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A 'RAGING STORM'

The Crackdown on Tibetan writers and artists
after Tibet's Spring 2008 Protests

A report by the International Campaign for Tibet
Washington, DC | Amsterdam | Berlin | Brussels
May 2010

A 'RAGING STORM':

THE CRACKDOWN ON TIBETAN WRITERS AND ARTISTS AFTER TIBET'S SPRING 2008 PROTESTS



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Washington, DC | Amsterdam | Berlin | Brussels
www.savetibet.org

“In a year that turned out like a raging storm [...] we could not remain idle. [We] did not commit to the foolishness of smashing this egg against a rock and knowingly leaping into an abyss out of rashness or for the sake of reputation. We did so out of the pain of separation from the tens of thousands of souls caught up in this deplorable violence, and the tormenting thirst for freedom, democracy and equality for those who should have them but do not.”

– From the afterword by editors
of the banned magazine
“Eastern Snow Mountain”
(Shar Dungri) about the Spring, 2008 protests in Tibet

COVER IMAGE:

The cover of the unauthorized literary magazine, *Courage of the Tsenbo (Tibetan King)*, published in September 2008, and including articles about the political situation in Tibet since the 1959 uprising and the Spring protests of 2008. In one article, monk Gartse Jigme, from Gartse monastery in Amdo, makes connections between young protestors today and religious and secular leaders over the past 50 years, saying: "As a Tibetan, I will never give up the struggle for the rights of my people/As a religious person, I will never criticize the leader of my religion/As a writer, I am committed to the power of truth and actuality/This is the pledge I make to my fellow Tibetans with my own life." A writer from Amdo describes the cover image as follows: "With a classic wind-chapped face and a pair of heavy eyes, the portrait of the Tibetan boy, balanced with the prostrating pilgrims, portrays the responsibility of a future generation of an endangered nation."

Contents

- 6 Summary
- 8 Crackdown and dissent
- 11 Fears for ‘official’ intellectual Shogdung after he reported on impact of March 2008 protests
- 17 Controlling information flow: state secrets and the penalties for spreading ‘rumors’
- 20 Disappearance of Tashi Rabten, author of ‘Written in Blood’
- 21 “Torture Without Trace”: pop singer Tashi Dhondup
- 24 Tashi Dhondup’s official court documents and song lyrics
- 31 A list of Tibetan writers, artists, performers and intellectuals imprisoned, ‘disappeared’ or harassed since the March 2008 protests

The detention of the influential Tibetan writer Shogdung from his office in Xining on April 23 signals a deepening crackdown on Tibetan writers, artists and educators since protests against the Chinese state began in March, 2008. Shogdung ('Morning Conch'), is the pen name of Tragyal, the most high-profile of some 31 writers, bloggers, intellectuals and others now in prison after reporting or expressing views, writing poetry or prose, or simply sharing information about Chinese government policies and their impact in Tibet today. Shogdung's new book, 'The Line between Sky and Earth', and other writings by Tibetan intellectuals since March 2008 are among the most wide-ranging indictments of Chinese policy in Tibet for 50 years.

There has been a vibrant literary and cultural resurgence in Tibet since Spring 2008 when protests against government policy and in support of the Dalai Lama swept across the plateau. Writers, using print and the internet, who are often fluent in Chinese as well as Tibetan, in Xining and other areas of Amdo (now part of Qinghai province) have been at the forefront. Singers and educators have also been involved in this cultural resurgence, which is grounded in a strong sense of Tibetan identity.

In daring to refute China's official narrative of events since March 2008, this new generation of Tibetans represents a more profound challenge to the ruling Communist Party authorities than before and as a result individuals are at greater risk. For the first time since the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, singers, artists and writers have been the target of a drive against Tibetan culture in which almost any expression of Tibetan identity not validated by the state can be branded 'splittist'.

Although less well-known outside China than high-profile Chinese dissidents such as Liu Xiaobo and Hu Jia, many of the Tibetan intellectuals named in this report are famous among Tibetans, and are also enduring long prison terms for peaceful expression. Their concerns about restrictions and repression mirror those of their Chinese counterparts.

This report details:

- The cases of more than 50 Tibetans, including 13 writers, involved in the arts and public sphere who are either in prison, have been ‘disappeared’ or have faced torture or harassment due to expressing their views.
- New information on the detention of the well established civil servant, editor and essayist, Shogdung, and the first English translation of extracts from his new book, ‘The Line between Sky and Earth’. Shogdung’s new book – likely to be the reason for his arrest on April 23 – is a detailed analysis of the 2008 Spring protests as a re-awakening of Tibetan national consciousness and solidarity, and advocacy for the right to civil disobedience following Gandhi’s non-violent example.
- Cases of Tibetans sentenced to long prison terms for simply speaking about the crackdown via email or telephone conversations. The penalties attached to these cases indicate a zero tolerance policy for even low-level information sharing in Tibet that is counter to China’s obligations to freedom of speech under its domestic law and international human rights law.
- A listing of Tibetan singers and performers arrested because of their song lyrics, and a translation into English of the official sentencing documents of one young singer, as evidence of the measures being taken by the Chinese government to silence Tibetans who do not conform to the state’s narrative about Tibet, whether with reference to Tibet before the 1950s or the Spring 2008 protests.

Crackdown and dissent

Since March 2008, the Chinese government has engaged in a systematic attempt to block news of the arrests, torture, disappearances and killings that have taken place across Tibet. The dangers faced by Tibetans who seek to describe the situation on the ground or simply express their views to the outside world are significant, which is linked to the widespread availability of the internet and other means of communication and the challenges that poses to China's aspirations for domestic and international message control.

Despite and because of the severity of Beijing's response, dissent continues to be openly expressed, particularly through the written word. Since March 2008, there has been a large number of unofficial writings about the protests, usually expressing grief and sadness at the impact of the crackdown. These have been published in blogs, articles in one-off or unauthorized literary magazines, in books published and distributed privately, and also in the lyrics of songs sung in public places, uploaded onto YouTube or as cellphone ring-tones. (See ICT report, 'Like Gold that Fears no Fire: New Writing from Tibet' <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/gold-fears-no-fire-new-writing-tibet>).

At the forefront of this resurgence of Tibetan cultural identity is a new bicultural, bilingual generation of educated Tibetans familiar with digital technology, with Chinese writings and official policies, and often too with unofficial accounts of Tibetan history that are banned in China. A common theme of their writings is the solidarity of Tibetans across the plateau and a pride in their unique cultural and religious identity. An awareness of the historic upheavals in Tibet from the 1950s and a new sense of urgency for political change infuses their work. The writings are often poetic in style, such as the articles included in "Eastern Snow Mountain" (*Shar Dugri*), a literary journal which was banned as soon as it was published in Amdo in 2008. The writers of "Eastern Snow Mountain", who are from the Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) area of

Sichuan, show extensive knowledge of Chinese and Tibetan law and policy, and discuss the sufferings of ordinary Chinese people as well as their own struggles against the state. (English translations of some of the essays are in: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/a-great-mountain-burned-fire-chinas-crackdown-tibet>). Shogdung's book also includes Tibetan people's struggle for freedom within China as an overall aim for all citizens of the Chinese state.

An important underlying message of the protests and dissent expressed across Tibet since March 2008 is the desire for the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Tibetans have risked their lives to assert their loyalty to him. The Tibetan writer and poet Anjam, who lives in exile in Dharamsala, India, says: "The literature of Tibet has been transformed since [March] 2008; it has taken on a new direction and is expressing new dreams. Some Tibetan writers have also taken on the responsibility of expressing their real feelings and facts about the situation in Tibet to the outside world. Many of these Tibetan writers represent the hearts of the Tibetan people inside Tibet through their writing. [Referring to several publications] they [various Tibetan writers in Tibet] speak about the failed policies of the Chinese government [...] and their writings strongly express their hopes for the return of His Holiness to Tibet.

"Because [Tibetans inside Tibet] are sacrificing or risking their lives to write these things, we should respect the value of their contribution – it can lead to a real understanding and connection of Tibetan people inside Tibet and those in exile. This dialogue is important while His Holiness is alive, but it will take on even more significance in future. It is very important that the voices of those Tibetan people who have risked their lives and expressed the failed policies of Chinese government should be heard globally. We should read and reprint their writing whenever we can."

A further feature of the cultural resurgence in Tibet has been the development of new alliances and understanding with Chinese intellectuals. On March 22,

2008, shortly after the March 10 outbreak of protests, leading Chinese intellectuals and writers released a petition that appeared on several websites in Chinese, entitled "Twelve Suggestions for Dealing with the Tibetan Situation". It was significant that Chinese voices were being raised in response to the way Beijing has handled Tibet policy. Points in the petition included: "We strongly demand that the authorities not subject every Tibetan to political investigation or revenge" and "The government must abide by the freedom of religious belief and the freedom of speech explicitly enshrined in the Chinese Constitution".

A year later, in June, 2009, a bold new report by a Beijing-based think-tank called Gongmeng (Open Constitution Initiative) challenged the official position that the Dalai Lama "incited" the protests that broke out in Tibet in March 2008, and outlined key failings in the policy of the Chinese government on Tibet. (<http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/bold-report-beijing-scholars-reveals-breakdown-china%E2%80%99s-tibet-policy>). It was the first such analysis from inside China. Several Chinese lawyers have offered to defend Tibetans, though this was in most cases not allowed by courts. (ICT report, 'Chinese lawyers blocked from defending Tibetans', <http://www.tibet-policy.eu/news/update-on-tibet-situation/267-chinese-lawyers-blocked-from-defending-tibetans>).

The Tibetan writer Woeser listed details of unofficial books published in Tibetan areas since the 2008 protests on her blog, where she wrote: "Any one of us could be a statistic. And we could also be a finer detail, a more robust part of the record. None of this is going to be over soon, and we must be clear, meticulous and thorough in presenting the undeniable and ineradicable truth about those whose lives disappeared behind the unknown and limitless dark veil during the blood and fire of 2008. Since then, there has been a constant stream of books, magazines, articles and songs in the mother tongue. Tibetan writers have broken through the silence, [beyond] the terror, and ever more of them are inspiring ever more Tibetans." (http://woeser.middle-way.net/2009/08/blog-post_03.html).

Fears for 'official' intellectual Shogdung after he reported on impact of March '08 protests

The whereabouts and welfare of influential Tibetan writer, Shogdung, detained on April 23, remain unknown. His detention followed the publication of a book about the meaning of what he terms “peaceful revolution” and the significance of the protests across Tibet since March 2008, which he describes as: “a sign of the rediscovery of the consciousness of nationality, culture and territory”. Just before his detention, Shogdung and other intellectuals had also written an open letter critical of the authorities’ handling of the earthquake on April 14 in Kyegundu (Chinese: Yushu), Qinghai.

