



Tibetan Envoy Newsletter

The Gu-Chu-Sum Movement of Tibet
(Association of Ex-Political Prisoners)

Tibetan Envoy Newsletter

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Commemorating 18th Anniversary of 27th September 1987

The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet commemorates the 18th anniversary of 27 September 1987.

The September 27 of this year marks the 18th year of the 27 September 1987 mass pro-independence demonstration in Tibet. This protest marks the first mass demonstration of the younger generation after March 1989. Twenty-one Drepung monks led the demonstration followed by the public. The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet pays its tribute to brave fellow Tibetans who sacrificed their lives for Tibet's cause.

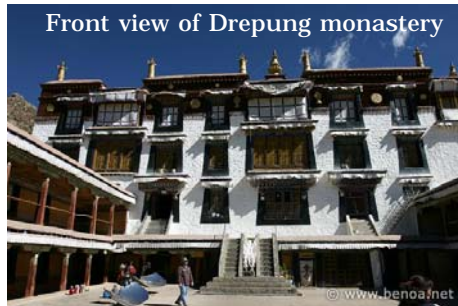
Morning program was held at Lhagyal Ri. The chief guests of the program were ATPD member Tenzin Gonpo, Tenpa Soepa of the private office and representative of other organizations. Tenzin Gonpo read out the message from ATPD and Tenzin Soepa of Private Office released two books - Vol 10 (I and my brother-biography of Tsering Sonam) and Vol 11 (Farmer's diary- a biography of Rigzin Choenyi)

Ngawang Woebar, President of the Gu Chu Sum, talked at TCV Gopalpur on the occasion and spoke on the need to keep Tibetan's struggle alive. In the evening a candle light vigil was carried out.

Drepung Monastery under siege

Dharamsala: 1 December 2005

High vigilance and tight security has been imposed at Drepung monastery, since 23 November 2005 following the patriotic re-education campaign carried out since October. The monastery was sealed off and no devotees are let in the monastery. On 23 November a during patriotic re-education session led by some senior monks, the monks refused to renounce the Dalai Lama as



a splittist. Five monks- Ngawang Namdrol of Phenpo Tsotoe, Ngawang Thubten of Lhasa, Ngawang Phelgye from Shigatse Rinpung, Ngawang Nyingpo of Phenpo Khartse, Phuntsok Thubwang of Lhoka Gongkar were expelled from the monastery by Wort Team, because of their refusal to denounce the Dalai Lama. They were considered as the main culprits and were handed over to their respective Public Security Bureau (PSB) of their native place. *(continued on page 4)*

Phuntsok Nyidon continues to remain under house arrest



Phuntsok Nyidon

Phuntsok Nyidon, one of the 14 Drapchi nuns, continues to remain under house arrest since her release from prison on 14 February 2005. It is known that she was not allowed to go outside Phenpo Lhundup County, even for medical treatment. The local police constantly come to her house and monitor her movements. Her repeated appeal to go outside Phenpo for medical treatment has been denied.

Phuntsok Nyidron was sentenced to nine years in jail in 1989 for "spreading anti-revolutionary propaganda." A further eight years were added to her sentence in 1993 for being one of the fourteen nuns who recorded songs yearning for their nation's freedom and praising the Dalai Lama while inside Drapchi Prison (TAR's Prison No 1).

She is in poor health and suffered a kidney failure due to severe torture and ill-treatment in prison. The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet remains deeply concerned with her deteriorating health and the denial of her freedom. China imposed severe restriction on former political prisoners especially during major festivals.

The Gu-Chu-Sum Movement of Tibet

Ex-Political Prisoner's Association

“Gu-Chu-Sum” means 9-10-3 in Tibetan. It was named according to the months in which major demonstrations occurred in Tibet. The number 9 is for the ninth month 27, 1987, 10 is for the tenth month 1, 1987, and 3 is for the third month 5, 1988. These demonstrations, carried out by three main monasteries' monks in Lhasa, were suppressed mercilessly by the Chinese army. Demonstrators were imprisoned and tortured harshly and forced into hard labor. Some became maimed or even killed.

In September 1991, we decided to organize an association for prisoners of conscience with our fellow Tibetans who were also in exile in India after gaining release from the Chinese prisons in Tibet. Because we have all suffered imprisonment and merciless suppression for peacefully demonstrating for the basic rights of free speech and expression of religion, we feel a deep responsibility to our people to engage in alleviating their suffering. We feel a duty to inform the world of our experiences and treatment by the Chinese government, with the hopes that China will be made to honor human rights standards of U.N.O., and that the world will support our cries for a just and peaceful resolution to the illegal occupation of Tibet.

