refusal to comply with the "party loyalty drive" which requires them to wave Chinese flags, sing patriotic songs and show love and respect to the Chinese Communist Party. Families of the six arrestees were rejected by the local authorities from handing over food and blankets to them.

In an attempt to glorify the Party and mark the 70th anniversary of its foundation, China organized numerous events where Tibetans were required to join. School students, monks, nuns, and laymen have been encouraged to participate in dance and singing competition and also poetry competitions and photo exhibitions have been held to demonstrate widespread Tibetan support for the CCP and its rule. Chinese authorities have published a video in which the monks of Galden Jampaling Monastery have been made to show support and gratitude to the Party.



Monks at Golden Jampaling Monastery

Further Sources:

- Free Tibet, “Six Arrested After Refusing to Participate in CCP Celebrations”: <https://freetibet.org/news-media/na/six-arrested-after-refusing-participate-ccp-celebrations>
- Free Tibet, “Hundreds of Tibetan Monks Instructed to Praise Chinese Communist Party in Choreographed Video”:
<https://freetibet.org/news-media/na/hundreds-tibetan-monks-instructed-praise-chinese-communist-party-choreographed-video%E2%80%A2>

D. Tibetan Jailed for Sharing Tibet-related Book on WeChat

A 45-year-old Tibetan man was arrested and detained from Shigatse (Ch: Rikaze Prefecture) by Chinese police officers around 8 March this year on his return home from a business trip to Tibet’s capital Lhasa.

Wangchuk's arbitrary detention is suspected to be linked with his sharing of Tibetan books, including some written by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a Tibetan translation of '*The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*' on the popular Chinese messaging platform WeChat.



Wangchuk in an updated photo. Photo: TCHRD

There is no exact information on his current whereabouts. However, his family members fear that he has been sentenced without their knowledge of whether any trial had taken place to imprison him. Thus, indicating that his family members were not informed about Wangchuk's arrest and charges, which is a clear violation of international human rights standard as well as Chinese constitutional laws.

Since Wangchuk's imprisonment, his family members have been subjected to restrictions and punishment. Authorities have cut his family's welfare benefits such as subsidies and old age insurance, and they are also restricted from travelling outside the country.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, "China Jails Tibetan Man for sharing Tibet-related Book on WeChat":
<https://tibet.net/china-jails-tibetan-man-for-sharing-tibet-related-books-on-wechat/>

E. Three Detained for Sharing Photos Online ahead of the 30th Nobel Peace Prize Day

Chinese authorities detained three Tibetans in Tibet's Amdo region, incorporated into China's Gansu Province, apparently for their WeChat communications with friends and family outside Tibet.

The detention took place days ahead of the 30th anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. Out of three detainees, two were identified as Tsegan and Lubum Dorjee. The name of the third person held and their whereabouts is still unknown.

In the recently published Freedom House's 2019 annual report on Internet Freedom, China topped the list of world's worst abusers of internet freedom for straight four years.

Further Sources:

- ICT, "Tibetans detained prior to Dalai Lama Nobel Prize anniversary in apparent WeChat crackdown":
<https://savetibet.org/tibetans-detained-prior-to-dalai-lama-nobel-prize-anniversary-in-apparent-wechat-crackdown/>

F. Tibetan Man and his Aunt Sentenced for Calling for the Release of 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

In May 2019, the Sershul County People's Court in Sichuan's Karze sentenced a Tibetan youth and his aunt for praying for the release of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and for sharing information of the act, respectively.

On 29 April 2019, Wangchen, aged about 20, and three of his friends were detained by the Chinese police for reciting prayers and shouting slogans during offering of prayer flags on the mountain while on a week-long clean up drive. Later one of the detainees

was released while the three others were scheduled to be tried by the local court within 15 days.

The Sershul County People's Court sentenced Wangchuk to a term of four years and six months for leading, "a conspicuous protest in public against the law of the land. The other two detainees, Lobsang and Yonten were each fined 15,000 Yuan and ordered to attend political re-education classes.