The detention of Shogdung, the pen name (meaning ‘Morning Conch’) of Tragyal, is significant because he is a well-established editor and an ‘official intellectual’ whose views have been seen by many Tibetans as close to the Party and the Chinese state. This was particularly since he wrote an article in 1999 denouncing Buddhism and Tibetan people’s profound religiosity as an impediment to development. But his new book, ‘The Line between Sky and Earth’ (*gnam sa go 'byed*) – which sold out on its first (unofficial) print run of 1,000 copies – is a passionate indictment of the Chinese government’s policies in Tibet and a discussion of events there since March, 2008, in which he describes Tibet becoming “a place of terror”.

Shogdung (Zhogs dung), a 47-year-old editor at the Qinghai Nationalities Publishing House in Xining, is the highest-profile writer to be detained since the current cycle of arrests and disappearances began following the protests of March, 2008. His detention was reported almost immediately in a blog posting by a Tibetan who knows him, who reported that five or six police took him from his office in Xining, searched his possessions, and took him into custody. They returned later and took two computers and other written documents. (Full report and translation at High Peaks Pure Earth, <http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/2010/04/earthquake-in-tibet-leading-tibetan.html>). The website

that gave this information was closed down a few days after it publicized this news.

Shogdung's wife was given notification that he had been detained on state security charges but has not been told where he is being held. Further information from the area indicates that the family's bookshop in Xining was closed by the authorities on April 13, and 35 copies of Shogdung's book were confiscated.

Shogdung had sought to travel to Yushu, where the earthquake struck on April 14, to help with relief efforts but had not been permitted to do so. According to the same blog, "Until the day of his arrest, he was busying himself with consoling and giving comfort to injured people at Xining hospital."

Shogdung and seven other intellectuals, including the singer Jamyang Kyi – who was detained temporarily in April 2008 – signed an open letter expressing condolences to, and solidarity with, the victims of the earthquake in Kham, eastern Tibet (the Tibetan area of Yushu in Qinghai). But according to Tibetan sources who know Shogdung, the reason behind his detention is almost certainly his new book, 'The Line between Sky and Earth'.

A Tibetan from the eastern area of Amdo said that people in the area speculated that the security services took months to detain Shogdung because they needed to translate his book into Chinese. The same source said: "Just before his arrest, he went to his hometown to celebrate his father's 80th birthday and he told him that it might be his last time to be with him. He went to mountains to throw *rlung rta* [windhorses, prayers printed on small slips of paper or on prayer flags]. I was told that it was first time he did that since his childhood." According to scholars familiar with Shogdung's work, in the past Shogdung opposed these rituals, which he regarded as damaging to Tibetan efforts at modernizing their culture.

A correspondent in Beijing for the French magazine “Le Nouvel Observateur”, Ursula Gauthier, met Shogdung in Xining two weeks before his detention. In the article (published in French), she wrote: “Shogdung was expecting – with a somewhat fatalistic courage – that he would have to ‘pay the price’ of the last book he had published a few months ago, outside the normal publishing channels, without ISBN number, that is to say without authorization. [...] Pirated editions have taken over. In China, all books are pirated, even those written in Tibetan, even illegal ones, as long as they sell. Shogdung's book was a best seller, a phenomenon resulting purely from word of mouth. One could find it everywhere in Xining, including at the main station. The book was not displayed conspicuously and one had to ask for it.” (<http://gauthier.blogs.nouvelobs.com/archive/2010/04/27/encore-un-intellectuel-tibeta-in-arrete.html#comments>).

Shogdung’s new book is a conspicuous contrast to his earlier work. Together with other intellectuals from Xining, Shogdung founded a group called ‘The New School of Thought’, and his controversial writings, including prominent articles in the Party paper, the *Qinghai Daily*, led to intense debate among Tibetan intellectuals in Amdo. Shogdung argued that Tibetans should embrace modernization and disassociate themselves from traditional Tibetan Buddhist teachings. Scholar and historian Tsering Shakya writes on the website High Peaks Pure Earth: “Shogdung’s hyper-critical attack on traditional Tibetan cultural practices was seen by many Tibetans as a remnant of the Cultural Revolution, and because his article was published through an official channel, it was seen as resembling the view of the Chinese Communist Party.”

His new book, however, includes a section that has been described by other Tibetan intellectuals from the area as “moving and personal”, in which he acknowledges his mistakes and misjudgment about monks’ roles in Tibetan society and apologises for his earlier views.

Shogdung's views appear to have been changed by events in Tibet that began in March, 2008. Although there are fears that Shogdung may face charges of supporting Tibetan independence or 'splittism', a Western scholar who has read the book in Tibetan said: "I have not read anywhere in Shogdung's book that he calls for separation or independence from China. He says Tibetans should keep the spirit of the peaceful revolution in which they have engaged since 2008, with an aim to asserting what he thinks are their rights, with peaceful means – he gives statistics at the end about what percentage of peaceful struggles for one's rights in the history of the world in the last two centuries have yielded results, and what percentage was successful through violence. The figures he quotes indicate that non-violence is more successful. He also calls for peaceful civil disobedience when one feels the legal frame in which one lives is not proper and is against one's principles." The same scholar said: "This is certainly one of the most open and daring critiques of the Chinese Communist Party policies in Tibet over the past 50 years, and is even comparable in scope to the Panchen Lama's 70,000 character petition to Mao, a forbidden text which Shogdung often refers to and quotes as it has become recently available for the first time to Tibetans in Tibetan."¹

Shogdung writes that he believes that March, 2008 was the result not only of the conditions experienced by Tibetans for so long, but also of individuals becoming more aware of concepts of freedom. He also notes that, due to his iconoclastic views publicised in the late 1990s, he feels that he had become cut off from society, and so had failed to see the events of 2008 coming. Now, he writes, although he fears for his own life as a result of speaking out, he feels that he had to do so because he could not bear the repression that he has witnessed over the past few years.

In the book, Shogdung also challenges the Chinese authorities' representation of events in March 2008. He says that while it is true that there was some looting and violence on March 14, 2008 in Lhasa, "one should draw a line between

small and major events and that compared to the violence [by the authorities] that followed, and over the past 50 years, it is not as significant.”

In an extract of the book, translated by the same scholar, Shogdung writes: “So what is a large-scale beating, smashing, looting and burning? In 50 years, among Tibetans, be they lamas, chiefs, nobles, elite, lay or religious, men or women, old, adults or young, farmers, herders, blacksmiths, shoe menders, with many rights or devoid of rights, rich or poor, be they enterprising and capable or not, brave or cowards, guilty or innocent, many have been hit by hammers, whipped with whips, put in chains, killed by arrows, put in jail, subjected to struggle sessions, or have died of hunger. This is stated in the history of hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of dead people. Even now, these ways of doing things have not been abandoned.’

To support his claims, Shogdung quotes from a few sources such as the Panchen Lama’s Petition (see above), as well as Jamdo Rinzang’s “My Homeland” (*Nga’i pha yul*) and other books, and Tsering Dhondup’s archive-based novel “Red Wind Roaring” (*Rlung dmar ’ur ’ur*) – books or texts that have circulated widely among Tibetans in Amdo over the last two years.

Shogdung emphasises the importance of non-violence, saying that if Tibetans dare to launch a revolution through peaceful means, the impact would be profound.

He further describes the situation in Tibet since March, 2008 as follows: “As to how they [the Chinese authorities] have transformed Tibet into a terrifying battle ground: ever since they [Tibetans] have launched [literally, the peaceful movement], all corridors in the monasteries have become archery grounds, they have aligned their tanks and guns. It makes one’s hair stand on end. At most of the junctions of monasteries and villages, soldiers parade. Such places are full of spies. It is so frightening! It makes one shiver with fear. At the top of the houses, in the streets and in the main places, they have hidden secret

weapons. Spies are waiting. My flesh is petrified, my bones hurt. Tourists or pilgrims are searched at the point of the gun, they are interrogated and required to register and to do all sorts of such things. It is freezing, it feels so cold. Most of the monks have been expelled to towns, most town-dwellers are locked in their houses. They [the authorities] listen and watch on the sly letters, phones, computers, websites, tea-houses, cafés.

“They have made everyone, be they close or distant, powerless, helpless and desperate. In daytime, they run like jackals. At night, they sneak in like bandits. Without warning, they attack chapels and meeting halls in monasteries, and homes and families in towns. They search houses from top to bottom, and again from top to bottom. They look for pictures of the Victorious One [the Dalai Lama]. They look for hidden weapons. Incidentally, they look for money. They look for valuables. They throw holy images on the floor and trample them. They say that people with a human face have the heart of beasts and are wolves wearing monk's robes. They show signs of folly and of having been struck by madness. (Red soldiers, although they have a head, have no brains and they have been served too much of the water of folly full with 'Motherland' and 'China' so one should not be surprised at the fact that they have become utterly crazy). When they have found ritual objects [*phyag cha*] in the protector's chapels, they claim it is a proof that weapons have been hidden [...].

“If one is a Tibetan, one is not allowed to stay at a hotel, one is 'welcomed' with the request to take off one's hat and shoes at airports, one does not get a ticket. One is not hired for jobs. Because of the deceptive propaganda, Tibetans are looked at with an air of mixed fear and terror. They are targets of suspicion. To sum up, Tibetans are considered like terrorists, they are treated like mindless children who are put under great pressure.

“Actually, it is not the first time this has happened. Ever since we have been conquered by dictators, in a series of campaigns, we have been beaten, strug-

gled against, seized, arrested, condemned, sentenced, massacred. They have made us unable or afraid to move, to speak, to think. Everything and everyone has become inert because of fear. These inhuman methods have been going on for more than 50 years.”

The open letter about the earthquake signed by Shogdung and other intellectuals is critical of the authorities’ handling of the crisis, and ends with a passage in which signatories advise not to give money to ‘certain organisations’, which could be a reference to the Chinese Red Cross, the only organisation officially entitled to receive donations for earthquake relief.

The letter, translated by High Peaks Pure Earth, an internet site that provides translations from writing in Tibetan and Chinese posted on blogs from Tibet and China, reads: “We who live in Xining, Qinghai province, several writers, express our condolences and sympathy with the Yushu brothers and sisters affected by the disaster, offer our condolences to the dead and are pooling funds and furthermore are preparing to visit the affected areas personally as soon as possible. However, as the news from the mouthpiece for the Party organisations cannot be believed, we dare not believe in the Party organisations. For political reasons, the Party organisation ordered the temporary suspension of sending people to the disaster area. For this reason, we in faraway Xining out of concern for you and your suffering send you this letter, apart from this, there is nothing else we can do.” (<http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/2010/04/earthquake-in-tibet-leading-tibetan.html>).

