

# Dictator Xi Jinping with a Model of Totalitarian Communist State for the 21st century

## Serious human rights violations in Tibet: Report 2016-2020

Dharamshala — Over the past 70 decades, there has been ongoing political repression, social discrimination, economic marginalization, environmental destruction, and cultural assimilation, particularly due to Chinese migration to Tibet which is fueling intense resentment among the people of occupied Tibet.

The communist-totalitarian state of China began its military invasion of Tibet in 1949, reaching complete occupation of the country in 1959. Since that time, more than 1.2 million people, 20% of the nation's population of six million, have died as a direct result of China's invasion and occupation. In addition, over 99% of Tibet's six thousand religious monasteries, temples, and shrines, have been looted or decimated resulting in the destruction of hundreds of thousands of sacred Buddhist scriptures.

Until 1949, Tibet was an independent nation in the Himalayas which had little contact with the rest of the world. It existed as a rich cultural storehouse — unifying theme among the Tibetans — as was their own language, literature, art, and world view developed by living at high altitudes, under harsh conditions, in a balance with their environment. The authoritarian-communist regime in Beijing continues to call this a "peaceful liberation", that the "Tibetans are living in a Maoist socialist paradise."

### **Denial of religious freedom**

Tibetans and other minority groups occupied by the Chinese Communist Party are denied of their basic human rights such as freedom to practice their religions. Yachen Gar, Buddhist Center situated at Palyul County in Kham province, eastern Tibet is home to over 10,000 nuns, monks, and lay practitioners dedicating to meditation and scriptural studies. The communist state of China started forcefully removing over 7,000 residents in May 2019 from the Center and demolishing the complex in July 2019. Videotapes and photography from the site showing half of the complex becoming barren which the Chinese authorities covered up with plastic. The Buddhist nuns were forcefully confined in Jomda County in eastern Tibet, beaten and subjected to a "patriotic re-education campaign". They were not even allowed to wear their robes.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, Larung Gar is thought to be one of the biggest communities for the study of Tibetan Buddhism in the world and is largely populated by monks and nuns. Designated

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1.<http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6595-new-photos-of-yachen-gar-shedding-more-light-on-china-s-repression-in-tibet>

as an institute, rather than any kind of monastery, the settlement was founded in 1980 by Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok – this designation has meant Larung Gar doesn't have to deal with China's strict rules on monasteries. Today, peaceful monks and nuns at Larung Gar are struggling to preserve their homes. Destruction has already started, threatening religious practice and culture in Tibet. Despite protests across the world against repressive actions by Chinese authorities in Larung Gar, the academy is seeing demolitions and forced removals for the second time in 15 years, as the Chinese government says it must bring down the town's "population."

However, the true population figures are debated – some think it around 40,000 while others estimate to be less than that. Chinese authorities have said that the population must be 5,000 by the end of September 2017. In August and September, Chinese authorities allegedly expelled over 1000 monks and nuns from the Buddhist Academy and forcing them to "participate in the patriotic re-education" campaign. On September 30, over 700 monks and nuns were expelled from the Academy that includes 400 from Golok County and 300 from Yulshul County. Over 300 nuns and monks were reportedly detained by Chinese police when they were returned to their homes in Kham Riwoche, Chamdo County, eastern Tibet, but the exact place where they were held unknown. Tibetan nun, Rinzin Dolma, committed suicide on July 20, 2016 the first day of the demolition. She left a note saying she "could not bear the pain of the endless Chinese harassment of innocent Buddhists who quietly studied at the institute." Two more nuns have also reportedly committed suicide. Khenrab Tharchin, a Tibetan political prisoner, died on Monday, August 7, 2016, a result of intense mistreatment by the Chinese authorities while in prison. He was arrested in 2008 after he refused to participate in what the Chinese called "patriotic reeducation campaign," a campaign whose aims were to control the Buddhist religious practices and eventually eradicate it completely, to suppress support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and to eliminate the notion of an autonomous and free Tibet.