Wangchen with his aunt Dolkar in an undated photo. Photo: RFA

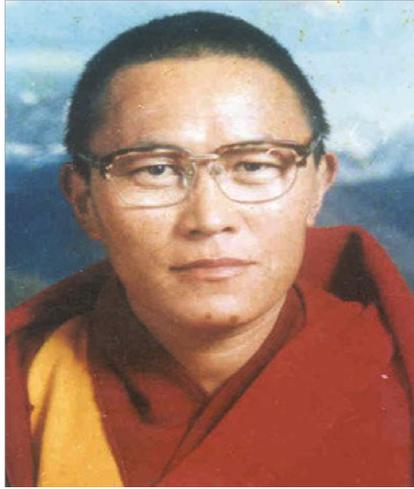
Wangchuk's aunt Dolkar was sentenced to a term of one year and three months imprisonment for sharing news of Wangchen's protest with outsiders.

Further Sources:

- Radio Free Asia, "Tibetan Man, Aunt Sentenced For Panchen Lama Protest in Sichuan":
<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/sentenced-05082019143525.html>
- Central Tibetan Administration, "In an Attempt to Muzzle Peaceful Call for Panchen Lama's Release, China Hands Heavy Sentence to Sershul Tibetan and Kin":
<https://tibet.net/2019/05/in-attempt-to-muzzle-reports-of-tibetan-protest-china-hands-heavy-sentence-to-sershul-tibetan-and-kin/>

6 - TORTURE AND DEATH IN PRISON:

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche



An undated picture of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche (65), a highly respected Tibetan spiritual leader and one of the most prominent Tibetan political prisoners died under suspicious circumstances on 12 July 2015 while being incarcerated in a Chinese prison in Tibet. Tibetans, global leaders and lawmakers have urged for an “international investigation’ into his death.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche was arbitrarily arrested from his monastery in April 2002, under trumped-up charges of being involved in a bomb blast in Chengdu. In 2002, he was sentenced to life imprisonment and denied access to a fair trial.

Tenzin Delek is a Buddhist religious leader and a social worker. He first came under Chinese government’s scrutiny in 1987 when he returned from India after meeting with the Dalai Lama.

As a spiritual leader, Tenzin Delek’s influence extended far beyond. But it was his strong advocacy for Tibetan cultural identity and Tibet’s environment that posed serious threat to China’s legitimacy in Tibet. His efforts in conserving Tibet’s environment by speaking against slapdash logging and mining projects,

construction of old people's home and setting up of schools for orphans made him not just a spiritual leader but an environmental advocate, social activist and a visionary.

Tibetans, global leaders and lawmakers have urged for an "international investigation" into his death. Tenzin Delek's innocence was reinforced when in 2004, Human Rights Watch stated that the legal proceedings against Tenzin Delek Rinpoche had been "procedurally flawed" and he had been charged to "curb his efforts to foster Tibetan Buddhism and his work to develop Tibetan social and cultural institutions."

Tibetans in Tenzin Delek's home county of Lithang, in eastern Tibet have fearlessly made steadfast efforts to secure his release. In 2009, 40,000 Tibetans risking arrests and even death, signed with red ink thumb impression, a petition calling for his release.

Months before his death, Tibetans across the globe marked the 13th year of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's imprisonment and demanded that he be released on medical grounds. His family members in Tibet sought medical parole in accordance with the Chinese law, particularly the Prison Law of People's Republic of China that provides for a 'commutation from punishment and release on parole'. This effort gained considerable support from the international community, including the U.S. Congressmen Jim McGovern who called on the US State Department to make his release on medical parole a priority. Tibetans were hopeful but this again was short-lived.

While demanding the release of his body, many local Tibetans sustained injuries from gunshot. His sister Dolkar Lhamo made a five-point appeal letter to the Chinese authorities citing a provision in its law that allows families to plea against cremations of prisoners. Lhamo also raised her suspicion that her brother's death may not have been natural.

Within a matter of days, the authorities secretly cremated his body in a remote high-security prison facility with the attendance of his family members, who noticed the deceased had black lips and nails — heightening their suspicion surrounding his death.

After his followers were handed over the ashes by prison authorities, the police confiscated the ashes from them at a hotel in Lunding at gunpoint and threatened to throw it in a nearby river. A few days later, his sister and niece went missing. His niece Nyima Lhamo later escaped to India and has testified before various International Committees about the period before and after the suspicious death of Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche.

Rinpoche's death points to China's gross violation of the principles of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also reflects on China's violation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by the First UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders stipulating, "sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals."