Controlling information flow: state secrets and the penalties for spreading ‘rumors’

A few months after protests began in March, 2008, the authorities began to convey warnings of penalties not only for ‘spreading’ but also for listening to ‘rumors’, presaging a wave of detentions and signaling a more systematic approach to blocking information flow. ‘Rumors’ is a term that is typically used

to refer to dissenting views and sentiment in the PRC or simply sharing information that is critical of state policies. (See: ICT report, <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/a-great-mountain-burned-fire-chinas-crackdown-tibet>). The official press announced that a Public Security Bureau task force had even been established specifically targeted at the fabrication and spread of rumors, with 108 People's Armed Police personnel deployed in 14 units. (*Tibet Daily*, December 26, 2008).

Tibet Autonomous Region Propaganda Bureau Chief Cai Yuying made it clear that it was not only an offence to spread 'rumors', but also to listen to what people say: "Without any hesitation, we must prevent rumor-mongering and stop people listening to rumors" (XZTV, June 2, 2008).

The focus on 'rumors' was reiterated recently following the earthquake in Kham (Kygundo/Yushu, Qinghai), when the authorities announced a drive to crack down on spreading rumors through cellphones or internet, and also on 'pornography' and 'illegal publications', both euphemisms for subversive or 'splittist' literature and videos in Tibetan areas. China National People's Radio reported that the authorities specifically ordered officials to pay special attention to "lawbreakers who use illegal publications to disturb people's hearts and disrupt the relief effort". (SCMP, April 22, 2010).²

Beijing has tightened controls in China to block use of the internet for criticism of the government or expression of views. Wang Chen, chief of the Cabinet's Information Office, said: "We will strengthen the blocking of harmful information from outside China to prevent harmful information from being disseminated in China and withstand online penetration by overseas hostile forces." (Xinhua, May 3, 2010).

The Chinese government has also announced the strengthening of a law requiring internet and telecommunications companies to inform on customers who discuss 'state secrets', a term that is not clearly defined by the state, so

citizens are not aware whether or not they have crossed the invisible line of what is defined as a ‘state secret’.³ This new addition to the law, tightens the controls over information flow still further (see Human Rights in China report, <http://www.hrichina.org/public/index>).

At least one Tibetan on the enclosed list faced ‘state secrets’ charges. Kunchok Tsephel, an official who founded a Tibetan cultural website, disappeared in February, 2009, but his family did not know of his whereabouts until they were instructed to attend court nine months later to hear the verdict – a 15-year prison sentence on ‘state secrets’ charges. No details have been published by the state about what these secrets were, but unofficial sources indicate that Kunchok Tsephel may have shared some information about the situation in Tibet since March, 2008, or it may have been linked to comments about Tibetan culture on his website.

Similarly, two young Tibetan men who worked for Western NGOs received a 14-year and life sentence for apparently attempting to pass on information about the situation in Tibet. Wangdu, a former health worker for an HIV/AIDS program in Lhasa run by the Australian Burnet Institute, is serving life, while Migmar Dhondup, a passionate conservationist who worked for the Kunde Foundation, is serving 14 years. Both are likely to be held in Qushui (Chushur) Prison in Lhasa. The sentences, which were announced in the *Lhasa Evening News* in November, 2008, were unprecedented in their severity for Tibetans accused of passing on information to people outside Tibet. (<http://www.saveti-bet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/ngo-worker-sentenced-life-imprisonment-harsh-sentences-signal-harder-line-blocking-news-ti>).

This tightened control has heightened the climate of fear in Tibet. Disappearances have been a key characteristic of the crackdown following the March 2008 protests; in many cases, families inside Tibet have no idea of the whereabouts of relatives who have been detained nor of their health or conditions. In the current climate in Tibet, being detained or ‘disappeared’ for even

a few days can lead to death or permanent psychological or physical damage. Tibetans detained during the crackdown over the past two years have been treated with extreme brutality, according to numerous reliable and eyewitness reports, leading to some Tibetans being profoundly physically disturbed upon release, with others unable to walk or speak, or with broken or dislocated limbs. (See cases detailed in <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/a-great-mountain-burned-fire-chinas-crackdown-tibet> and ICT report <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/deaths-two-tibetans-after-torture>).

Compiling the list of writers, artists and intellectuals included with this report required the piecing together of fragments of information and consultation with a number of Tibetans and scholars with connections in Tibet, most of whom preferred not to be named. There are likely to be many more cases of writers and artists who have been detained and whose names we do not know, due to the efforts of the Chinese government to silence Tibetans and prevent news of the detentions reaching the outside world.

Disappearance of Tashi Rabten, author of 'Written in Blood'

Tashi Rabten (pen name: The'urang), editor of the essay collection about the March, 2008 protests "Eastern Snow Mountain" and a student at the Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou, was detained again on April 6 and is believed to be in detention in Chengdu, according to unofficial sources.

Tashi Rabten, who is from Dzorge (Chinese: Ruo'ergai) county in Ngaba, Sichuan province, part of the Tibetan region of Amdo, is due to graduate this year. He was detained temporarily in July 2009. He is the editor of a literary magazine banned after publishing an edition on the 2008 protests in Tibet and author of a new, unauthorized collection of work called 'Written in Blood'.

One of his friends said: “He has won great respect and popularity among students, intellectuals and ordinary readers in Tibet as an outstanding and brave young thinker.” Referring to his book, ‘Written in Blood’, the same Tibetan said: “It consists of many valuable writings on democracy, freedom and equality. In fact, I didn’t see anything illegal in there.” The same source said that Tashi Rabten had been under surveillance for some time, with his activities strictly monitored, and copies of his book confiscated from the university campus.

“Written in Blood” is introduced by the author as follows: “Given my [young] age and [lack of] qualifications, the appearance of this little book may be premature. After an especially intense year of the usual soul-destroying events, something had to be said, and after pondering on whether to speak out, I finally produced this humble little book between 2008-09, shed like a drop of blood.”

Tashi Rabten edited the edition of the magazine “Eastern Snow Mountain” (*Shar Dugri*) about the protests in 2008. It includes the details of the case of a 45-year old nomad, Paltsal Kyab, also known as Jakpalo, who was beaten to death in police custody in May, 2008. ⁴

The magazine was quickly banned, but not before copies had circulated in Tibetan areas of Qinghai and Gansu provinces and beyond. In an afterword to the collection, the publishers say that they felt they had no choice but to publish, despite knowing the risks: “The magazine staff and associates did not commit to the foolishness of smashing this egg against a rock and knowingly leaping into an abyss out of rashness or for the sake of reputation. We did so out of the pain of separation from the tens of thousands of souls caught up in this deplorable violence, and the tormenting thirst for freedom, democracy and equality for those who should have them but do not.”

The writers, including Tashi Rabten, added that the publication “appeared as a sketch of history written in the blood of a generation”. (See: “A Great Mountain Burned by Fire: China’s Crackdown on Tibet”, www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/a-great-mountain-burned-fire-chinas-crackdown-tibet).

‘Torture Without Trace’: pop singer Tashi Dhondup

*“First, a sad tune for my brother who hasn't returned from afar
Second, the pain because there is no harmony for people
Third, the occupation and denial of freedom for Tibetans
This is all torture without trace”*

Tashi Dhondup, a popular Tibetan singer from the eastern Tibetan region of Amdo, was detained by police on December 3, 2009 at a restaurant in Xining, the capital of Qinghai province “on suspicion of incitement to split the nation,” according to a document issued by police in Henan (Tibetan: Sogpo) County, where Tashi Dhondup is originally from. According to one ICT source, four police officers – two from Xining and two from Henan County – drew guns on Dhondup when he initially refused to stand up after being ordered to do so by the officers, who then put him in handcuffs and took him to a waiting police van while his wife and two friends who were with him at the restaurant demanded to know where he was being taken.

According to an ICT source, Tashi Dhondup had been under intense political pressure for several weeks following the October 2009 release of a CD containing songs which in Tibet’s current political climate were regarded by the Chinese authorities as highly charged, including lyrics calling for the Dalai Lama’s return to Tibet and lamenting that “There is no freedom in Tibet.” Copies of music videos of his songs and translations of his lyrics are at: <http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/2010/03/torture-without-trace-five-songs-by.html>, and see also: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvuI2Rve6Sk>.

Copies of official documents detailing the investigation, detention and eventual sentencing to “re-education through labor” of Tashi Dhondup confirm that he was sent to a labor camp for 15 months in early January 2010 following his detention in December 2009 on suspicion of “incitement to split the nation.” The official documents go into detail about the content of Tashi Dhondup’s songs, referring specifically to the lyrics, for instance, of his song ‘1958’, which compares the repression of Tibet from March 2008 onwards with the crushing of resistance to the Chinese takeover in Amdo, eastern Tibet, in 1958. The document states that this song states clearly “That 1958 was a year of horror, a year of strife among the Tibetan people, and a year when a great enemy arrived in Tibetan areas. The year 2008 was a year that shook the world, a year when the people were massacred by the black earth.” The official document, which does state that Tashi Dhondup did not write the song lyrics, concludes: “These songs twist the facts and are reactionary in nature.”

It is not clear from the documents, translated below into English by ICT, why Tashi Dhondup’s case was not prosecuted in the courts, and was instead passed on to the local “re-education through labor” management committee. The documents indicate that police claimed to have amassed a considerable amount of evidence against Tashi Dhondup, including copies of CDs featuring “Tibet independence songs,” testimony from police and other witnesses that he regularly performed the songs, and Tashi Dhondup’s own ‘confession.’ In this case, police either chose not to pursue prosecution through the courts, or alternatively, state prosecutors chose not to accept the case from police.

Under such instances in Chinese law – if the courts are unwilling or unable to prosecute a case – police have the option of sending it to be considered instead by a “re-education through labor” committee. Such committees, which are usually staffed by senior police officers and other Party and government officials, have the authority to send defendants to labor camps for up to three years without any judicial oversight and without the defendant having any right to

hire a lawyer to mount a legal defense against police accusations of wrongdoing.

Tashi Dhondup's sentence of 15 months "re-education through labor" is to be counted from the day of his detention – December 3, 2009 – and according to the document detailing the decision, he is therefore due to be released on March 3, 2011.