In the year 2017, Chinese authorities had destroyed more than 4,500 homes and monastic buildings at Larung Gar. More than 4,825 monks and nuns have been expelled since 2016 with many forced back to their hometowns and deprived of opportunities to pursue religious studies. The destruction of Larung Gar received international attention in 2016, as organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International called the decimation a clear violation of religious freedom, however, the demolitions continued, leaving thousands homeless.<sup>2</sup>

Labrang Jigme, a monk from Labrang in Amdo province, endured torture and nearly died following several periods in prison. He was hospitalized immediately after his

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5352-despite-wide-criticism-hundreds-more-expelled-from-larung-gar-tibet>

release on 26th October 2016. He was recorded on video in Tibet an account of his own imprisonment and views on Chinese policies against the Dalai Lama. “They frame us with the greatest and heaviest crimes, and under trial, they coax or even force us to admit to many things we never did, an ongoing process of rendering us lifeless as a corpse, if not wiping us out altogether,” Labrang Jigme writes. He was not allowed to wear monks’ robes. <sup>3</sup>

Lhamo Dolma, a Tibetan Women was detained and disappeared by Chinese police on March 28, 2018 while on a pilgrimage to Lhasa from her home in Bora Township, Sangchu County, eastern Tibet. She was 'suddenly taken away' for 'questioning' by 'a few secret police in plain clothes.' She was seized and her family was warned against sending information about her detention to others.

NgawangTsono, 51, died on January 27, 2018, in PhenpoLhundrub county in the Tibet Autonomous Region’s Lhasa prefecture, after deteriorating health plagued her for years after being released from prison. she was not allowed to return to her nunnery, and instead continued to face problems and harsh working conditions in society after her release.

A monk called Thubpa, 32 was also taken by Chinese police at night from Trotsik Monastery in the same county sometime toward the end of 2017. He had previously been arrested for shouting political slogans calling for more freedom in Tibet and burning the Chinese flag during a period of widespread protests in 2008.

In yet another incident, Four Tibetan monks were arbitrarily arrested by Chinese authorities on November 7, 2019, for distributing leaflets calling for Tibetan independence in the courtyard of a Chinese government office in Sershul County. They also called for an end to the aggressive and unlawful acts of Chinese officials in the area and for an end to the dirty political campaigns that were harmfully disrupting the lives of the local people.<sup>4</sup> The Chinese police also arrested Nyimey 15-year old monk on November 18, 2019 for allegedly writing articles honoring and supporting the four monks who were accused of peacefully demanded independence for Tibet and called for human rights in Tibet by distributing leaflets.

A former political prisoner named Tashi Phuntsok, 60, a senior disciple of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche known as a Tibetan environmental defender has died on March 16, 2020. His health had been poor ever since his release from YakraPhuk prison in July 2003. Phuntsok was sentenced by the Chinese authorities, alongside Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche in 2002, and was released early in July 2003 due to his deteriorating health in

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5387-i-found-strength-i-didnt-know-i-had-in-truth-ex-tibet-political-prisoner>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6664-the-rest-of-the-band-is-still-being-held-captive>

poor prison conditions. Phuntsok was arrested and falsely accused of colluding with Tenzin Delek Rinpoche in trumped-up charges of involvement in a series of bomb explosions.

### **Self-Immolation protests in Tibet**

Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet since 2009, starting in Ngaba County, a focal point for political demonstrations against China's rule. Many of the initial self-immolations were carried out by Buddhist monks, but a growing number of laypeople, including nomads and farmers, have since taken part. Tibetans in desperation to free themselves from the Chinese Communist occupation resort to peaceful self-immolation. More than 156 Tibetans have separately set themselves on fire to protest against controls on their religion, language, culture, and other repressive measures over the past few years in Tibet by Communist China. More than 156 precious human lives are lost in self-immolation alone and international organizations like the United Nations (UNs) have called out China for the brutal rule in Tibet. Authoritarian Communist China has the audacity to continue the inhuman rule in Tibet. The self-immolators call out slogans including free Tibet, no human rights in Tibet, the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet, and release of the 11th Panchen Lama who is the world's youngest political prisoner; abducted at the age of six along his families missing till date.

