

Chinese authorities re-arrest Jigme Gyatso

According to a confirmed information received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), the Chinese authorities re-arrested Jigme Gyatso, who was previously arrested on 23 March 2008 and then later released on 15 October 2008 for providing assistance to the making of the film LEAVING FEAR BEHIND (Tib: Jigdrel).

TCHRD learnt from various sources that Jigme Gyatso a.k.a Golog Jigme, age 40, a monk of Amdo Labrang Monastery, was re-arrested by Sangchu County Public Security Bureau (PSB) personnel some where around 10 March 2009 from his residence in Sangchu County, Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP"), Gansu Province.

Sources told TCHRD that around 4 am in the morning, around 10 March 2009, the Sangchu County PSB personnel entered Jigme Gyatso's room and arrested him without giving any explanation. Since then there has been no information about his whereabouts.

From October 2007 to until March 2008, Dhondup Wangchen, a Tibetan from Bayen, Tsoshar (Ch: Hualong) "TAP", Qinghai Province and assisted by Golog Jigme (Jigme Gyatso), started filming a documentary film LEAVING FEAR BEHIND. The aim of the documentary film was to gather opinions and feelings of ordinary Tibetan people about the Dalai Lama, China's policies in Tibet and the Olympic Games. The film also provided a glimpse into hearts and minds of the Tibetan people about what they really feel about the Chinese presence in Tibet and the survival of Tibetan culture. The filming was concluded in the early March 2008.

The duo took great risk and danger by making the film and later smuggled it to the outside world on 10 March 2008. Immediately, the documentary film drew immense attention to the plight and suffering of the Tibetan people. On that same day and afterwards, Lhasa city erupted into unprecedented mass protests against unpopular Chinese rule, which was then later spread to many regions of Tibet.

On 23 March 2008, Jigme Gyatso was arrested by the Chinese security forces and detained in Kachu detention centre, (Ch: Lingxia) in Gansu Province. He was later released on 15 October 2008.

Three days later, on 26 March 2008, Dhondup Wangchen was arrested by the Chinese authorities in Tong De in Qinghai Province. He was first detained at Ershilipu Detention centre, in Xining city for three months. He was then later taken to Gongshang Hotel in the middle of July 2008, where he was last seen. He is still being detained in a secret prison. Dhondup Wangchen gave his reason for making the documentary film as under:

"Nowadays, China is declaring that they are preserving and improving Tibetan culture and language. That's what they are telling the world. Many organisations and offices have been set up for these things. What they say and what they do are totally different, opposites. If they really want to preserve and improve Tibetan culture and language in Tibet then they should withdraw Chinese people

living in Tibetan areas. Tibetan culture and language has to be practiced in all Tibetan areas. If it is not practiced, how can it be preserved?"
(www.leavingfearbehind.com)

The Centre expresses serious concern at the present condition of Jigme Gyatso. During his earlier detention, he was severely tortured and interrogated by the Chinese prison guards. He fainted several times due to the beatings he received in the cells. The Centre urges the vital organs of United Nations to immediately intervene and seek the immediate release of Jigme Gyatso from his unconstitutional detention.