The document includes a standard entry about the requirement to inform a detainee's family or workplace within 24 hours of the detention, or to provide a reason why no such notification was given. In the case of Tashi Dhondup's detention notification, that particular entry is left blank. According to ICT's sources, Tashi Dhondup's father was only notified of his son's detention on December 6, three days after his detention, when he was told to bring warm clothes for his son at the detention center in Xining where he was being held.

When Tashi Dhondup's father arrived at the detention center, he was refused permission to see him. He was told that his son was undergoing "education," and that if the results were unsatisfactory, he would have to return to assist in the education. Sources later reported that Tashi Dhondup was severely beaten and tortured while in detention.

Tashi Dhondup's official court documents

Copies of these court documents, in Chinese, were received by Tibetans in exile. Enclosed below is a translation into English by ICT.

Huangnan Prefecture Re-education Through Labor Management Committee
 Re-education Through Labor Decision

Huangnan Prefecture Resolution [2010] No. 1

Name: Zhaxi Dongzhi; male; born April 15, 1979 [further details omitted] Criminal experience: taken into criminal detention in accordance with the law by Henan County Public Security Bureau on December 3, 2009 on suspicion of incitement to split the nation.

Facts and evidence of the crime. Facts and evidence ascertained by Henan County Public Security Bureau: On April 16 and 28, 2009, the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi performed the reactionary song “1958” and was subpoenaed by Henan County Public Security Bureau according to law. During interrogations, the criminal subject Zhaxi Dongzhi confessed fully to performing a reactionary song and willingly admitted his error. Henan County Public Security Bureau criticized him, which was followed by issuing a police warning.

On November 10, 2009, the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi performed the reactionary song “Torture without Trace,” which appeared in large quantities in Henan County Town’s cultural market. On November 11, Henan County Public Security Bureau in conjunction with culture and trade departments, formed a joint inspection group to carry out a concentrated inspection of culture markets within the jurisdiction, confiscating more than 40 discs of the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi performing reactionary songs and two posters advertising the album.

[PAGE 3]

On December 3, 2009, Henan County Public Security Bureau detained the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi in Huoguo Cheng [a restaurant], on Bayi Road, Chengdong District, Xining City. The criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi confessed without reservation to the criminal behavior of colluding with others to produce 3000 copies of the album of reactionary songs “Torture without Trace” for marketing in Henan County, Zeku County, Tongde County, Gande County, Banma County and Dari County in Qinghai Province, in Luqu County in Gansu

Province, and in Aba County, Hongyuan County and in Ruo'ergai County in Sichuan Province.

Upon receiving Henan County Public Security Bureau's report of Zhaxi Dongzhi's crime of incitement to split the nation, this Re-education Through Labor Management Committee convened a collegial group to verify the case. From April 16, 2009 onwards, the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi performed in Tibetan the reactionary song "1958," the lyrics and music for which were written by someone else, which incites "Tibet independence," and which states clearly that 1958 was a year of horror, a year of strife among the Tibetan people, and a year when a great enemy arrived in Tibetan areas. The year 2008 was a year that shook the world, a year when the people were massacred by the black earth. These songs twist the facts and are reactionary in nature. "Torture without Trace," the album of reactionary "Tibet independence" songs by the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi clearly states, Tibetans were invaded and have no freedom, and there's pain in having our own mineral wealth taken. Such opinions flagrantly contradict historical facts. In the song "Unable To Meet," it clearly states "I cannot raise the Snow Lion flag," which is an expression of the strong desire to hang the "Tibet independence" flag in Tibetan areas, which is reactionary in nature. In the "Tibet independence" song "For That I Shed My Tears," it states that Tibetan people have no freedom. In the "Tibet independence" song "No Regrets," it states of wanting to sing a song to say Tibetans have no rights, and that even if he were shot dead there would be no regrets. These songs forcefully propagandized "Tibet independence" opinion, harmed state security, and seriously disrupted the stability of social order in Tibetan areas. Because the writer of the "Tibet independence" songs' words and music has escaped,

[PAGE 4]

interrogation of the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi was pursued. Zhaxi Dongzhi fully confessed without reservation to the acts of performing, copying, transporting, distributing and broadcasting "Tibet independence" propaganda goods. This committee has ascertained the facts are true that Zhaxi Dongzhi on numerous occasions performed "Tibet independence" songs, conspired with other to produce discs, and to market 3000 discs of "Tibet independence" songs in 11 counties in the three provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan.

Following examination and verification, the evidence confirming that the criminal suspect Zhaxi Dongzhi broke the law is: translations of “Tibet independence” songs, “Tibet independence” discs, posters advertising “Tibet independence” songs, on-the-spot investigative diagrams, photographs and records of “Tibet independence” songs being performed, the testimony of witnesses, the criminal suspect’s confession, and an itemized list of confiscated goods and documents, etc.

In accordance with regulations contained within Article 10, Clause 1, Item 1 and Item 4, and Article 13 of the State Council’s “Implementation Measures for Re-education Through Labor,” it is hereby decided to commit Zhaxi Dongzhi to one year and three months re-education through labor. Prior to the decision on re-education through labor, the individual committed to re-education, Zhaxi Dongzhi, had been held in criminal detention. For each day held in criminal detention, a day is taken off re-education through labor. The period of re-education through labor is [therefore] limited to run from December 3, 2009 to March 2, 2011.

If this decision is contested, an administrative review by the Huangnan Prefecture People’s Government or the Qinghai Province Re-education Through Labor Committee (address: Rule of Law Office, Public Security Department, Qinghai Province) may be applied for within 60 days of receipt of this certificate of decision; or, an administrative suit can be brought to Tongren County People’s Court within three months of receipt of this certificate of decision.

Huangnan Prefecture Re-education Through Labor Management Committee.
January 5, 2010.

Torture Without Trace: song lyrics

Reproduced below are lyrics to two of Tashi Dhondup's songs, which are published at <http://www.highpeakspureearth.com/2010/03/torture-without-trace-five-songs-by.html>.

The first song expresses his sadness about the lack of freedoms of the Tibetan people, while "1958-2008" compares the repression of Tibet from March 2008 onwards with the crushing of resistance to the Chinese takeover in Amdo, eastern Tibet, in 1958.

Torture Without Trace

*First, a sad tune for my brother hasn't returned from afar
Second, the pain because there is no harmony for people
Third, the occupation and denial of freedom for Tibetans
This is all torture without trace*

*First, the regret as our ancestral wealth is lost to outsiders
Second, the pain that we aren't the owners of our resources
Third, the practice of sterilisation to wipe out our race
This is all torture without trace
This is all torture without trace*

*First, the hurt from being denied my parents' love
Second, the failure to hear the inner voices of my people
Third, the grief that our mountains are belittled
This is all torture without trace
Third, the grief that our mountains are belittled
This is all torture without trace*

1958 – 2008

Hey!

*The year of 1958,
is when the black enemy entered Tibet,
is when lamas were put in prison.*

*That time was terrifying
That time was terrifying*

Hey!

*The year of 1958,
is when Tibetan heroes were put in prison,
is when innocent Tibetans were put in prison.*

*That time was terrifying
That time was terrifying*

Hey!

*The year of 2008,
is when innocent Tibetans were tortured,
is when the earth destroyed people's lives.*

*That time was terrifying
That time was terrifying*

-
- ¹ The first translation into English of the full text of the Panchen Lama's 1962 "70,000 Character Petition" was published by the Tibet Information Network, now closed, as: "A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret Report of the 10th Panchen Lama". At the time he wrote the Petition to Mao, the 10th Panchen Lama was the most senior religious leader remaining in Tibet. Believed to be the most extensive internal criticism of Chinese Communist policies ever submitted to the leadership, Mao Zedong reacted by denouncing the report as "a poisoned arrow shot at the Party" and its author as "a reactionary feudal overlord". Two years later the 10th Panchen Lama was condemned as an enemy of the people, and spent most of the following 14 years in prison or under house arrest. Written four years before the start of the Cultural Revolution, the Petition argues that China's policies were leading to the eradication of religion, the decline of Tibetan culture and potentially to the elimination of Tibetans as a distinct nationality.
 - ² The authorities also issued directives on coverage of the earthquake, saying that state media should reduce coverage of the consequences of the earthquake, not focus too much on the role of Tibetan Buddhist monks in helping the victims, and prioritise coverage of the Shanghai Expo. (Reporters without Borders, www.rsf.org, April 30, http://en.rsf.org/shanghai_en.html).
 - ³ The revised State Secrets Law, passed on April 29 by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's legislature, will take effect on October 1, 2010.
 - ⁴ An essay in the collection reads: "Shikalo [Jakpalo] a man in his forties from Charo Xiang in Ngaba county, was beaten to death on false charges. His precious life has fizzled out. This father and cornerstone of his household leaves behind him a widow and [five] orphans, weeping inside. This life-demeaning disaster has ruined life for one household." For a full report on the death of Jakpalo, see: <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/deaths-two-tibetans-after-torture>.

A LIST OF IMPRISONED TIBETAN WRITERS AND ARTISTS

**ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT:
'A RAGING STORM'**



WRITERS/BLOGGERS/WEBSITE FOUNDERS

Tashi Rabten (Pen name: The'u rang)



བཀྲ་ཤིས་རབ་བརྟན།

Tashi Rabten (Pen name: The'u rang)

Tibetan (Wylie): bkra shis rab brtan

Chinese: 扎西绕登 (Pinyin: Zhaxi Raodeng)

Status: Detained, whereabouts unknown

Tashi Rabten (pen name: The'urang), a student at the Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou, was detained on April 6 and is believed to be held in Chengdu, the provincial capital of Sichuan. Tibetan sources reported that around 16 security personnel arrived in the university hostel and ransacked students' rooms.

Tashi Rabten, who is from Dzoerge (Chinese: Ruo'ergai) county in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba), Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province in the Tibetan region of Kham and is due to graduate this year, was detained temporarily in July last year. He is the editor of a banned literary magazine on the 2008 protests in Tibet and author of a new collection of work called 'Written in Blood.' One of his friends said: "He has won great respect and popularity among students, intellectuals and ordinary readers in Tibet as an outstanding and brave young thinker." (see: <http://www.khabdha.org/?p=3484> and <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/fears-missing-tibetan-writer-continued-crackdown-writers-and-artists.>)

Druklo (pen name: Shokjang)

འཇུག་ལོ། (ཞོག་ཞུང་།)

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Brug lo, Zhogs ljang

Status: Released after detention



Druklo (pen name: Shokjang) a Tibetan student at Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou, was detained on April 6, 2010, along with Tashi Rabten (pen name: The'urang) (see: <http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=27066>). Security officials confiscated their computers, cell phones and books.