In 2017, Pema Gyaltzen (pegyal) 24 years of age set himself on fire at the main market Square in Karze County, Kham Province of eastern Tibet, on 18th March. He protested against Chinese repressive rule in Tibet. The Chinese immediately took him from the scene while he was severely burned. Later 10 Tibetans come to ask for his body but instead they were detained and tortured for one night.<sup>5</sup>

In another protest, Konpe, aged around 30 years set himself on fire in Ngaba on December 23, 2017 in northeastern Tibet, to protest against China's repressive policies in Tibet. A video of the self-immolation protest was initially posted on social media networks. No other details are available at that time as the Chinese authorities imposed stringent restrictions in the area and the lines of communication are cut off. He died on a Sunday morning around 5 am. The Chinese authorities surreptitiously cremated the body despite repeated requests from the family members to hand over the body to them. Konpe is the sixth Tibetan to carry out a self-immolation protest in 2017.<sup>6</sup>

The last self-immolation in Tibet was carried out by Tenga, in Karze County of eastern Tibet, on November 26, 2017.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5447-youth-sets-himself-on-fire-to-protest-against-the-chinas-rule-in-tibet>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5855-tibetan-man-dies-after-setting-himself-on-fire-to-protest-chinas-rule-in-tibet>

A 16 years old student called Chakdor Kyab from Gansu in eastern Tibet set himself on fire in protest against the Chinese brutal rule in Tibet, on May 2 2017. He shouted 'Tibet wants freedom' and 'let His Holiness the Dalai Lama return to Tibet' while he was burning. The Chinese police and military swiftly arrived at the scene and distinguished the flames and took the body away. It wasn't clear whether Chakdorkyab was alive or dead.<sup>7</sup> Another Tibetan, Lobsang Gyaltsso, 24 years of age survived the self-immolation and released on 10th May 2017 after serving 5 years in Jail. He was a 19-year old monk from Kriti Monastery when he self-immolated as a protest against the Chinese brutality in Tibet on 13th February 2012 in the main street of Ngaba County in traditional Amdo northeastern Tibet.

Tashi Rabten, 33 from Machu County in Gansu's Kanlho (Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, set himself ablaze on 8th December 2016, on a road leading from the Machu county. He shouted slogans such as "Long life His Holiness the Dalai Lama", "The return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama return to Tibet," and "The release of Panchen Lama GendunChokyiNyima." following the protest. His charred body was taken away by Chinese police.<sup>8</sup>

Subsequently, 50-year old Khedup was allegedly taken into custody on December 14th, 2016 by police in Machu County in Gansu. He was held for over a month in Machu County, and during that time was interrogated and tortured, suffering beatings and other mistreatment at the hands of the police. Police suspected Khedrup of sending photos and video clips of the December 8th, 2016 self-immolation protest of Machu resident Tashi Rabten to international media. But the authorities could not produce any evidence of his crime, and he was therefore released on January 21, 2017. Before his release, authorities warned Khedrup, not to discuss with "outsiders" any details of what had happened to him while in detention. They said they would be closely watching his daily movements and activities, and warned him that he could be arrested again.

TsedupKyid, a 32-year-old Tibetan Women was sentenced to four years in prison for intentional homicide on April 5, 2013, due to her alleged role in trying to prevent Gedun's body from falling into the hands of the Chinese police and armed security personnel. Gedun, a 29-year-old Tibetan monk self-immolated in Golog Pema County, Amdo region of northeastern Tibet at around on December 3, 2012. He shouted slogans demanding "freedom in Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet". Tsedup Kyid has been released after serving a four-year prison term. She was returned to her home by authorities on April 5, 2017, after serving her full term in prison.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5523-another-self-immolation-protest-against-chinese-rule-reported-in-eastern-tibet>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5321-tibetan-self-immolator-calls-for-freedom-in-tibet-democracy-in-china>

Tsekho Aka TsekhoThukchak, a 44-year old, father of two, set himself on fire in Meruma town, Ngaba County in eastern Tibet, on March 7, 2018. He died at the scene, but the whereabouts of his body is unknown. He was known for his strong sense of Tibetan identity and nationalism with great interest in the cause of Tibet. His protest occurred in the run-up to the anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, one of the most significant dates of the year for the people of Tibet. On March 10, 1959, Tibetans from across the social spectrum rose up to stage a defiant yet peaceful uprising against the illegal occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China.