Gu-Chu-Sum is a non governmental organisation endorsed by H.H. the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Government in Exile, and the Indian Government. Each of the 380 members are former prisoners of conscience. ❖

MESSAGE FROM NGAWANG WOEBAR,
PRESIDENT OF THE GU CHU SUM MOVEMENT OF TIBET



It is of grave concern that China continues to violate human rights in Tibet. The recent crack down and resume of patriotic re-education is a clear sign of deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet. The reopening of monasteries and admitting monks in the monasteries after cultural revolution is only outward gesture and deceptive with no religious freedom in Tibet. There is total control of monasteries through the presence of

Democratic Management Committees and constant visits by Work Team to administer patriotic re-education in the monasteries and nunneries.

The high religious lamas are targeted and imprisoned by the Chinese government for no apparent reasons. Trulku Tenzin Delek, Geshe Sonam Phuntsok, Bangri Rinpoche, Chadrel Rinpoche, late Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok were accused of ‘threatening the stability of the state.’ They were put behind bars for their social service to people through setting up orphanage, old age home, retreat center etc. The Chinese authority took their initiatives as a threat to their power and accused them of various crimes like terrorism.

Beginning from 1996, patriotic re-education was launched in Tibet in the monasteries and nunneries enforcing loyalty to Peoples’ Republic of China. Monks and nuns were forced to denounce the Dalai Lama as the head of splittist clique and accept Tibet as inalienable part of China. Various other issues were imposed to indoctrinate them. This led to mental torture and contradiction in their faith and belief, which severely hampers spiritual growth of religious practitioners. Thousands of monks and nuns withdrew voluntarily refusing to undergo patriotic re-education or denounce the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal head of Tibetan people. Commencing in 1994 and later in 1996 the portrait of the Dalai Lama was banned in institutions, monasteries and later in homes. The recent renewed repression in the monastery led to surge of expulsion and suicides in the monastery. The sheer inner conflict and mental trauma of patriotic re-education led the monks to take extreme steps. In Drepung monastery on 23 November five senior monks were expelled and handed over to their respective local police. This led to mass protest by the Drepung monk.

China’s growing economic and military power makes it less responsive to international pressure. The sign of China’s growing hegemony in the world is apparent with the recent U.S President Goerge Bush’s remarks on human rights been turn to deaf ears. The U.N Special Rapportuer on Torture on visit to China and Tibet state that Torture Is ‘Widespread’ in China. Its high time that International Community makes China accountable for the gross violation human rights in Tibet and China. With emerging economic development, it is imperative that China upholds human rights standards and gives basic freedom to its people and especially to minority communities.

Chat with Ven Yeshi Togden



Ven Yeshi Togden, former President of the Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet, was honored as one of the 'Unsung Heroes of Compassion' by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 6th November 05 at Ritz Carlton Hotel, San Francisco California. Forty-eight people from various countries and diverse walks of life received this award. As Elizabeth Share rightly mentioned '***There is no limit to the amount of good a person can do, if they do not care who gets the credit.***'

The award is given to people who are committed to social service and peace in the world. The awardees are ordinary foot soldiers who worked for society without being in spotlight. That's why they are aptly named 'Unsung Heroes of Compassion.' They may not have been duly credited but they never gave up their spirit to work for others through compassion in action.

Following is a brief extract from an interview with Ven Yeshi Togden.

How do you feel about the award?

It was a kind of mix feelings I did not know how I reached the podium to receive the award. His Holiness the Dalai Lama was standing and receiving all the awardees. A brief story of each awardee was read out. I felt very uncomfortable since His Holiness had to stand for a long time.

When His Holiness shook my hand and put a scarf on my head, I felt elated and was happy that my hard work had not been wasted. In view of so many contradictions in society, I sometimes doubted whether my work had really helped the Tibetan cause or not. The award provided me a yardstick on my work.

On asked about his future plan to work on any social issue, he said, "Presently I am working as an executive member of the Gu Chu Sum, but not in the office. I am rewriting the constitution of the Gu Chu Sum to make it a strong backbone of the organization."