Kunchok Tsephel



ད་ཀོན་མཚོ་ག་ཚེ་འཕེལ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dkon mchog tshe 'phel
(Pinyin: Gongjue Cibai or Gongque Caipei)
Status: Sentenced - 15 years

Kunchok Tsephel, an official in a Chinese government environmental department and founder of the influential Tibetan literary website, Chodme (མཚོ་ཕེ། 'Butter-Lamp', www.tibetcm.com), was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of disclosing state secrets, according to reports from Tibet received by Tibetan exiles. Some of the charges are believed to relate to content on his website, which aims to protect Tibetan culture, and possibly to passing on information about protests that took place in Tibet in 2008.

Thirty-nine year old Kunchok Tsephel was detained in the early hours of the morning on February 26, 2009. His house was ransacked and his computer, camera and mobile phone seized. His family had no idea where he was until November according to the same sources. They were summoned to court on November 12, 2009, to hear the verdict of 15 years imprisonment after a closed-door trial at the Intermediate People's Court in Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu province.

Kunchok Tsephel, who was born into a nomadic family in 1970 in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) county, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan), the eastern Tibetan area of Amdo, is fluent in Tibetan, English and Chinese. He studied English and Chinese languages at Beijing Nationality University, and from 1997-99 continued to study English at Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou. In 2004, he was recruited as a Tibetan and English language teacher at the Tibetan Nationality Middle School in Machu, in addition to his work for the Chinese government environmental department. He founded his website on Tibetan arts and literature in 2005, together with a young Tibetan poet Kyabchen Dedrol. The website, which was shut down by the authorities several times over the past few years, was self-funded with a mission of promoting Tibetan arts and literature. (See: <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/founder-tibetan-cultural-website-sentenced-15-years-closed-door-trial-freedom-expression-c>; and www.internationalpen.org.uk/index.cfm?objectid=264A6A72-3048-676E-26881BFF062C1C43.)

Kunga Tseyang (pen name: Gangnyi)



ཀུང་པེ་ལང་གི་རྩེ་འགྲུ་ (གུང་ཉི།)

Tibetan (Wylie): Kun dga' tshe dbyangs,
Gangs nyi

Chinese: 贡噶擦央 (Pinyin: Gong'ga Cayang)

Status: Sentenced - 5 years

Kunga Tseyang, pen name Gangnyi (gangs nyi: 'Sun of the Snow') is a leading intellectual, blogger, photographer and environmental activist of the intellectual “new generation” movement. A Labrang monastery monk, Kunga Tseyang was educated in Labrang and Beijing. He traveled widely in Tibet and photographed the environmental degradation taking place on the plateau and its impact, and he also worked with the Nyenpo Yutsae Kyekham environmental protection group. He was arrested on March 17, 2009 and sentenced to five years in prison on November 17, 2009 by a court in the Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province. Full details of charges against him are not known but are likely to be connected to his writing, which include a piece entitled “China must apologize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.”

In a powerful essay entitled 'Who are the Real Splittists,' Kunga Tseyang wrote about the aftermath of the March 2008 protests:

“China Television, Lhasa TV and others, while ignoring the truth, have excessively branded all Tibetans as separatists. This has caused an incurable communal injury between the Chinese brothers and sisters and Tibetans leading to Chinese disliking the Tibetans and Tibetans holding animosity towards the Chinese. I, as a person, am forced to accept the fact that this was the biggest factor causing a split among the nationalities. Tibetans are driven to a desperate position because of them being accused of doing things, which they never did, and small incidents were exaggerated and paraded before the world. Even Tibetans who worked for the party for over two to three decades were accused and the Chinese news media, the experts that they are in fabricating lies, went to schools and universities where there are only a handful of Tibetan students to accuse them and to witch hunt them. Such excessive misinformation and wrongful acts have caused a huge chasm and disturbance in the minds of Tibetan officials and students who have absolute love for Chinese brothers and sisters and liking for the Communist Party of China. This has left a feeling of ‘racial hatred’ in their minds. This is the negative consequence of their incompetent reporting.” (Translated by Bhuchung D Sonam and published on High Peaks Pure Earth together with other writings.) <http://www.highpeakspure-earth.com/2009/04/remembering-honourable-gangnyi-la.html>.)

Tragyal (pen name: Shogdung)



བཀྲ་རྒྱལ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bkra rgyal (Zhogs dung)

Status: Detained

Tragyal, pen name Shogdung (“Morning Conch”) is the author of “The Line between Sky and Earth” (gnam sa go 'byed). He was detained by the police on April 23, 2010. The bookshop run by his wife was ordered to close on April 12th, 2010, and 35 copies of his book were confiscated (see interview with his wife Lha 'tsho: <http://www.tibettimes.net/news.php?showfooter=1&id=2636>). According to the same interview, Tragyal is being held at Ershilipu detention center in Xining; his wife went there but was not allowed to give him food.

Kirti Kyab

ཀི་རི་སྐྱའབས།

Tibetan (Wylie): Kirti skyabs

Status: Detained



Kirti Kyab, from Dzoegé (Chinese: Ruo'ergai) County, Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, was a teacher at the Nationalities Teachers Training College in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) County, also in Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture. Kirti Kyab was also the vice-editor of the literary magazine *Shar Dungri* (Eastern Snow Mountain; extracts translated in ICT report “A Great Mountain Burned by Fire,” www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/a-great-mountain-burned-fire-chinas-crackdown-tibet). He was detained in March, 2010 and his whereabouts are unknown.

Khang Kunchok

གངས་དགོན་མཚོག

Tibetan (Wylie): Gangs dkon mchog

Pinyin: Kang Gongque

Status: Detained in March, 2008 - release could not be confirmed

Khang Kunchok, founder of the magazine Nanjia was detained on March 20, 2008, when protesting against the killing of Tibetans by security forces, and was sentenced to two years in prison. Khang Kunchok is from Drotsang village in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) County in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province, and studied at Barkham Nationalities Teachers Training College. Khang Kunchok had previously edited Kangsel Metok, the Kirti monastery magazine. (See: www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/fears-missing-tibetan-writer-continued-crackdown-writers-and-artists.)

Sungrab

གསུང་རབ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Gsung rab

Chinese: 松绕 (Pinyin: Songrao)

Status: Detained

Sungrab, a computer student, recently compiled an English-Tibetan dictionary. He was detained on April 24, 2010, and his current whereabouts are not known. He is from Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province, the Tibetan area of Amdo.

Trintse

འཕྲིན་ཚེ།

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Phrin tshe

Status: Sentenced - nine years

Trintse, a 29-year old monk from Kirti monastery, is from Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province. He is an active blogger and writer. His Tibetan calligraphy is said to be the best in the area and he won awards at a prefecture-level calligraphy competition. He was arrested on March 29, 2008 and was sentenced to nine years imprisonment in November 2008 by Ngaba Prefecture People's Intermediate Court. According to sources in contact with Tibetans in the area, he faced charges of revealing state secrets, although details could not be confirmed.

Gedun Tsering

དགེ་འདུན་ཚེ་རིང་།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dge 'dun tshe ring

Chinese: 根敦次仁 (Pinyin: Gendun Ciren)

Status: At risk

Nineteen-year old Gedun Tsering from Mewa Serthi village, Rongtha Monastery in Zungchu (Chinese: Mao'ergai) County in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, published a book called 'Tears' on January 12, 2010. Although he has not yet been detained he is in grave danger. Security personnel have questioned his family and detained a fellow monk called Tsepa; it is not known whether he has been released or not.

RESEARCHER/FILM MAKER

Dhondup Wangchen



དོན་འགྲུབ་དབང་ཆེན།

Tibetan (Wylie): Don grub dbang chen

Chinese: 顿珠旺钦 or 当知项欠 (Pinyin: Dunzhu Wangqian or Dangzhi Xiangqian)

Status: Sentenced - six years

Dhondup Wangchen and Jigme Gyatso (see below) were detained in March 2008, soon after they completed filming interviews for a documentary ('Leaving Fear Behind') featuring Tibetans in a Tibetan area of Qinghai expressing their views on the Dalai Lama, the Olympic Games, and Chinese laws. Police detained filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen on March 26, 2008 in Kawasumdo (Chinese: Tongde) County, Tsolho (Chinese: Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Qinghai Province, and filmmaker's assistant Jigme Gyatso, a Labrang (Chinese: Xiahe) Tashikhyil monk, on March 23, 2008, in Linxia City, Gansu province. The men had filmed more than 100 Tibetans, most of whom chose to speak on camera without concealing their identities. The film was smuggled out of China prior to the film-makers' detention. The completed documentary, featuring 20 of the Tibetans, was screened in Beijing in August 2008 and can be viewed in its entirety (approx 25 minutes) at <http://woeser.middle-way.net/2008/09/leaving-fear-behind.html>

Li Dunyong, from the Beijing Gongxin law firm, was blocked from taking on the case by the Xining judicial authorities, who informed Dhondup

Wangchen's family that the court would designate a court-appointed lawyer for the trial. This is in violation of China's criminal procedure law and its obligations under international human rights law, which guarantee criminal defendants the right to choose their own defense counsel and to meet with their counsel while in detention (Human Rights Watch, www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/08/03/china-ensure-fair-trial-tibetan-filmmaker). In March 2010, Chang Boyang, a lawyer representing Dhondup Wangchen was threatened with the closure of his law firm if he did not drop the case (Amnesty International, April 21, 2010). According to a further report, at least one government was refused permission to have access to any trial or hearing of Dhondup Wangchen. Various western governments have raised concerns about Dhondup Wangchen's case, including the UK, when Foreign Minister David Miliband raised his case directly with the Chinese leadership during a trip to Beijing.

Tibetan exile writer and poet Anjam, who is based in Dharamsala, India, highlighted the unique nature of Dhondup Wangchen's work, saying: "His strategy is unique in Tibetan history; no one else has done this sort of work. He belongs to the new Tibetan generation of intellectuals and has made a great contribution to his country and people."

