

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/006/2003

21 January 2003

Further information on EXTRA 89/02 (ASA 17/059/2002, 6 December 2002) and follow-up (ASA 17/002/2003, 9 Jan 2003) - Fear of imminent execution/death penalty/unfair trial/torture or ill-treatment
New concerns: Incommunicado detention/possible "disappearance"

PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF
CHINA

Lobsang Dhondup (also known as Luo Rang Deng Zhu) (m)
Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche (also known as Ngawang Tashi or A An Zha Xi) (m)

New names: Tsultrim Dargye (m), aged 36
Tamdring Tsering (m), aged 33
Ashar (or Aka) Dhargye (m), aged 40
Tashi Phuntsok (m), aged 39
Tserang Dondrup (m), aged approximately 65
Choetsom (m), aged 19
Pasang (m), aged approximately 19

Amnesty International has recently received reports that at least ten others were detained in connection with the case against Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche and Lobsang Dhondup. Five of them have since been released, reportedly after being tortured or ill-treated in detention, but five others are believed to remain in custody. Two other monks, interrogated by police in connection with the case, have not been seen since 8 April 2002. There are fears that they may have "disappeared".

Four monks were reportedly arrested along with Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche on 7 April 2002 at Jamyang Choekhorling monastery, Nyagchukha county (in Chinese: Yajiang county), Sichuan province. One has since been released, but the others, Tsultrim Dargye, Tamdring Tsering and Ashar (or Aka) Dhargye are thought to remain in detention. It is not known whether they have been charged or sentenced. Tamdring Tsering was allegedly severely beaten by police on arrest.

Choetsom and Pasang are also thought to be monks at Jamyang Choekhorling monastery. They reportedly went missing on 8 April 2002 after being interrogated and beaten by the police during the raid on the monastery the day before. They have not been seen since. It is unclear whether they are in hiding or in police custody.

Tashi Phuntsok, from the same monastery, was arrested on or around 21 April 2002 while he was in Nyagchukha hospital undergoing treatment for tuberculosis. He is believed to remain in detention, although it is not known whether he has been charged or sentenced. There is no information about his current state of health.

Two further arrests reportedly followed on or around 7 May 2002. Two men were arrested after collecting 20,000 signatures on a petition to deter an earlier apparent attempt to arrest Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche. Whilst one has since been released, the other, Tserang Dondrup (also known as Jortse or Jotse), was tried in Nyagchukha and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. The details of his conviction are not known. He is reported to have lost most movement or flexibility in his legs since his arrest, possibly as a result of torture or ill-treatment. Three others are also known to have been arrested in connection with this case, but have since been released.

According to local officials, the court hearing for Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche and Lobsang Dhondup which was due to be held on 10 January 2003 did not take place. The Chinese authorities have since confirmed that the

appeal process is ongoing, although it is not possible to confirm when the verdicts will be announced. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche is reported to have called off his hunger strike after receiving official assurances that he would be given a new trial. On 21 January, Radio Free Asia reported having received a secret tape recording made by Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche in his prison cell, in which he claims he has been falsely accused protests his innocence.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Chinese or your own language:

(Luo Rang Deng Zhu and A An Zha Xi are the Chinese names of Lobsang Dhondup and Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche. Please use these Chinese names in letters to the authorities).

- calling on the authorities to reveal the names and whereabouts of all those detained in connection with the case against A An Zha Xi (Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche) and Luo Rang Deng Zhu (Lobsang Dhondup) and to clarify the charges against them;
- urging the authorities to release them unless they are charged or convicted of a recognizable criminal offence;
- expressing concern at allegations that some of those detained in connection with this case have been torture or ill-treated and urging the authorities to guarantee the safety of all those who remain in custody;
- calling on the authorities to launch a full, immediate and impartial investigation into all allegations of torture or ill-treatment with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice;
- urging the authorities to conduct an immediate review of the case against A An Zha Xi (Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche) and Luo Rang Deng Zhu (Lobsang Dhondup), and if charges are well-founded, to conduct a re-trial in an open court ensuring that the defendants are given full facilities to prepare and present their defence in line with international fair trial standards. Otherwise they should be released unconditionally.

APPEALS TO: (Please note fax numbers may be difficult to obtain, but please keep trying)

Acting Governor of the Sichuan Provincial People's Government

ZHANG Zhongwei Daishengzhang
Sichuansheng Renmin Zhengfu
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Telegram: Provincial Governor, Chengdu, China

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Fax: +86 28 8435 6784 / 8435 6789 (c/o Foreign Affairs office of Sichuan Provincial People's Government)

Salutation: Dear Governor

Director of the Sichuan Provincial Department of Justice

ZENG Xianzhang Tingzhang
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24 Shangxianglu
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People's Republic of China

Telegram: Director, Sichuan Justice Department, Chengdu, China

Fax: +86 28 8435 6784 / 8435 6789 (c/o Foreign affairs office of Sichuan Provincial People's Government)

Salutation: Dear Director

Minister of Justice

Zhang Fusen
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10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie
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Telegram: Justice Minister, Beijing, China

Fax: +86 10 65 292345

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 March 2003.