I asked him the secret of the success of the Gu Chu Sum. He replied, "When I look back on what helped make a bunch of newly arrived refugees with no working knowledge of English and Hindi, I felt that the sacrifice of personal interests and full commitment in our work made it click." He attributed the success of the Gu Chu Sum to the hard work of people who worked in the initial stage – help both financially and morally by many Tibetan and foreign friends. The kind guidance of the Tibetan Government in Exile (TGIE) remains a major support for the Gu Chu Sum.

The Gu Chu Sum was set up on 27th September 1991 by newly arrived former political prisoners and activists in India. The Chinese claim that political prisoners are unproductive members of society. He said that this statement was proved wrong when the Gu Chu Sum was solely set up by the former political prisoners. He said, "It is naturally for any one to achieve in a free society with a good degree of hard work and sincere motive, unlike in Tibet where we have to live under constant harassment and fear."

Any message to Tibetans in exile? He replied, "There is high degree of freedom in India and Tibetans have gained a lot of experience working in a democratic system. Sometimes people take things for granted and speak recklessly against our own government without in-depth understanding. This is a very dangerous trend, which poisons people's minds and demoralizes our community. Therefore it is very essential to analyze the issue and speak with full understanding. We have to be very careful, as the Chinese government may spread false rumors in our society." He said, "love and support our government." This reminds me of President John Kennedy's statement – "***Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can for your country.***"

Tibetan NGOs Meet Maneka

On 25 November, the monks of Drepung held a silent protest at the monastery courtyard demanding release and readmission of the five monks. The Work Team at the monastery had to call for TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) office to bring the situation under control. A large number of People Armed Police and PSBs arrived at the monastery, where protesters were beaten up severely and confined to their rooms. The army sealed the monastery. There are reports of the death of a monk and more arrests. As a



precautionary move armies were stationed at Gaden and Sera monasteries. No clear information is available on the exact situation in Lhasa.

The patriotic reeducation was launched in 1996 in Tibet by the Chinese government, which sought total indoctrination of Tibet's historically most outspoken section of society; monks and nuns. The campaign was part of the national 'strike hard campaign' of 1996, which sought to rid China of 'splittist' activities. Since June of this year, China launched a renewed patriotic re-education campaign in Tibet in the wake of the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Tibet Autonomous Region in September 2005.

Phayul-Dharamshala 22 November - Representatives of four Tibetan non-governmental organizations met Saturday with animal activist and politician Maneka Gandhi following her statement on India TV which left many Tibetans disappointed.

At a press conference held here today, the president of the Tibetan Women's Association said that there was a dire need for a dialogue with Ms. Maneka Gandhi on her controversial statement : "throw all Tibetans out of India, each one of them is a poacher". Maneka was one of the panelists on a TV news bulletin of *India TV* which carried a report on poaching in India and the reported smuggling of Tiger skin into Tibet. She was reacting to a question asked by the channel's anchor Rajat Sharma about the possible solutions to eradicating poaching in India.

The Tibetan team was comprised of Ven. Ngawang Woeber of Gu Chu Sum, Mr. Karma Choephel of the National Democratic Party of Tibet, Mr. Lobsang Yeshi of the Tibetan Youth Congress and Ms. BTsering. The Tibetan NGOs told the media that they had expressed their concerns about the protection of wildlife in India and Tibet and the need to find a pragmatic solution to the problem.



The Tibetan team clarified, however that Ms. Maneka Gandhi did not hold any personal vendetta against the Tibetans in exile, as there was no grounds for such vindication. The team also said that Gandhi admitted that her statement was controversial in nature and that there was not a single case of a Tibetan poacher filed under the Indian law.

Ms. Gandhi suggested that the Tibetan team should meet Mr. Ashok Kumar, the Vice-Chairman of Wildlife Trust of India, Mr. Tito Joseph and Ms. Onkuri Majumdar, the senior Project Officer and the legal Programme of the Wildlife Protection Society of India respectively. After a series of meetings with these people, the Tibetan NGOs said they knew how the Tibetans in Tibet have fallen victims to China's subtle policy. "In China, though the trade of Tiger, Leopard and other wild animals is illegal, China has decided to turn a blind eye to the upcoming fashion of decorating costumes with animal hides in occupied Tibet. In fact, it has come to our notice that Chinese administrators organize festivals and competitions to encourage the innocent Tibetans to go for wildlife hides," said the Tibetan NGOs. "Considering the seriousness of this upcoming fashion in Tibet, the above Tibetan NGOs are committed to educate and create awareness among Tibetans both in Tibet and outside Tibet to curb this practice in Tibet starting from the upcoming Kalachakra in Amravati. The Tibetan NGOs seek support and co-operation from everybody including the media to address this issue effectively".