Gedun Gyatso, aged around 16, and Choekyi Gyatso, age unknown set fire to themselves on December, 9, 2018 in Ngaba County in Eastern Tibet. Their self-immolations were to protest against the occupation, human rights abuses, and restrictions on Tibet's religion and culture. Chinese Security and armed police quickly arrived at the scene and took them away and their conditions were described as critical. Gedun Gyatso was taken to a hospital in Chungchu County and Choekyi Gyatso was taken to a hospital in Barkham, also neighboring county, but one of them succumbed to his injuries.<sup>9</sup>

Since Xi Jinping gained power in 2013, he has retained and even intensified its hard-line policies against Tibetans in Tibet. Xi is now the most powerful Chinese authoritarian ruler since Mao and has moved the system back toward one-man rule- a neo-totalitarian party-state. Under Xi's firm hand, dictatorial controls and censorship have been tightened relentlessly, particularly in Tibet.

A young man, Yonten, 24, has died after setting fire to himself in the latest of a wave of Tibetan self-immolations, on Tuesday, November 26, 2019, in a village close to Meruma Yultso of Ngaba County, northeastern Tibet. Yonten's self-immolation photograph indicates that there aren't many people around when he set himself alight.<sup>10</sup>

Dolma Tso, a Tibetan woman jailed in Sichuan Province for allegedly attempting to rescue a self-immolation protester from police has reportedly been released in poor health after serving a three-year term on December 4th,2016.

### **Freedom of information**

Planting heavy surveillance and monitoring the movement of Tibetans inside Tibet is a way to take complete control of the Tibetans by the Chinese authority. Recording conversations and chat history in mobile phones of Tibetans in Chinese messaging app like WeChat and charging them on various accounts to suppress the voices is a daily

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6385-two-more-youths-set-themselves-on-fire-in-protest-against-china-s-repression-in-tibet>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6667-young-tibetan-dies-after-self-immolation-protest-in-occupied-tibet>

occurrence. Tibetans are detained and imprisoned by deeming the contents post in socio-media 'politically sensitive.

Reportedly in Zeku County, northeastern Tibet on 27th September 2017, a legal training for group chat organizers on WeChat was commenced. It was yet another attempt by the Chinese authority to control and stop spreading of information within and outside of Tibet. Everyone who has or planning to start a group chat WeChat were required to attend the training where the Chinese authorities instructed how their contents should adhere to Chinese laws. The Chinese authorities told the organizers to block any content that was considered illegal by the Chinese law. Further the authorities warned that within the group if illegal contents such as pornography and anything related to Tibet's independence were to share, the group organizers should take full responsibility. Organizers were extensively instructed by Chinese judges about Chinese law and regulations.<sup>11</sup>

In 2018, the Chinese Authorities launched a new campaign that offers rewards for reporting of illegal content on Tibet. A circular on socio-media issued by the Chinese public security bureau on 14th November 2018 and 30 boxes have been set up across Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet to report criminal activities and issues. Criminal issues such as speaking and reading foreign news articles or broadcasts about Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, etc. The measures are so broad and all-encompassing that almost everything other than official state propaganda that published, posted online or broadcast could be characterized as 'evil' and 'illegal' subject to punishment.<sup>12</sup>

In 2016 two monks, named Lobsang Sherab, 35, and GedunDakpa, 39, had been missing since being arrested in Thangkor Town, north-eastern Tibet on August 24. Dakpa was sentenced to 5 years in prison by a People's Immediate court in GyalrongTrochu Township, Ngaba County, eastern Tibet, approximately on June 17, 2017. Like Dakpa, Sherab's whereabouts were unknown until June 17, when he was sentenced by the same court, to four years in prison. Both monks were sentenced for their engagement in "activities to split the motherland" and "sharing information with outsiders" about peaceful protests staged by Tibetan nomads against government land seizures in Ka Bharma Village in Thangkor Town, Dzoerge in Ngaba County of north-eastern Tibet. Information about the sentencing has recently become known due to the difficulties of getting information out of the occupied Tibet. <sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5746-in-tibet-china-holds-training-cracks-down-on-spread-of-info-via-wechat>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6370-china%E2%80%99s-new-campaign-offers-rewards-for-information-on-%E2%80%98illegal-content%E2%80%99-of-tibet>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5584-two-monks-jailed-for-sharing-information-on-tibet-and-splittist-activities>