Jigme Gyatso



འཇིགས་མེད་ཀྱི་མཚོ།

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Jigs med rgya mtsho

Chinese: 晋美加措 (Pinyin: Jinmei Jiacao)

Status: Detained/released

Jigme Gyatso worked as assistant for Dhondup Wanchen (see above). He was detained on March 23, 2008 and released on October 15, 2008. He was again detained on March 10, 2009 and released April 22, 2009. In common with other released prisoners, he is likely to be in an insecure and difficult situation, and under particular surveillance. See: <http://cpj.org/2009/03/two-tibetans-arrested-amid-ongoing-media-restricti.php> and www.ifex.org/china/2008/09/18/two_tibetan_documentary_filmakers/

INTELLECTUALS/TIBETANS WHO SHARED INFORMATION

Norzin Wangmo

ནོར་འཇིན་དབང་མོ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Nor 'dzin dbang mo

Chinese: 龙真旺姆 (Pinyin: Longzhen Wangmu)

Status: Sentenced - 5 years



A Tibetan female cadre in her thirties, Norzin Wangmo, was sentenced to five years in prison for passing on news over the phone and internet about the situation in Tibet to the outside world, according to two sources including the Tibetan government in exile. Norzin Wangmo, from Trochu (Chinese: Heishui) County in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan province, was convicted on November 3, 2008. Exact details of the charges against her are not known. In a letter written upon receiving the news about her imprisonment, a friend of hers, singer and writer Jamyang Kyi (see below) wrote: "In your thirties, the prime of life, the critical juncture when your child needs educating, you and other heroes and heroines like you parted ways with your parents, split up with your spouses, and made orphans of your children for the sake of truth, and had to take the path alone. Five years is 1,825 days. It is 43,800 hours. To have to spend the best years of your life in a dark prison cell, what misery!" www.highpeakspureearth.com/2008/11/letters-to-norzin-wangmo-by-jamyang-kyi.html, <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/disappearances-continue-across-tibet-tibetan-woman-sentenced-talking-telephone>

Wangdu



དབང་འདུལ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dbang 'dus
Chinese: 旺堆 (Pinyin: Wangdui)
Status: Sentenced to life

Wangdu, who worked for an international public health NGO, was sentenced to life imprisonment after he allegedly shared, or attempted to share, information about the situation in Tibet. Wangdu, a former Project Officer for an HIV/AIDS program in Lhasa run by the Australian Burnet Institute, was charged with 'espionage' by the Lhasa City Intermediate People's Court after he was detained on March 14, 2008, the day that demonstrations turned violent in Lhasa. Wangdu was accused of collecting "intelligence concerning the security and interests of the state and provid[ing] it to the Dalai clique... prior to and following the 'March 14' incident." (<http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/ngo-worker-sentenced-life-imprisonment-harsh-sentences-signal-harder-line-blocking-news-ti>.)

Forty-one year old Wangdu is a former Jokhang monk from Dechen Township, Taktse (Chinese: Daxi) County, around 25 kilometers east of Lhasa. He previously served eight years in prison after detention on March 8, 1989, the day martial law took effect in Lhasa after three days of protest and rioting. His three-year sentence to "re-education through labor" was extended to eight

years' imprisonment after he and 10 other political prisoners signed a petition stating that the 1951 17-Point Agreement was forced on an independent Tibet. Wangdu, who speaks fluent Chinese and once worked as a guide for Chinese tourists at the Jokhang, is still listed as a member of staff on the website of the Melbourne-based Burnet Institute, one of the leading medical research and public health Institutes in Australia. Wangdu worked on the HIV Prevention in Lhasa Project, which commenced in 2001 with AusAID and Burnet Institute funding, and aimed to develop resources to be used to educate Tibetans about HIV.

A former political prisoner who shared a cell in Tibet Autonomous Region Prison (Drapchi) and carried out labor with Wangdu in the prison's greenhouses during his previous sentence told ICT: "During that time in prison [the early 1990s] I became very close to [Wangdu] and he started learning English with me from [another prisoner]. He is such an open-minded, talented, easy-going guy and got on really well with other prisoners while he was in Drapchi. He is very good at Tibetan literature and painting and Chinese language as well. He used to worry about the new generation in Tibet because they are losing their culture and their language, and he often criticized people for not being interested in anything other than money. The last time I saw him, when we said goodbye to each other, I was very sad."

Migmar Dhondup



མིག་དམར་དོན་འགྲུབ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Mig dmar don grub

Chinese: 米玛顿珠 (Pinyin: Mima Dunzhu)

Status: Sentenced to 14 years

Migmar Dhondup, who was also arrested in connection with the March 14 protests and has been sentenced to 14 years imprisonment, is in his early thirties and also worked for an NGO doing community development work. He is originally from Tingri (Chinese: Dingri) County in Shigatse (Chinese: Xigaze) Prefecture in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Migmar Dhondup, who speaks fluent English and is very well educated, also used to work as a tour guide. Both Migmar Dhondup and Wangdu were accused of collecting “intelligence concerning the security and interests of the state and provid[ing] it to the Dalai clique... prior to and following the 'March 14' incident”. A translation of the official news report is at: <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/ngo-worker-sentenced-life-imprisonment-harsh-sentences-signal-harder-line-blocking-news-ti>

Migmar Dhondup is a well-educated Tibetan passionate about nature conservation, who worked for the Kunde Foundation in Tibet, an NGO committed to helping marginalized and impoverished communities. Migmar Dhondup was educated in exile and on his return to Tibet some years later, he began wor-

king as a tourist guide for, among others, an American archaeologist who has surveyed over 700 ancient pre-Buddhist archaeological sites in upper Tibet. Migmar accompanied him on several fieldwork trips traveling for many weeks in the remote northwest. The experience of seeing ancient rock art in caves and learning about Tibet's rich history gave Migmar great pride in his native heritage and in his people, according to friends.

According to the same Tibetan and Western friends, Migmar was always happiest out in the field - conducting health trainings in villages, planting trees, or building food gardens to enable nomads to grow vegetables throughout the year. On his trips, however, the increasing levels of poverty in southern and northwestern Tibet demoralized him. He felt that he could never do enough to help those less fortunate than himself. He also cared a great deal about the preservation of Tibetan culture and encouraged other Tibetans to remember their mother tongue and wear traditional dress. He is a great reader, with one close friend saying that he was never seen without a book in his hand. One of his favourite books is Ma Jian's 'Red Dust', an account by a Chinese dissident writer of his travels through Tibet.

Tashi Gyatso



བཀྲ་ཤིས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bkra shis rgya mtsho

Chinese: 扎西加措 (Pinyin: Zhaxi Jiacao)

Status: disappeared/detained

Tashi Gyatso, a monk at Sarma monastery, ‘disappeared’ after he went to make a phone call. According to Phayul.com, Tashi Gyatso was detained on April 8, 2010 in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County in Kanlho (Chinese Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province. A Tibetan source with contacts in the area told Phayul.com that the authorities allegedly found equipment to receive the Tibetan-language service of Voice of America radio in his room at the monastery. (See: www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=27104&article=China+arrest+2+in+Nyagrong+and+Machu%2c+students+protest+in+Sertha&t=1&c=1)

Yeshe Choedron

ཡེ་ཤེས་ཇོ་སྐྱོད་ཀྱི་

Tibetan (Wylie): Ye shes chos sgron

Chinese: 益西曲珍 (Pinyin: Yixi Quzhen)

Status: Sentenced - 15 years



Yeshe Choedron was arrested in March 2008, and on November 7, 2008, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced her to 15 years imprisonment after being convicted for “espionage” for allegedly providing “intelligence and information harmful to the security and interests of the state” to “the Dalai clique's security department,” according to the official Lhasa Evening News. (See: www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/ngo-worker-sentenced-life-imprisonment-harsh-sentences-signal-harder-line-blocking-news-ti)

HARASSED AND/OR NO LONGER DETAINED

Tsering Dhondup



ཚེ་རིང་དོན་གྲུབ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Tshe ring don grub

Chinese: 次仁顿珠 (Pinyin: Ciren Dunzhu)

Status: Fired from job

Tsering Dhondup lost his government job as the head of the Bureau of Historical Editors of Malho (Chinese: Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province, the Tibetan area of Amdo, in October 2009, a few months after privately publishing his novel *Rlung dmar 'ur 'ur* (“The Red Wind Howling”). (See: www.khabdha.org/?p=4619#more-4619.)

Jamyang Kyi

འཇམ་དབྱངས་སྒྲིད།

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Jam dbyangs skyid

Chinese: 江央吉 (Pinyin: Jiangyang Ji)

Status: Detained/released



Jamyang Kyi, a writer and singer, was detained on April 1, 2008. Her release was reported by RFA on May 20, 2008 (www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet_bail-05202008174657.html). After her release she wrote an account of her detention entitled “Stages of Torture.” (See: www.highpeakspureearth.com/2008/11/they-by-jamyang-kyi.html.) Jamyang Kyi described her detention on her blog, a partial English translation of which was published in “Like Gold that Fears no Fire,” www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/gold-fears-no-fire-new-writing-tibet).

Chamdo Rinzang/Rinchen Zangpo

བྱ་མདོ་རིན་པམ་དམ་རིན་ཆེན་པམ་པོ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bya mdo Rin bzang

Status: “Disappeared” and released

Chamdo Rinzang published two important books about history *Nga'i pha yul dang zhi ba'i gcing grol* “My home and peaceful liberation” and *Nga'i pha yul dang gzab nyan* (“My hometown: listening carefully”) in autumn 2008. The books focus on the Chinese invasion of the villages in the Bya mdo area of Amdo, Tibet from 1958 through the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). In the first book, the author wrote eleven chapters based on interviews conducted with about 20 elderly people.

Rinzang was detained by police on July 19, 2006 and released later that year. He was detained again in July 2009, and returned to his family in August 2009, but suffering serious mental trauma. He was released into the care of his family by the police who said he had a serious disease. According to sources in contact with Tibetans in the area, he has “become crazy and cannot eat, or drink nor move by himself,” according to information posted on Khabdha.org (<http://www.khabdha.org/?p=4334>). Also see: http://www.tibettimes.net/blogs.php?id=64&post_id=2936

Tibetan exile scholar Gedun Rabsal wrote after he read the books: “The stories [in Chamdo Rinzang's books] are nothing new to my ears, as I had heard them over and over again during my childhood. But, it is rare for these stories to be published and distributed widely. The books that just landed in my hands were full of these stories. These all too common stories told by people, who suffered during the time of the invasion: mass-killings, tortures, imprison-

ments and so on. I wonder about this courageous person--the writer Rinchen Zangpo. I think he is literally risking his life by doing this project. Yet, he did it--whether out of nationalism, or out of compassion to those who suffered, but not dare to tell the very story until now.”

Go Sherab Gyatso

སྣོ་ཤེས་རབ་རྒྱ་མཚོ།

Tibetan: Sgo Shes rabs rgya mtsho

Chinese: 喜绕加措 (Pinyin: Xirao Jiacao)

Status: Detained/released

Go Sherab Gyatso, a monk at Kirti monastery in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, and author of *Nga tsho sad ran*, ("It is time for us to wake up") (Gansu Nationalities Publishing House, 2007). Imprisoned in 2008, news of his release was given by High Peaks Pure Earth in January 2009 www.highpeakspureearth.com/2009/01/to-go-sherab-gyatso-laby-jamyang-kyi.html.

