

## PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ngawang Sungrab, aged 26, monk from Drepung monastery  
Gyaltzen Choephel, aged 33, layman from Lhasa  
Ngawang Sangdrol, (f) aged 24, nun from Garu nunnery  
Ngawang Choezom, (f) aged 26, nun from Chubsang nunnery  
Ngawang Tenzin, (f) aged 30, nun from Gyadrag nunnery, detained in 15 February  
1995 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Currently held  
in solitary confinement  
Tanak Jigme Sangpo, aged 70, teacher

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Following the violent suppression of demonstrations inside Tibet's Drapchi prison on 1 and 4 May 1998 many prisoners, particularly those detained for political reasons, are reported to have been severely beaten and are believed to face continuing ill-treatment. Many prisoners have been placed in solitary confinement and there is continued fear that interrogations of prisoners concerning the demonstrations will result in further beatings, torture and ill-treatment.

Increased security inside Tibet since the demonstrations has made it difficult to obtain precise details concerning the number of prisoners killed and beaten. Unconfirmed reports indicate that at least five prisoners have died so far -- one allegedly shot dead by an armed policeman during the 1 May demonstration.

Reliable reports confirm to date that Ngawang Sungrab and Gyaltzen Choephel were so viciously beaten following the 1 May protest that they required hospitalization. According to one report, Gyaltzen Choephel may subsequently have died. Ngawang Sungrab is currently serving a ten-year prison term for participation in a peaceful demonstration and Gyaltzen Choephel was sentenced to 15 years' for his alleged involvement in the death of a policeman.

Following the 4 May demonstration, three young nuns, Ngawang Sangdrol, Ngawang Choezom and Ngawang Tenzin are reportedly being held in solitary confinement and are being subjected to harsh interrogation involving ill-treatment. All are currently serving sentences ranging from five to 18 years for their participation in peaceful pro-independence activities. Ngawang Tenzin's sentence was due to expire in May 1997 and the reason for her continued detention in Drapchi prison is not known.

Due to space restrictions at the prison some prisoners have been moved into solitary confinement at other prisons.

There are also concerns for the safety of Tanak Jigme Sangpo who may have taken part in the demonstration. He is currently serving a 28 year sentence, also for his involvement in peaceful pro-independence activities.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The catalyst for the events of 1 May appears to have been the holding of a Chinese flag-raising ceremony attended by prisoners in Drapchi. Unconfirmed reports say that the ceremony was to be filmed in order to show to the European Union Troika ambassadors from the United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Austria who visited the prison as part of a ten day visit to Tibet.

Reports say that, having assembled for the ceremony, one prisoner started to shout independence slogans. This reportedly led to the shooting of one prisoner after which many prisoners were beaten and put into solitary confinement.

On 4 May, the day of the visit of the EU ambassadors, a second protest by prisoners took place, again resulting in harsh suppression including severe beatings.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/express/airmail letters in English or Chinese or in your own language:**

- expressing serious concern at reports that prisoners in Drapchi prison, including Ngawang Sungrab and Gyaltzen Choephel, have been severely beaten and are currently in Sera Military hospital;
- expressing serious concern at reports that other prisoners, including Ngawang Sangdrol, Ngawang Chozom and Ngawang Tenzin are being held in solitary confinement and have been subjected to harsh interrogation including ill-treatment;
- requesting the immediate release from solitary confinement of all prisoners;
- seeking assurances that they will not be ill-treated during interrogation or at any other time;
- urging that prisoners will receive all necessary medical treatment;
- expressing grave concern at the reports of deaths in Drapchi prison as a result of the events of 1 and 4 May 1998, including one prisoner reportedly shot dead;
- urging that all prisoners held at Drapchi prison solely for the peaceful exercise to their right to freedom of expression, be immediately and unconditionally released;

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the People's Republic of China

**JIANG Zemin** Guojia Zhuxi

Beijingshi

People's Republic of China

**Telegrams: President Jiang Zemin, Beijing, China**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Chairman of the Xizang Autonomous Regional People's Government

**Legchog** Zhuren (formerly Gyaltzen Norbu)

Xizang Zizhiqu Renmin Zhengfu

1 Kang'angdonglu

Lasashi 850000, Xizang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

**Telegram: Chairman, Regional People's Government, Lasa, Xizang Autonomous Region, China**

**Telexes: 68014 FAOLT CN or 68007 PGVMT CN**

**Salutation: Dear Chairman**

**COPIES TO:**

Prison Governor, Drapchi Prison/Tibet Autonomous Regional Prison No.1

Jianyuzhang

Xizang Zizhiqu Di Yi Jianyu

Lasashi 850003

Xizang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

Amnesty International members in Austria, Luxembourg and the UK may like to ask their EU ambassador what follow-up action they have taken following their visit to Drapchi prison.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 September 1998.