Press Releases

Lobsang Tenzin's condition worsen in new prison

In information received through a reliable source, Lobsang Tenzin, a former student of Tibet University, serving 18 years imprisonment in Pawo Tramo prison was transferred to prison near Nyethang Dolma Lhagang (temple) in June 2005. Transferred along with him were two other prisoners Tashi Tsering of Nagchu and another person (name not known) from Chamdo. It is further known that Lobsang Tenzin's kidney problem deteriorated in the new prison and his health condition is critical. Due to torture and frequent solitary confinements his eye sight has become very poor and he has developed hearing problems.

Lobsang Tenzin was born in 1966 at Dranak Shol, Lhasa. He completed his primary and intermediary schooling with distinction. In 1987, he joined Tibet University. In the University he was a well known student and was voted 'the best student of the year in 1988.' He took part in 5th March 1988 pro-independence demonstrations and was arrested on the charge of killing a People Armed Police. His arrest was formally announced on 16th April 1988 through the public media.

He was subjected to severe interrogation and torture at the Xing Jing Da Du police station on Dhondhe road in Northeastern Tibet and Gutsa Detention Center. He was charged as the main accused in the death of a member of People Armed Police named Yu-re-pon. Subsequently, he was suspended from the University. On 19 January 1989, Lobsang Tenzin was sentenced to death with two years suspension.

In prison he was put in solitary confinement for numerous times for his fearless voice and campaign against injustice. He was transferred to Drapchi prison and in August 1989 with his hands and legs shackled in iron rods, was taken to Pawo Tramo prison. He was the main person behind the petitioning to James Lilley, then U.S ambassador to China, regarding the conditions in prison. On 5 March 1991, his death penalty was commuted to life imprisonment. Again in 1994, under strong international pressure, Lobsang Tenzin's life imprisonment was reduced to 18 years.

In December 2005, we received reliable information that Lobsang Tenzin is suffering from kidney and heart ailments. The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet remain deeply concerned about the health condition of Lobsang Tenzin and urgently asks the international community to press Peoples' Republic of China for the immediate release of Lobsang Tenzin.

Strike Hard Campaign Underway in Tibet

12 August 2005: According to China's official statement, a 40 day summer strike hard campaign is to be carried out in Tibet Autonomous Region. The reason cited for this campaign was a crack down on the outlaws in society like thieves, criminals, drug addicts etc in order to maintain social harmony and stability. In such a strike hard campaign the main target group consists of ex- political prisoners, those who are suspected of political dissidents. In the past many such campaigns had been carried out and this time also it is for sure that many former political prisoners will land up in detention centers or under surveillance.

This 40 day summer strike hard campaign is being carried out in the view of the upcoming 40th Anniversary of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Security in TAR has been tightened and more troops have been brought to maintain security. Tourist permits or visas to TAR have been difficult to obtain since July 2005.

The original strike hard campaign was designed to crack down on anti social elements in China. It was later applied to Tibet in 1996. It came under severe criticism for its violation of fundamental human rights and for targeting political dissidents rather than outlaws.

Activities:

Talks and photo exhibitions in Tibetan Settlements and schools in Northern India.

The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet toured Northern India settlements and schools.



Eleven places were covered in the week long tour- Dickeyling, Clement town, Poanta, Rajpur, Selagurl TCV Model School, Sakya College, Mussorie (Homes and CST). The main objective of the tour

was to highlight situation in Tibet, raise the human rights violations in Tibet, to share testimonies of political prisoners. Biographies of political prisoners, annual magazines, newsletters and other publications of organization were distributed.

Ngawang Woebar, President of the Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet, and Phurbu Tsering, a former political prisoner shared their experiences in prison. A photo exhibition was also shown to the public and students. The public and school were very impressed by this program, they expressed

the need to carried out such activities every year.



So far the fourth batch of Gu Chu Sum members have toured East, North East, North and South India as per the agenda of the third general board meeting.

Workshop on Human Rights and Democracy for Gu Chu Sum members

Around 100 members of the Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet gathered at the Club House, Hotel Bhagsu on 22 October 2005 to attend a work shop on Human Rights and Democracy. The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet organized the workshop for its members.