Further Sources:

- BBC, "Tibetan Monk Tenzin Delek Rinpoche dies in China Prison": <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-33505834>
- The Telegraph, "Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, Political Prisoner-Obituary": <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11738749/Tenzin-Delek-Rinpoche-political-prisoner-obituary.html>
- Central Tibetan Administration, "Niece of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche Testified Before Australian Parliament": <http://tibet.net/2018/03/niece-of-tenzin-delek-rinpoche-testifies-before-australian-parliament/>

Former Political Prisoners' Death Due to Torture Sustained in Prison/Detention:

A. Yeshi Gyatso



Undated photo of Yeshi Gyatso

Yeshi Gyatso was arrested on 31 March 2008 for taking part in the 2008 peaceful protests. During his detention he was tortured and beaten severely for months leaving him with deep mental scars with severe psychological impact. He was around 50 years of age when he breathed his last on 1 May 2019.

B. Pema Wangchen

On 13 February 2016, the fifth day of *Losar* (Tibetan New Year), Pema Wangchen sang the Tibetan national anthem in public in his native village Wongsang in Karze County. In April 2016 he was arbitrarily arrested and detained for about 15 days during which he was subjected to brutal torture.

Pema Wangchen was released in poor health condition with bruises and swelling on his body and continued to suffer from various health complications.



Undated pictures of Pema Wangchen and in hospital. Photo: VOT

On 16 April 2019, Pema Wangchen died from prolonged illness sustained through torture suffered while in Chinese police custody.

C. Lekshey Thupten



An undated picture of Lekshey Thupten. Photo: Gu-Chu-Sum

Lekshey Thupten, a monk at Nalanda Monastery in Phenpo, Lhundrup County in Lhasa was arrested in 1995 for raising voice against the political re-education campaign enforced in his monastery. He was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment out of which he spent 3 years in Drapchi prison, notorious for the brutality inflicted on the inmates.

In the five years of imprisonment he was subjected to torture and inhuman treatment resulting in his frail health at the time of release in 2000. He passed away in April 2019 at the age of 50 after prolonged illness sustained due to torture suffered by him in prison.

Further Sources:

- "Former Tibetan Political Prisoner Lekshey Thupten Passed Away":
<https://tibet.net/2019/04/former-tibetan-political-prisoner-lekshey-thupten-passed-away/>
- "Tibetan Man Tortured for Singing Tibetan National Anthem Dies":
<https://tibet.net/2019/04/tibetan-man-tortured-for-singing-tibetan-national-anthem-dies/>
- "One More Torture Survivor, Former Political Prisoner Yeshe Gyatso Passes Away":
<https://tibet.net/2019/05/one-more-torture-survivor-former-political-prisoner-yeshi-gyatso-passes-away/>

7 - SELF-IMMOLATION PROTESTS IN TIBET



"...since we do not have freedom to voice the truth about our condition, I had to sacrifice my life to be a witness of truth to the world in general and specifically to the Chinese government and people..." - Sonam Topgyal, male, 26 year-old, died after self-immolation protest on 9 July 2015.

- **154 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet since 27 February 2009**
- **128 men, 26 women**
- **131 of the 154 are known to have died following their protests**
- **26 of the Tibetans who self-immolated were 18 or under**

Since 2009, 154 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet.¹ 131 of them succumbed to the injuries. The whereabouts and conditions of the surviving self-immolators remain unknown. All the self-immolators have called for 'freedom in Tibet' and 'the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet.'

¹ As of February 2020

However, instead of addressing the underlying grievances of Tibetans, the Chinese authorities have responded to these self-immolations with further repressive policies by heightening restrictions in Tibetan areas and dismissing the self-immolations as “acts of terrorism” and criminalizing the partners, friends and relatives of the self-immolators with arrests and heavy sentences.

The Chinese authorities, labeling self-immolation as an “act of terrorism” incited by the “Dalai Clique”, issued guidelines (Annexure 3, page 60) aimed at punishing family members and the relatives of the Tibetan self-immolators. The guidelines bar family members of self-immolators from travelling, applying for loans and licenses, employment opportunities, and governmental aid.

Till date, more than 50 Tibetans have been sentenced to imprisonment for varying prison terms under the alleged charge of having link with self-immolation protests. China’s prosecutions of Tibetans in response to the self-immolation protests only exacerbate the situation instead of addressing the legitimate grievance of Tibetan people in Tibet.