India based Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) said that Chinese authorities in Qinghai Province have issued an urgent notice that calls for increased monitoring and management of online chat groups and individual users “at all times and in all places”, according to a podcast news in Tibetan and Chinese released by local Chinese government media. The notice bans posting and sharing of “illegal” information that “harms the nation and the Chinese Communist Party” failing which the consequences would result in fixed-term imprisonment of one to eight years. The notice particularly targets online groups with more than 10 members each and requires all members of such groups to publicize the contents of the notice, exercise “self-restraint”, “keep a tight lip by not sharing rumours”, and stop sharing “sensitive information”. Importantly all chat groups and individual users that are found posting and sharing illegal contents will be prosecuted as part of the ongoing nationwide crackdown on ‘black and evil forces’, the notice said.<sup>14</sup>

The moderators of online chat groups are specifically instructed to shoulder major responsibilities in managing the behavior of group members and the contents they share. The notice added that all relevant government departments including the internet authorities are “closely monitoring” all chat groups including their status updates or ‘moments’ and the offenders will be “dealt with strictly according to the law”. The notice lists 10 rules that all online users have to observe: 1. Do not share sensitive political information 2. Do not believe in rumours and 3.do not post/share them 4. Do not send internal information to outsiders. 5. Do not send threatening information related to [above point] 6. Do not share information related to Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan before it is released by the government 7. Do not share information related to the military. 8. Do not share documents related to state secrets 9. Do not collect all kinds of unverified news reports 10. Do not send all kinds of photos and videos of various [government officials] [All] must abide by the law. <sup>15</sup>

In 2017, the Public Security Bureau in Machu, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province had issued a notice containing nine rules that are by and large similar to the current notice barring rules 4, 8, 9, and 10. Elsewhere in the Tibet Autonomous Region, local Chinese authorities announced cash prizes of up to 300,000 yuan (approx. USD 44,000) for reporting illegal online contents that effectively criminalizes free speech.

In the another protest, Tenzin Gelek, an 18-year old monk belonging to Kirti monastery, staged a peaceful protest against China's repressive policies in Tibet on September 6, 2018 but was quickly arrested and taken away. Gelek is a native of Meruma Township in Ngaba County, known by his pen name "Sarin" (Cost of the Land), wrote two

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6599-china-makes-fixed-jail-term-up-to-eight-years-for-illegal-online-content>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5719-dont-touch-the-9-topics-further-threats-to-information-freedom-in-tibet>

articles— one expressed the suffering of the Tibetan people and the other stated that China's actions in Tibet are 'betrayal' of treaties. He then posted on WeChat before his arrest.

Two young Tibetans identified as Yonten and Choegyal had staged a peaceful protest in Wonpo village in eastern Tibet. They scattered leaflets in the air and called out for Tibet's independence in the peaceful protest against China's occupation of Tibet. In their non-violent protest, video clips showing a portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, together with a song of praise for His Holiness and expressed their infinite desire and yearning for freedom in Tibet. The two immediately taken into custody by a group of Chinese police when they were staging a peaceful protest and scattered leaflets calling for Tibet's independence from China. For this demonstration, they have already prepared for the slogan leaflets of 'Tibet independence' with their photos, they also wrote short verses titled "My Own Directions" and "Discourse", under their pen names. shared with their photos on Chinese social media WeChat.

Choechok, is a monk at the village monastery in DzameyWonpo, Serchul County, eastern Tibet. He was released from prison on February 6, 2020, after serving two years. Choechok was arrested by the Chinese authorities in December 2017. His arrest was believed to be related to a post he made on WeChat. In the post in December 2017, Chochok used the picture of Konpe, a Tibetan monk who self-immolated, as the background. A number of Tibetans have been arbitrarily arrested every year for simply expressing their views about the desire for freedom and their sufferings of the complete lockdown by the Chinese Communist-authoritarian regime.<sup>16</sup>

### **Devoid of education freedom**

In Tibet today, Tibetan writers, intellectuals, musicians, artists, environmentalists, and religious figures are being arbitrary arrested, imprisoned and tortured by Chinese authorities for merely posting an article to a blog, writing an essay, editing a magazine, sending information by text message, or singing songs that express the suffering of the Tibetan people. Demanding their basic rights to learn their own language and culture is a punishable offense in the eyes of the Chinese authority. The Chinese Communist Party for decades-maintained failed policies intended to keep ethnic minorities, especially Tibetans and Uighurs, under political control while giving them some space to preserve their own languages and cultures.