Rangjung

རང་འབྲུང་།

Tibetan (Wylie): Rang 'byung

Chinese characters: 让穹 (Pinyin: Rangqiong)

Status: Detained/released



A 28-year old father of two and journalist at Sertha (Gser rta) TV, Rangjung was detained on September 11, 2008 by the Sertha (Chinese: Seda) County Public Security Bureau in Kandze (Chinese: Kanzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province (the Tibetan area of Kham) and released one month later. Reasons for his detention remain unknown, but authorities confiscated two computers from his home, according to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (www.tchrd.org/press/2008/pr20080924.html).

Woeser (or Weise or Oeser)



འོ་དེ་ཟེ་ཤི།

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Od zer

Chinese: 唯色 (Pinyin: Weise)

Status: Restrictions, no passport

Woeser, born in 1966, has remained under careful watch and had her movements restricted by authorities over the last few years. She continues to write, on her blog “Invisible Tibet” (<http://woeser.middle-way.net/>). She lost her job in Lhasa after her book “Notes on Tibet” (*Xizang biji*) was banned in 2003. (See: www.tibet.ca/en/newsroom/wtn/archive/old?y=2004&m=3&p=16_2.)

In “The two types of imperialism Tibet encounters” (Woeser & Wang Lixiong, *Unlocking Tibet*, 2005), Wang Lixiong has described Woeser's case in some detail: Following her voluntary resignation, Woeser was removed from the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) Literature Association and deprived of income; her assigned housing was confiscated; medical and retirement insurance suspended; and she is restricted from “applying for a passport”. Wang concludes: “So, in spite of not being thrown into prison, she has been deprived of everything that can be taken away from her.” Despite her relatively high profile, her situation remains uncertain, and in a recent interview Woeser said that she felt as though she was “sitting on the edge of a cliff and I could fall down any moment.”

In the same interview, a profile in the New York Times, Andrew Jacobs described Woesser as : “A graceful, soft-spoken woman whose disquieting tales are often punctuated by nervous laughter, Ms. Woesser has become an accidental hero to a generation of disenfranchised young Tibetans. Like many of her peers, she was schooled in Mandarin, part of a policy of assimilation that left her unable to write Tibetan, and she grew up embracing the official version of history - that the Communist Party brought freedom and prosperity to a backward land.” (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/25/world/asia/25woesser.html?pagewanted=all>)

Woesser's poetry book, “A True Heart” and translation of her poems are at: www.raggedbanner.com

Translations of her blogs : www.highpeakspureearth.com

Drokru Tsultrim



འབྲོཀ་རུ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

Tibetan (Wylie): 'Brog ru tshul khrim

Chinese: 卓楚楚臣 (Pinyin: Zhuochu Chuchen)

Status: Detained/released in 2009

The monk Drokru Tsultrim edited a magazine called “Life of Snow”, which has been banned. He is thought to be from Mangra (Chinese: Guinan) County in Tsolho (Chinese: Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Qinghai province, studied in Loktsang monastery in Chabcha (Chinese: Gonghe) County, also in Tsolho TAP, and at Detsa monastery in Tsoshar (Chinese: Haidong) TAP, Qinghai province. Drokru Tsultrim was detained on April 2, 2009 from another monastery where he was studying, Gemo, in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) County in Sichuan province, on suspicion that his writing was “reactionary.” An image of Drokru Tsultrim can be seen at www.highpeakspureearth.com/2009/05/in-name-of-human-rights-set-free-all.html. See details: www.savetibet.org/media-center/jct-news-reports/fears-missing-tibetan-writer-continued-crackdown-writers-and-artists

ARTISTS, PERFORMERS AND MUSIC AND FILM PRODUCERS

Tashi Dhondup

བཀྲ་ཤིས་དོན་འགྲུབ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bkra shis don grub

Chinese: 扎西顿珠 (Pinyin: Zhaxi Dunzhu)

Status: Sentenced - 15 months of “re-education through labor”



Copies of official documents detailing the investigation, detention and eventual sentencing to “re-education through labor” of the popular singer Tashi Dhondup confirm that Dhondup was sent to a labor camp for 15 months in early January 2010 following his detention in December 2009 on suspicion of “incitement to split the nation.” (See enclosed report, “A Raging Storm”)

Tashi Dhondup, a popular Tibetan singer from the Tibetan region of Amdo, was detained by police on December 3, 2009 at a restaurant in Xining, the capital of Qinghai province. Tashi Dhondup had been under intense political pressure for several weeks following the October 2009 release of a CD containing songs which in Tibet's current political climate were regarded by the Chinese authorities as highly charged, including lyrics calling for the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet and lamenting that “There is no freedom in Tibet.” Copies of music videos of his songs and translations of his lyrics are at: www.highpeak-spureearth.com/2010/03/torture-without-trace-five-songs-by.html.

Palchen Kyab



དཔའ་ཚེན་སྐྱའབས།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dpal chen skyabs
Chinese: 班钦加 (Pinyin: Banqian Jia)
Status: Detained

Palchen Kyab, head and founder of a Tibetan literacy project for nomad children, who was also a singer and helped local singers produce DVDs/CDs, was detained on April 25, 2008, and as of April 2010 is believed to be still in custody. (www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet_crackdown-04182008081004.html). Palchen Kyab, who is in his early thirties, is from Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province (the Tibetan area of Amdo). Palchen Kyab was arrested together with Dabe (see below) and singer Drolmakyi (see below), who were later released after paying a heavy fine, but the welfare and whereabouts of Palchen Kyab remain unknown. (See: -G.yu zhun dra ba, dated February 21, 2009, <http://youshun12.com/?p=665>; Tibet Times, April 4, 2009: <http://tibettimes.net/news.php?cat=49&cp=23&&id=967>). According to a source in contact with Tibetans in the area, the reasons for arrest were as follows: “The Chinese government considered his association was bad (*mi bzang ba*); his songs had political content; and he is thought to have a relation with a person who printed Tibetan flags during the peaceful protests in 2008 in Golog. He started his association in 2008 with his personal funds. He taught Tibetan and Chinese to nomad children not

going to school; protected and developed traditional arts and culture, including the training of singers, production and distribution of CDs.” In 2007, Palchen Kyab recorded a DVD with Lhundrup (see below). Their song Skar ma'i 'og gi skyo sgug (“Sadness/suffering under the stars”) was accused of being political. At that time Palchen Kyab escaped arrest, although Lhundrup did not.

Lhundrup



ལུན་ལྷུ་བཀྲ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Lhun 'grub
Chinese: 伦珠 (Pinyin: Lunzhu)
Status: Detained/released in 2008

Lhundrup, from Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province, is a musician and singer. Together with Palchen Kyab, in 2007 he recorded a DVD, and their song Skar ma'i 'og gi skyo sgug ('Sadness/suffering under the stars') was accused of being political. (See also: <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jun/08/world/fg-singer8/3>.)

Drolma Kyi

ལྷོ་ལ་ས་སྐྱིད།

Tibetan (Wylie): Sgrol ma skyid

Chinese:卓玛吉 (Pinyin: Zhuomaji)

Status: Detained/released



Amdo singer Drolma Kyi was detained on March 30, 2008. According to family and friends, Drolma Kyi was permitted to return home in late May after nearly two months in custody. <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jun/08/world/fg-singer8>

Dabe (Dawa Thar)



མགོ་ལོག་ལྷ་མོ། (ལྷ་བ་ཐར།)

Tibetan (Wylie): Zla bhe

Status: Detained/released in 2008

Dabe, a comedian from Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province (Amdo), was held for approximately one month before being released in late April 2008. See: <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jun/08/world/fg-singer8/3>. *Spyi tshogs me long* ("Mirror of Society", Tibetan PEN newspaper) of January 2010 carried an interview with Dabe after he arrived to India.

Tenzin

བསྟན་འཛིན།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bstan 'dzin

Chinese: 旦增 (Pinyin: Danzeng)

Status: Detained/released



Amdo singer Tenzin, detained in Lhasa for downloading illegal music
www.highpeakspureearth.com/2009/01/what-kinds-of-songs-are-reactionary.html

Tibetans detained after songs about Dalai Lama and March 2008 repression

Eleven Tibetans, mainly monks, were detained on December 4, 2009, following the production and distribution of the VCD *Chag krum dmar po* (ཆག་ཀུམ་དམར་པོ།) (“Bloody Omen”; the literal translation is ‘red fragments’), which featured images of Chinese repression and Tibetans killed after the March, 2008 protests. Songs on the VCD express devotion to the Dalai Lama and feelings of sadness and helplessness about the deaths of Tibetans following the protests.

According to the same source, the VCD was jointly produced by five monks from two different monasteries in Tsakho township in Matoe (Chinese: Maduo) County, Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. Around 5000 copies of the VCD were distributed free of cost by six other Tibetans in and around Matoe County, according to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). TCHRD reported that according to one Tibetan source, all 11 people involved in the production and distribution of the VCD were detained by Matoe County PSB officials on December 4, and that the five monks who produced the VCD remain in custody. It could not be confirmed whether the five monks still remain in prison or whether they have been released.

According to several Tibetan sources, five people are still being held in prison. Six other people who distributed the VCD and were arrested at the same time were released after paying a fine of 10,000 RMB (\$1,146) each, and made to give 10,000 RMB each as ‘security’ (*gta' ma 'jog tu bcug*). They were warned they would be arrested again if they failed to recall all the copies of the VCD. The same sources said that if the Tibetans did not denounce those who direc-

ted the enterprise, the case would be handed over to higher authorities. Another source stated that all 11 people have been released, without giving details. (See: www.dawakarlo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=863:2010-01-28-20-57-44&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=129; and also RFA's Tibetan-language service report : www.rfa.org/tibetan/chedi-klaytsen/khamlaytsen/kham-stringer/china-arrested-11-tibetan-in-amdo-golok-12102009122011.html?searchterm=None).

The five monks who created the VCD from Tsakho (Thswa khol) Monastery are named as: Abbot Ngagsung (མཁན་པོ་སངས་སྤུང་། Mkhan po Sngags srung, 23), Nobay (ནོབ་བློ་ Nor bhe), Sherab Nyima (ཤེ་རབ་ལྷི་མ་ལྷུང་པ་ཤེ་རབ་ལྷི་མ་ལྷུང་པ་ཤེ་རབ་ལྷི་མ་ sngags pa Shes rab Nyi ma, 25) and two monks from Khakor (Mkhar skor) Monastery : Trulku Tsepak (སྤུང་ལྷུང་པ་སྤུང་ལྷུང་པ་ sprul sku Tshe dpag, 28) and a monk whose name is not known.