“The suffering of Tibetans without basic human rights is far worse than the suffering that we endure when we set ourselves on fire...”

- Sonam and Choepak Kyab,

(both died after self-immolation protest on 19 April 2012)

Tibetan self-immolation protests against Chinese government and its repressive policies continued with the latest self-immolation protest reported in November 2019.

Latest Self-immolation Protest on 26 November 2019

A young Tibetan nomad from the nearby nomadic township of Meruma in Ngaba (Ch: Aba) county in Tibet’s traditional province of Amdo died on Tuesday after setting himself on fire to protest Chinese rule of Tibet and its hardline policies against the Tibetans.

Yonten, aged around 24, set himself ablaze in the center of town nearby Meruma at around 4 pm local time on 26 November 2019. He is identified as son of Sodhon (father) and Tsekho Kyi (mother), residents of Meruma’s Unit 2.

According to a reliable source, Yonten became a monk and joined Ngaba Kirti Monastery at a young age but he later disrobed for reasons unidentified. In recent years, several reports were received of Chinese authorities in Tibet forcing young Tibetan monks out of their monasteries, at times ordering them to join Communist schools. After leaving his monastery, Yonten then led a life of a nomad in the area.



File photo of Yonten

Ngaba is a heavily-monitored Tibetan region with intense surveillance measures implemented regularly where police can reach a protest site within a few steps or minutes, stated our source. Details on whether Yonten’s body was returned to his parents and the extent of restrictions following the protest was not known.

Over the years, the Chinese government has implemented a total crackdown on Tibetan self-immolation protests, labelling the protests as an “act of terrorism” and criminalizing family members of the self-immolators who were reprimanded with arrests and

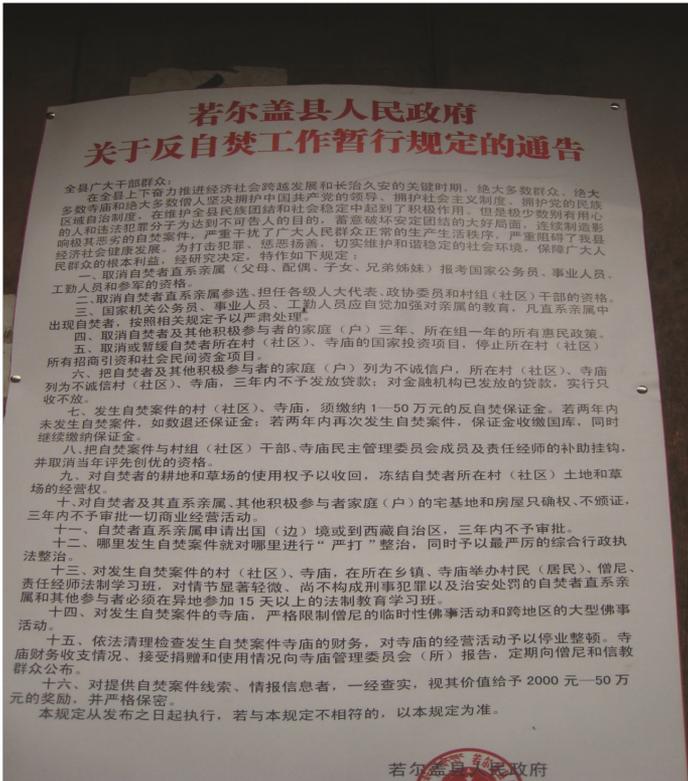
heavy sentences. Yonten's self-immolation protest is the first one recorded in 2019.

Further Sources:

- Central Tibetan Administration, "A Tibetan Youth in Ngaba Dies after Setting Himself on Fire to Protest against Chinese Rule":
<https://tibet.net/a-tibetan-youth-in-ngaba-dies-after-setting-himself-on-fire-to-protest-against-chinese-rule/>
- Central Tibetan Administration, "Fact Sheet on Tibetan Self-Immolation Protests in Tibet Since February 2009":
<https://tibet.net/important-issues/factsheet-immolation-2011-2012/>

ANNEXURE 3

English Translation of Dzoegge County's Directive on self-immolation



Notification on the Provisional Regulation of the Work against Self-immolation Issued by Dzoegge County People's Government

To all the Government staffs and the mass in the county;

At this crucial moment when the entire county makes utmost effort for promoting leapfrog expansion of economy and long-term stability, the majority of the mass, monasteries, and monks give determined adherence to the leadership of Chinese Communist

Party, adherence to the Socialist System, and adherence to the system of minority regional autonomy.