But under President Xi Jinping, the totalitarian Communist regime leader who came to power in 2013, China has adopted more assimilationist policies, designed to absorb these minorities into the fold of one Chinese nation. Virtually any expression of Tibetan

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6715-tibetan-monk-released-after-serving-two-years-over-a-social-media-post-on-tibet>

identity is being branded "splittist" - a threat to the Motherland and severely punished. Tibetans are facing heavy restrictions and repression imposed by the communist regime that erupted into unrest in recent years. The regime has stepped up politically motivated arrests, prosecution, and conviction of peaceful protesters, singers, writers, and human rights campaigners. Chinese authorities have also intensified security measures in many parts of the occupied provinces in Tibet and the region has been the scene of peaceful demonstrations since 1949. China has jailed scores of Tibetan writers, artists, singers, and educators for asserting Tibetan national identity and civil rights since widespread protests swept the region in 2008. Tibetans in Tibet are being severely beaten, imprisoned, tortured and killed for their faith and culture preservation.

Tibetan children living in Sichuan province were being denied the right to education in their own mother language. In a memo submitted to a January 2017 meeting of the Regional Chinese people's consultative Congress (CPCC), regional committee member, and professor at the Sichuan Teachers University, Dolkar Kyi called for Tibetan language instruction to be instituted immediately in schools along with the Chinese language curriculum. According to Kyi about 2,000 Tibetan children of school age live in Chengdu but no schools in Chengdu teach in Tibetan language and all Tibetan children are taught in Chinese as the sole medium of instruction. Kyi's proposal was later spread through socio-media. Tibetans in Chengdu tried for many years to set up courses for their children in their native tongue without success. Those who want their children to be taught in Tibetan have no option but to send them back to hometowns. She said that China's constitution guarantees protection for "the equal treatment (minority) nationalities and for equality among languages".<sup>17</sup>

Tashi Wangchuk,<sup>18</sup> a 33-year old Tibetan language advocate, was detained on 27 January 2016 and his trial took place on 4 January 2018 at Yushu Intermediate People's Court, in Jyekundo County in the Kham region of Tibet. He was tortured and suffered extreme inhuman and degrading treatment during the first week of detention. He was held for a lengthy period in a 'tiger chair' where he was subjected to arduous interrogation and was repeatedly beaten. Due to China's secrecy around the announcement of trial outcomes, his lawyers were unable to be in court on that day of his trial. Tashi had already spent over two years in Chinese detention despite the fact that he has committed no crime under both international laws and that of the Chinese constitution. Wangchuk heard the verdict in Yushu County in eastern Tibet. He warned that the Tibetan language was threatened by the Chinese government policies to make Mandarin Chinese the language of schooling and government. Wangchuk, was arrested in early 2016, two months after he was featured in a New York Times video and article

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5373-tibetans-in-chengdu-call-for-inclusion-of-tibetan-language-education>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6184-activist-jailed-five-years-over-speaking-out-for-linguistic-rights-in-occupied-tibet>

about Tibetan language education. In January 2017, charged with "inciting separatism" for comments he had made to The New York Times.

At the trial Wangchuk has said that he does not advocate independence for Tibet, but wants the rights for ethnic minorities that are promised by the Chinese law, including the right to use their own language. After over two years in detention in China, Tashi Wangchuk has been sentenced to five years in prison, on May 22, 2018. On politically motivated charges of 'inciting separatism' after he publicly sought to realise his right to Tibetan language education in occupied Tibet. In January 2018, government delegations from the UK, EU, US, Germany, and Canada attempted to attend the trial but were all denied access. Court officials also refused to allow a New York Times reporter into the trial, despite several requests.