In the morning session we had Karma Choemphel la of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputy (ATPD) as the first speaker on Democracy. He

spoke on the evolution of Democracy in the world and about the Tibetan government in Exile. Group discussion and presentation was followed by it.

In the afternoon session Ugen Tsewang la spoke on Human Rights and the U.N system to our members. All the members from nearby Dharamsala and Dolmaling gathered for the one-day workshop on Human Rights and Democracy.



Members at the workshop

In the News

A young monk dies under mysterious circumstances following the “patriotic education” campaign in Drepung monastery

Source: Tchrdr

Ngawang Jangchub, 28 years old, died in the first week of October 2005 under mysterious circumstances in his quarters in Drepung Monastery, according to confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD). He was found dead a day after he had a heated argument with “work team” officials conducting the “patriotic education” campaign in the monastery.

The “work team” officials arrived in the monastery the beginning of October 2005 to conduct the campaign. As stipulated by the guidelines of

the campaign, the monks in the monastery were required to condemn the Dalai Lama as a “splittist” and to pledge their loyalty to the Chinese government. Some of the monks refused to be “educated” and an argument erupted between them and the officials. It is reported that during the argument, Ngawang flatly refused to condemn the Dalai Lama calling him “the savior for the present and the next life”. He told the officials that he had no regrets, even if he was to be expelled from the monastery. Ngawang further refuted the Chinese officials’ claim of Tibet being a part of China; he

reportedly said, “Tibet has never been a part of China historically and I dismiss your claim over Tibet”. In response, the officials verbally abused him and threatened him with dire consequences. Following the argument, Ngawang furiously returned to his quarters and did not come for the next day’s session. When the other monks went to check on him, they found him dead in his room. The exact cause of his death is unknown although the monks speculate suicide due to extreme psychological trauma.

Torture Is ‘Widespread’ in China, U.N. Investigator Says

NY Times [Saturday, December 03, 2005 07:39]

By JOSEPH KAHN

(Manfred Nowak, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture, listens to a question during a news conference in Beijing December 2, 2005. The use of torture is widespread in China and the country needs major structural reform to its legal system for the situation to improve, the top U.N. envoy said on Friday. Nowak said his team was under frequent surveillance during a two-week trip that included Tibet and the northwestern Muslim-majority region of Xinjiang — the first visit granted his office in a decade. REUTERS/Claro Cortes IV)

BEIJING, December 2 - A high-level United Nations investigator condemned the “widespread” use of torture in Chinese law enforcement and said Beijing must overhaul its criminal laws, grant more power to judges and abolish labor camps before it can end such abuses, according to a summary of his findings released Friday.

The investigation, by Manfred Nowak, the special rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, noted some progress by

Chinese officials in reducing violence against prisoners since the country signed an international covenant banning torture in 1988.

But Mr. Nowak said that “obtaining confessions” and fighting “deviant behavior” continued to be central goals of China’s criminal justice system. The police and prison guards are pushed to extract admissions of guilt and are rarely punished for using electric shock, sleep deprivation and submersion in

water or sewage, among other techniques the Commission on Human Rights considers torture, to obtain them, he said.

“The use of torture, though on the decline, particularly in urban areas, nevertheless remains widespread in China,” Mr. Nowak said at a news briefing in Beijing. “There is a need for much more structural reform to address the problem.”

Himalayan Parivar Seminar in Shimla on 6 November 2005.

On 6 November 2005, one day seminar was conducted by Himalayan Parivar in Shimla. The main objective of the seminar was protection of Himalayan environment, culture and species. The prevention of terrorism in Himalayan regions. On the occasion

Regional Tibetan Women's Association, Regional Tibetan Youth Congress and National Democratic party took part in the seminar.

The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet took part in the discussion

and hold a photo exhibition 'Under oppression and persecution.' As many as 300 local people and Tibetans NGOs came for the seminar.

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Our Activities

- Organizing exhibitions, lectures, talks, and interviews with former prisoners.
- Publishing the annual magazine "Tibetan Envoy".
- Organizing education and job training programs.
- Providing housing, employment, medical care, and economic assistance to former prisoners.
- Sending money and clothing to the prisoners and their families in Tibet.
- Maintaining a database of political prisoners and ascertaining the health conditions and treatment of political prisoners in Tibet.