All over the county, they played an active role in safeguarding the national unification and social stability. However, a tiny minority with ulterior motives and lawless criminals deliberately destroyed the overall stability and unity for reaching their evil intentions. They fabricated consecutive cases of self-immolation and caused extremely impact. Regular order of production and normal life of the mass were seriously interrupted. Healthy development of economy and society got married. In order to combat the crime, in order to praise virtue and punish vice, in order to make earnest efforts for maintaining harmony and stability of social environment, and in order to protect the fundamental interest of the mass, the regulations are specifically formulated through study and decision.

1. Lineal consanguinity (parents, spouse, children, and cousin) of the self-immolated person should be disqualified from applying national public servant, enterprise staff, worker, unit clerk, and enlistment in army.
2. Lineal consanguinity is disqualified from participating in the election, from deputizing National People's Congress, from member of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and from staff membership of village group (community).
3. Public servants of state organs, enterprise staffs and workers should consciously strengthen the education for their relatives. Once self-immolation occurs among their immediate relatives, the person (Note: government employed one mentioned in the context) should be dealt with seriously in accordance with the relevant regulation.
4. The family of the self-immolator should be disqualified from policies benefiting the people for three years, and the village group in where the self-immolated person lived should be disqualified from policies benefiting the people for one year.

5. The village (community) and monastery in where the self-immolator lived should be disqualified or suspended from national investment projects. All the projects of investment attraction, all the social and rural capital projects should be cut off from village (community) in where the self-immolator lived.
6. The family (household) of self-immolator or other active participators should be listed as non-honest family. The village (community) and monastery in where the self-immolator lived should be listed as non-honest village and non-honest monastery. Loans should not be granted to them for three years. For the loans already granted by financial institutions should only be called in, should not grant any new loan to them.
7. The village (community) or monastery at where self-immolation happened should pay 10,000 to 50, 0000 Yuan security deposit for counter self-immolation. The security deposit will be returned in full if self-immolation does not happen for two years. If self-immolation happens again, the security deposit will be confiscated as state treasury, simultaneously the security deposit should be continued.
8. Self-immolation cases should be linked to the subsidies for the cadres of village group (community), member of monastery democratic management committee and monk teacher in accountability. They should be disqualified from the selection of excellence for the year.
9. The rights of cultivating land and pasture should be recalled from self-immolator. The management right of land and pasture should be frozen for the village (community) in where the self-immolator lived.
10. Only ownership confirmation can be granted to the residential property and the house belong to the self-immolator, immediate relatives and other active participators. But certification should not be granted to their residential property and house. All their commercial operating activities should not get approval for three years.

11. Applications to exit the country (border) or entry to TAR, submitted by the immediate relative of self-immolator, should not get approval for three years.
12. Where self-immolation case happens, there should have “harsh crackdown” and punishment. Simultaneously should have comprehensive administrative law enforcement.
13. Legality study class should be launched for the villagers, monks, nuns, and religious teachers, whoever from the village (community) and monastery where self-immolation case happened, whoever from the township and monastery in where the self-immolator lived. If the self-immolator’s case is apparently slight, not constitutes criminal offense and public security penalty, immediate relatives of self-immolator and other active participator must attend more than 15 days legality education class held in somewhere else.
14. For the monastery where self-immolation happened, temporary activities of Buddhist affair and inter-regional major Buddhist events should be seriously restricted.
15. Inspection and cleaning will be done to financial affair of the monastery where self-immolation happened in accordance with the law. Management activities of the monastery should be shut down and cleaned up. Financial income and expenses, and the statement of the donation receive and use should be reported to the Monastery Management Committee (department), and should be periodically announced to the monks, nuns and the religious believers.
16. If anyone reports clue and intelligence of self-immolation case, once the information gets confirmed true, the informant will get an award of 2,000 to 500,000 Yuan by valuating the intelligence. The process should be strictly kept confidential.

This regulation should be implemented from the day of announcement. Any other regulation discrepant to this regulation should take this regulation as criterion.

Sealed by
People’s Government of Dzoeye County
Dated: 8 April 2013