Shonu Palden, a 41-year old Tibetan man, died on September 30, 2018 after prolonged treatment for torture-related injuries in Machu County, eastern Tibet. He died on the way to the hospital. Following his arrest on 18 June 2012 for spearheading protest during the 2008 uprising. One of his daughters was temporarily denied school admission to punish her father. Subsequently, he was subjected to intimidation and harassment by local authorities for allegedly sharing information about his medical condition and his daughter to a human rights organization.

Tsegon Gyal, 55, was sentenced on January 10, 2018, by the People's Intermediate Court in Tsojang, northeastern Tibet. The Tsojang People's Intermediate Court put him on trial in secret, with no notice given to his parents or relatives. The Chinese government didn't follow due process or allow him a defense attorney. Gyal had most likely been charged because of a blog post he had published criticizing China for implementing a restrictive policy of "ethnic unity" in the Tibetan areas under its control.

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Druklo,<sup>20</sup> who is most commonly known by his pen name Shokjang, was released from prison in accordance with his sentence on March 19, 2018. Shokjang was originally detained by police in Rebkong, on March 19, 2015, and ultimately sentenced to three years in prison on charges of 'inciting separatism' and 'disturbing social stability,' though Shokjang has continuously maintained his innocence. Shokjang was first arrested in April 2010, along with another writer Theurang, for their writing regarding the 2008 protests in Tibet, and Chinese violent suppression of Tibetan protesters. Theurang (also known as Tashi Rabten) was sentenced to four years.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6029-tibetan-writer-tsegon-gyal-jailed-three-years-for-inciting-separatism>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/6074-tibetan-writer-shokjang-released-after-three-years-in-chinese-prison>

Pema Wangchen, 32, from Karze, eastern Tibet passed away on April 26, 2019 at a hospital in Chengdu city of China's Sichuan province from unspecified health issues following his release from prison. He was subjected to severe torture while in Chinese police custody following his arbitrary arrest in April 2016. His arrest took place without a warrant after a video footage of him singing the Tibetan national anthem went viral online and it caught the attention of Chinese police.

## **Environmental destructions**

Tibetans are eco-friendly and their lives depend on the environment, but since the Chinese invaded Tibet, China destroyed and mining the sacred Mountains and land. Therefore, Tibetans protested in environmental destruction and social discrimination inside Tibet. More than 100 Tibetans have protested Chinese mining operations at a site considered sacred by local Tibetan residents. The protest took place at Yulshok Gargye in Minyak County, eastern Tibet on May 4, 2016.<sup>21</sup> Chinese police attacked a crowd of Tibetan villagers on June 1, 2016, after the hundreds of Tibetans, residents of a township near a sacred mountain, strongly protested the mining of gold at the holy site, by the Chinese government. Six of the protest leaders were brutally beaten and detained by police, one of them, was Tsewang Kyab who was seriously injured and was rushed to a hospital in Chengdu city. A video footage smuggled out of Tibet, depicting local Tibetans confronting Chinese police forces, and calling upon authorities to discontinue the mining. Tsewang Kyab holding a book in the background looks like an Environmental Protection Propaganda, speaking in the video can be heard, urging police to "Stop the destruction of the environment."

A protest in Amchok began on May 31, 2016, and followed 15 years of frustrated appeals to authorities to halt the mining on the mountain, on Gong Ngon Lhari Mountain which has been regarded for generations as a sacred site. A symbolical drawing shows the sacred mountain of Nyenchen Gong-ngonLari with a big Chinese excavator, which causes heavy environmental destruction. The drawing with words written in red, white and yellow, also called on the Chinese authorities to stop mining operations, saying their activities are "Arrogant, Illegal, Destruction And Selfish."<sup>22</sup>

On June 1st, 2017 locals in the villages of Shitsa, in Northeastern Tibet protested after a district leader revealed plans to divert the locals' water to a Muslim valley, forcing Tibetan locals to travel over four hours to obtain drinking water and creating a major shortage of water in the future. Paramilitary were deployed and reportedly used tear gas and shot onto the crowd, injuring more than 40 people. Many local Tibetans were arrested in relation to the events. Yet in another incident the Chinese authorities give no