The six other Tibetans in and around Matoe County who distributed the VCD have been named as:

Gaybo (དགེ་བོ། Dge bho, 41) a former abbot at Tsakho Monastery;

Gowang (23), a monk at Tsakho Monastery;

Tashi Nyima (དགེ་བོ་སྤུང་ལྷུང་པ་ལྷུང་པ་ཤེ་རབ་ལྷི་མ་ dge bskos Bkra shis nyi ma, 33), Disciplinary head of Tsakho Monastery;

Markyi (མཁན་པོ་དམར་སྐྱི། Mkhan po Dmar skyi , 40), abbot of Khakor Monastery

Khenpo (མཁན་པོ། Mkhan po , 25), a monk at Khakor Monastery

Garab Dorjee a.k.a. Garkho (དགེ་བོ་དམར་རྩོམ་པ་དགེ་བོ། Dga' rab rdo rje, 46), a layman from Tsakho Township.

MASTER PRINTER/CRAFTSMAN

Paljor Norbu



དཔལ་འབྱོར་ནོར་བུ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dpal 'byor nor bu

Chinese: 班觉罗布 (Pinyin: Banjue Luobu)

Status: Sentenced - 7 years

Paljor Norbu, a traditional Tibetan printer who is highly respected as an elder by other printers in Lhasa, was 81 when seized. On October 31, 2008 he was arrested and in November was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. His whereabouts are unknown.

Paljor Norbu ran a family printing business in the Barkhor in Lhasa which has printed and published Buddhist texts for monasteries for some generations. The business was shut down by the Public Security Bureau, which also took many of the wooden printing blocks. This suggests that he was not accused of involvement in any protests from March 10 onwards in Lhasa, but possibly in providing publications.

Paljor Norbu is known to be a “very modest, quiet person.” According to High Peaks Pure Earth, before 1959, he traveled to various important monasteries such as Tashilhunpo, seat of the Panchen Lama, and Narthang in order to supervise printing of Buddhist texts.

In Narthang, he supervised the printing of one set of the 224-volumes of the famous Narthang Tengyur (*Snar thang Bstan 'gyur*), an order from the Fifth Jamyang Shepa (1916-1947), the famous head of Labrang Monastery and book collector.

See: <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/disappearances-continue-across-tibet-tibetan-woman-sentenced-talking-telephone>; **see also:** www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/12/05/china-free-prominent-tibetan-cultural-figure.

EDUCATORS, STUDENTS AND THE MACHU PROTESTS

Despite intensive security and a stepped-up military presence, Tibetans marked two significant anniversaries on March 10 and 14, 2010 and called attention to restrictions, with protests involving hundreds of people in Amdo, eastern Tibet. Two of the protests, in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) county town and Tsoe City (Chinese: Hezuo), both in Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province, involved teenage students, and their schools are now under lockdown.

Tibetan middle-school students in Machu staged a peaceful protest on April 3 after their headmaster and two of his Tibetan assistants were fired, according to a Tibetan source based in Dharamsala, India (see: www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=27072). The school's headmaster Kyabchen Dedrol, and his two assistants – Do Re and Choekyong Tseten – were fired by Chinese authorities following the protests during the March anniversary period (see: www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/tibetans-mark-uprising-anniversaries-despite-crackdown-lhasa-war-zone). The situation has deteriorated further, with 21 teachers from the school being fined 20 to 60 thousand *yuan* (\$8,785) for failing to “give the student a good education on daily basis and supervising well their daily activity,” according to sources in contact with Tibetans in the area. The military presence has been stepped up and teachers and students are undergoing intense political education.

On May 3, Phayul.com reported that the students had started a hunger strike, asking for the re-instatement of their sacked headmaster, the release of Choekyong Tseten and two other arrested students, and a stop to political education (see: www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=27230&article=Machu+middle+school+students+go+on+hunger+strike%2c+demand+sacked+teachers'+reinstatement).

Choekyong Tseten

ཚོས་སྤྱོད་ཚེ་བཟན།

Tibetan (Wylie): Chos skyong tshe brtan

Chinese: 曲炯次旦 (Pinyin: Qujiong Cidan)

Status: Fired and detained

Choekyong Tseten, vice-head of the Machu Tibetan Middle School in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province, was fired from his position and disappeared on March 17 following several peaceful protests by students at the high school in March and April 2010. According to a Tibetan source in exile with contacts in the area, he is believed to be detained by authorities at an unknown location. Also see: www.tibettimes.net/news.php?showfooter=1&id=2625. According to Tibetan sources, he was accused of: “failing to supervise well” his department.

Students at the Machu Tibetan Middle School began a hunger strike on April 22, 2010, demanding the release and reinstatement of Choekyong Tseten, along with the reinstatement of Kyabchen Dedrol and Do Re.

Kyabchen Dedrol



ལྷུབས་ཆེན་བདེ་གྲོལ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Skyabs chen bde grol

Status: Fired from job

Kyabchen Dedrol was demoted from his position as Headmaster of the Tibetan Middle School in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province. He is also a famous writer and blogger. Born in Machu in 1977, Kyabchen Dedrol is regarded as one of the most promising Tibetan writers of his generation.

Students at the Machu Tibetan Middle School began a hunger strike on April 22, 2010, demanding the release and reinstatement of Choekyong Tseten, along with the reinstatement of Kyabchen Dedrol and Do Re.

Do Re

ར་རེ

Tibetan (Wylie): Rdo red

Status: Fired from job



Do Re was fired from the position of teacher/vice-head of the Tibetan Middle School in Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu province.

Students at the Machu Tibetan Middle School began a hunger strike on April 22, 2010, demanding the release and reinstatement of Choekyong Tseten, along with the reinstatement of Kyabchen Dedrol and Do Re.

Ngulra Tobden



དངུལ་རའི་སྟོབས་ལྷན།

Tibetan (Wylie): Dngul ra'i Stobs ldan

Chinese: 土登 (Pinyin: Tudeng)

Status: Detained

Tobden, a 40-year old Tibetan language teacher from Machu (Chinese: Maqu) County Tibetan Primary School, Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu province, was arrested by the Machu County police on March 28, 2010. Tobden is still in detention according to Tibetan sources and his current whereabouts are unknown. According to Phayul.com, Tobden was ordained as a monk and joined Ngulra Monastery after completing his primary schooling. He studied for some years in India before returning to Tibet in 2006.

Tobden's detention followed several peaceful protests by Machu Tibetan High School students in March and April 2010. www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=27072. Following these events, the head of Machu Public Security Bureau, Sonam Tse (Bsod nams tshe), was also removed from his position (see: www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=26932).

Tsering Dhondrup and Thubten Nyima Gyalpo

ཚེ་མིང་དོན་འགྲུབ་དང་ཐུབ་བསྟན་ཉི་མ་གྲུལ་པོ།

According to the exile website *Tibet Post*, these two students from the Machu Tibetan High School were detained at the same time as their teacher, Tobden. Further details are not known (see: www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/818-21-tibetan-teachers-fined-for-qteaching-subversive-topicsq).

Sonam

བསོད་ནམས།

Tibetan (Wylie): Bsod nams

Chinese: 索朗 **or** 索郎 (Pinyin for both variants: Suolang)

Status: Detained

Sonam, a teacher at the Nationalities Teachers Training College in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) County in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province. He is from Dzoegé (Chinese: Ruo'ergai) county in Ngaba. He was a monk at Kirti monastery in Dharamsala for some years and after returning to Tibet he studied at the Northwest Nationalities University in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. He is currently in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) County detention center, according to a Tibetan source in exile.

Dolha

རོ་ལྷ།

Tibetan (Wylie): Rdo lha

Status: Detained

A teacher at the Nationalities Teachers Training College in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) County, Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, who was detained in March 2010.

Unknown

Status: Fired from job

The headmaster of the Tibetan Middle School in Tsöe (Chinese: Hezuo) in Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province, was fired in the wake of student protests at the school.

Agya

ཨ་རྒྱལ།

Tibetan (Wylie) : A rgya

Status : Demoted

Agya was demoted from her position as head of the Nationalities Teachers Training College in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang) County, Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province. She is presently working in another government department.

PRE-MARCH 2008 IMPRISONMENT

Dolma Kyab



ལྷོ་ལ་མ་སྐྱེ་བ་སྐུ་བ་སྐུ་བ་

Tibetan (Wylie): Sgrol ma skyabs
Chinese:卓玛加 (Pinyin: Zhouma Jia)
Status: Sentenced/imprisoned: 10.5 year
sentence

Twenty-nine year old Dolma Kyab, who is known among his friends for his passionate concern for Tibet's environment, was detained in March 2005 and is serving 10 and a half years on charges related to his unpublished manuscript, *Lhing 'jags med pa'i Hi ma la ya* (originally written in Chinese under the title: *Sao dong de Ximalayashan*, "Restless Himalaya"). According to recent information, Dolma Kyab, who is originally from Amdo, has been transferred from Qushui (Tibetan: Chushur) County prison in Lhasa Municipality to a prison in Qinghai province.

In a letter from prison smuggled out by friends, Dolma Kyab appeals for help from United Nations committees on human rights, and says that he was imprisoned because of the ideas expressed on Tibet in his unpublished manuscript. A group of well-known Tibetan and Chinese writers have written a letter calling for his release.

An extract of Dolma Kyab's manuscript in English, translated by ICT, is available in the report, "Like Gold that Fears no Fire," at: www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/gold-fears-no-fire-new-writing-tibet.

A Tibetan version is being distributed by Tibetan PEN: www.tibettimes.net/news.php?cat=14&id=1849. See also: <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/tibetan-scholar-sentenced-ten-years-prison-after-writing-book-history-and-culture>.

Kalsang Sonam (aka Sonam Kunphel)



སྐལ་བཟང་བསོད་ནམས། (མིང་གཞན་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་འཕེལ།)

Tibetan (Wylie): Skal bzang bsod noms aka
Bsod noms kun 'phel

Chinese: 格桑索朗 (Pinyin: Gesang Suolang)

Status: Detained

Kalsang Sonam was detained having relayed messages from Drolma Kyab (see above) that detailed prison conditions in Chushur (where Drolma Kyab was being held at the time) and the reasons for his imprisonment. Further information about his whereabouts and sentence is not known.

The International Campaign for Tibet is a non-profit membership organization that monitors and promotes internationally recognized human rights in Tibet. ICT was founded in 1988 and has offices in Washington, DC, Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels.

A 'Raging Storm': The Crackdown on Tibetan writers and artists after Tibet's Spring 2008 Protests

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