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/4998-tibetans-protest-against-chinese-mining-in-minyak-county-tibet>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/videos/1305-about-300-tibetans-protest-gold-mining-at-a-sacred-mountain-in-tibet>

explanation for the order to move from the pasturage in Golog prefecture's Darlag County, or for the expulsion of another nomad group from their nearby winter camps. The affected locals have written an appeal, addressed to "The respected senior leaders of the People's Republic of China, and concerned departments", where the nomads oppose the authority's orders on 6 grounds, calling it unconstitutional, stating, "Taking away citizens' rights to pastureland is against the constitution, against national and local laws, and a major cause of damage to People's' livelihood and way of life." Authorities set a deadline of August 23 for the nomads to move, and though most were able to leave by the assigned date. Some did not meet the deadline. So the officials brought in armed police to threaten the nomads who remained, finally forcing them from the land and fining each of them 1,000 yuan [U.S. \$152] for failing to obey the order. They were also told that anyone still left behind would be jailed.

Indeed, across Tibet, large-scale mining efforts of copper, gold, silver, chromium, and lithium has become the norm, integrating the region into the Chinese industrial economy, and leaving devastating environmental destruction. Tibetans who oppose the mining risk being imprisoned, tortured, or killed. Inside Tibet, Qinghai province was the first to officially enact PRC policies of nomad re-settlement, forcing tens of thousands of Tibetan pastoralists to slaughter their livestock and move into newly built housing colonies in or near towns, abandoning their traditional way of life.

There is a population of approximately 10,000 Tibetan nomads in the county who have been relocated by the Chinese government, with nearly 400-500 homes around the Lhathog Yulung Zangter Mountain affected by the Chinese mining operations. The Yulung Zangter Mountain in Kham Lhathog County of eastern Tibet is rich in copper, gold, silver, aluminum, lead, and iron. The mining project in Lhathog County is known as the largest in China and the second largest in the world. There is an excessive amount of resettlement happening in places riddled with alcohol, gambling, increasing Chinese migrants, and prostitution, all of which are becoming major problems making the county a morally void place, particularly for younger generations.

Tibetan nomads who used to live near the front of the Yulung Zangter Mountain in Lhathog County of eastern Tibet are facing tremendous suffering after being forced to abandon their traditional grazing lands over 10 years ago. Every year, each household earns about 50,000 Yuan, which was enough before the mining operations. But they have been forcibly relocated with insufficient compensation, sub-par housing, and a lack of government assistance in finding jobs. The nomads are illiterate and have no experience in industrial work; even so there is a huge lack of jobs in the resettlement towns.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/news/tibet/5879-over-10000-nomads-affected-by-mining-operations-in-lhathog-tibet>

Another Tibetan nomadic community located behind the Yulung Zinger Mountain is now being forced to abandon their traditional grazing lands where mining operations started at the beginning of 2017. The government has already taken land from Tibetan nomads with minimal compensation and they are now being forced to abandon their traditional grazing lands and the caterpillar fungus business as the mining area has been fenced off and become a restricted area.

Several other mining operations were carried out by the Chinese government at other mountains, including a holy mountain called "Dolma Punsum" which is highly respected by the nomads in Lhathog County. "The priceless treasures exploited from these mountains in Tibet have already been taken to China." This deteriorating situation is not uncommon. Massive land-grabs by the Chinese government have been going on for decades in different parts of Tibet, particularly in the east, northeastern and central parts of Tibet.

Between May 2016 to May 2020 roughly over 1,133 Tibetans either arrested, arbitrarily detained, imprisoned, tortured to death in custody, and serving sentences across Tibet under China according to TPI sources. In recent years due to heavy surveillance and monitoring from Communist China over Tibet, it has become extremely difficult to obtain information from Tibet. The decrease in the reliable reports coming from inside Tibet does not necessarily mean a decrease in Tibetans facing less suffering under China.

***The report completed on May 22, 2020 at the request of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission.***

**The Analytics and Reporting team**

**Yangchen Dolma**

**Namgyal Dolma**

**Yeshe Choesang**

**Tibet Post International**

**Dharamshala, District Kangra,**

**H.P.-176219**

**India**

**Tele: +91-9418143289**

**Email: [news@thetibetpost.com](mailto:news@thetibetpost.com)**

**[www.thetibetpost.com](http://www.thetibetpost.com)**